



AIA NYCOBA NOMA CIVIC LEADERSHIP PROGRAM 2021





FOREWORD

Congrats to the fifth class of the AIA New York Civic Leadership Program!

After five years of inspiration, critical inquiry, and success, I see no signs of this program losing steam. In fact, each year's cohort dynamically reinvents itself, bringing forth timely and important topics to research and discuss that not only nourishes the current participants, but informs the work of many of the chapter's constituents, from committees to board directors to members at large.

I am particularly pleased that this year the Civic Leadership Program successfully established a meaningful partnership with nycoba|NOMA to ensure that the program not only attracts diverse candidates but engages diverse speakers on a range of topics. The CLP program has always been socially minded; however, this year marked a turning point in the program's intentionality to be inclusive. I believe that this kind of collaboration also becomes an example for the rest of the chapter to learn from.

Pursuing a career in architecture and design requires a commitment to life-long learning. I hope that this program has helped you lay a foundation of skills onto which you can build, or rather design, a path that will not only guide you intellectually, but help you find your voice as a civic minded leader. I invite you to engage the various initiatives of AIA New York as your lives and careers permit.

See you at the Center!

Benjamin Prosky, Assoc. AIA

Executive Director
AIA New York | Center for Architecture



FOREWORD

nycobaNOMA is delighted to continue our partnership with AIANY's Civic Leadership Program. This year marks our second year of participation in what we believe is a primer for young architects to explore and engage in community development while developing essential skills necessary for civic engagement.

We are so enthusiastically supportive of this program as it aligns with our core mission to advance the influential voices of minorities in the profession.

The CLP program is the perfect combination of diverse professionals that share common interest in being socially responsible & engaged in real life dialogue that impacts more than just the built environment.

This experience will enhance your professional trajectory and help you connect the dots and make sense of equitable and conscious concepts that allow the sharing of common-local community needs and responsibilities that benefit us all.

nycobaNOMA congratulates the 5th cohort of The AIA New York Civic Leadership Program. We look forward to hearing of your success!

Gregory T. Switzer, AIA, NOMA, NCARB

President
nycobaNOMA

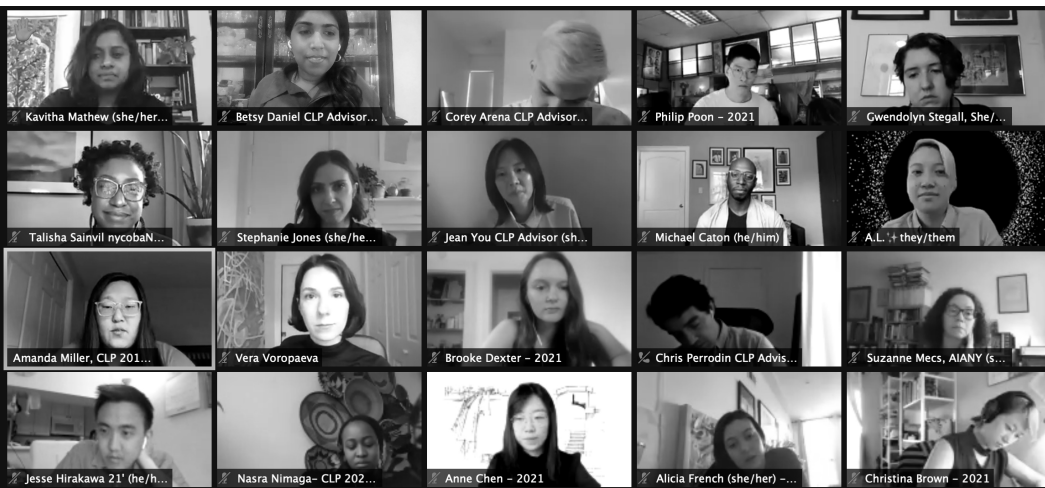


PROGRAM MISSION

The AIANY Civic Leadership Program (CLP) develops a class of emerging architectural professionals into civic leaders by refining the critical skills that design professionals need to better represent the people that they serve.

We do this by increasing architects' connections to their communities, developing their advocacy capacities, and supporting their pursuit of public service in elected or appointed office.

Each year, the CLP selects ten emerging AIA members to participate in a six-month journey to improve their community outreach and public relations skills, strengthening the AIANY's culture of advocacy by providing opportunities to interface with municipal agencies, community development organizations, and local stakeholders.



JUNE 2021

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
						12
				17		
				24		

**FULL-DAY PROGRAM
KICKOFF**

LOGISTICS DAY

RESEARCH CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT

OCTOBER 2021

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
					1	
			13			

DEVELOPMENT SESSION #5
Public Parks in NYC

**SKILL BUILDING
WORKSHOP #3**
Understanding Communication
Workshop in Collaboration
with nycoba | NOMA

PROGRAM SCHEDULE

JULY 2021

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
					23	

DEVELOPMENT SESSION #1
Streeteries: Emergency
Solution to Permanence?

AUGUST 2021

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
					6	
			11			
					27	

DEVELOPMENT SESSION #2
Zoning and Shared Equity Housing
in Community Plans

SKILL BUILDING WORKSHOP #1
Navigating & Influencing NYC Political Systems

DEVELOPMENT SESSION #3
Past, Present and Future of the
Public Review Process

SEPTEMBER 2021

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
					17	
			22			

DEVELOPMENT SESSION #4
Affordable Housing,
Preservation & Data

SKILL BUILDING WORKSHOP #2
Civic Voice Workshop led by NPCA

NOVEMBER 2021

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				04		
			17			

PUBLIC EVENT #1
What's Next for Basement
Apartments after Hurricane Ida

**SKILL BUILDING
WORKSHOP #4**
Facilitation and Stakeholder
Engagement led by 3x3

DECEMBER 2021

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		2				
				16		

PUBLIC EVENT #2
Intent to Impact Approaches to
Community Based Design

PROGRAM CONCLUSION

2021 LEADERS & ADVISOR TEAM



2021 LEADERS



CHRISTINA X. BROWN
Assoc. AIA, LEED GA, EcoDistrict AP
Kohn Pedersen Fox Associates

“A design profession that addresses systemic issues at its root by challenging the status quo rather than one that band-aids over issues as temporary solutions. I think this vision takes strong proactive leaders, engagement and education, raising awareness both within and outside of the profession and design action that reflects a more holistic approach.

Christina X. Brown is a recent graduate from Carnegie Mellon University with a Bachelor of Architecture and Master of Science in Sustainable Design degrees, currently working at Kohn Pedersen Fox Associates in New York City. From a heavily air-polluted oil workers' village in Tianjin, China to the lush and manicured landscapes of Bangalore, India and the unfiltered rural natures of North Carolina, Brown moved around growing up. With each move, so shifted her environment, quality of life, culture and political structure, and socio-economic status. These changes also allowed her recognize the beauty of diversity, the complexity of race and gender in society, and the role of nature in our built environment, ultimately leading her to pursue a career in sustainable architecture. In college, Brown learned about social resilience, the circular economy, systems thinking, racial justice, and equity, and realized how systemic issues related heavily to the experiences she had growing up, including her exposure to racism, hate, economic struggle, and opportunity barriers. She found urgency in addressing these issues at local scales, in engaging local communities and empowering them, in using her own expertise to tackle societal problems. Brown is committed to not being a passive bystander in the design profession and strives to become a proactive member that questions the status quo, challenges injustice, and pushes forth positive change.

2021 LEADERS



ANNE CHEN

AIA, NOMA, LEED AP BD+C, WELL AP
Perkins Eastman

“*To me civic leadership is about responsibility and dedication. Showing up and being ready to listen and work have been successful tools for understanding the goals and interests of each stakeholder group. I've realized that communication and collaboration is the key to achieve the shared goal of the community*

Anne Chen works across the disciplines of architecture, landscape architecture, and urban design. Focusing primarily on K-12 education projects, she devotes her time, energy, and talent to serve the public and impact young minds by advancing the design of school facilities and volunteering at local communities. She has recently relocated to New York City. In addition to her work as a designer, Chen lends her time to several organizations. She serves as the marketing adviser for the AIA|DC Equity Committee by WIELD, where she's deeply involved in discussion topics, event planning, and communications. As a volunteer at AIA NOVA WIA, she helps drive initiatives focused on justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion. She is also involved in the Women Leadership Initiative and DEI effort at Perkins Eastman. As former vice chair, she was instrumental in the successful creation of the AIA|DC Asian American Designers Union. Prior to the pandemic, she also volunteered at Architecture in School, Casey Trees, and DCBIA. Chen has a Master of Landscape Architecture from the Harvard Graduate School of Design. She received her Bachelor of Science in Architecture from the University of Virginia, where she also minored in Global Sustainability. With a values system that sees a world in need and a determination to help, Chen works closely with various research faculties to explore issues that she feels are fundamentally important.



BROOKE DEXTER

Assoc. AIA
James Corner Field Operations

“*As I've worked the polls for the recent election and started volunteering with Crown Heights Mutual Aid, I've found it invigorating to connect with my neighbors and see the many ways that change is possible. ...These efforts have inspired me to further develop my skills to be a better advocate and find ways to better support local initiatives, which ultimately impact buy-in on a bigger scale in the city.*

Brooke Dexter is the Director of Communications for James Corner Field Operations, where she works with the design team and collaborators, clients, press, and the public to promote the firm's projects and pursue new work. In her previous role as Graphics and Marketing Associate at SITU, Dexter led the effort to translate the firm's core values across the firm's digital and printed materials as part of a rebrand effort. Recently, she has been part of the core team at Field Operations that has been working with Bedford Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation as part of the Neighborhoods Now initiative. Launched by Van Alen Institute and the Urban Design Forum, the pro bono initiative supports local organizations leading their communities' pandemic response and recovery. Dexter is also an active part of leadership for the Gowanus Studio Space, a member-run studio for emerging artists in Brooklyn. She holds a Master of Architecture degree from the University of Michigan, in addition to a Bachelor of Science in Architecture with a minor in Urban and Community Studies.

2021 LEADERS



JESSE HIRAKAWA

Assoc. AIA, NOMA

NYC Department of City Planning

“Civic engagement, advocacy and awareness is important in the design profession because it is a public’s right to know what is happening in their neighborhood...I feel a responsibility in addition to a passion to fight global issues by initiating local changes.”

Jesse Hirakawa is an Urban Designer and Planner at the NYC Department of City Planning (DCP). He currently focuses on neighborhood planning initiatives, large-scale housing projects, public spaces, mixed-use developments, fresh food accessibility, and community outreach in the borough of Brooklyn. Through collaboration with other city agencies, developers, designers, community members, and stakeholders, he continues to advocate for the highest urban design standards and quality public space. At DCP, he contributed to the Special Natural Areas District update that focused on a more holistic and balanced approach to natural resource preservation and neighborhood development. He also worked on Zoning for Coastal Flood Resiliency, a citywide zoning framework for building-scale resiliency measures along the city’s waterfront and floodplain. Prior to DCP, he worked as a landscape designer in Southern California. In addition, he was a music educator, where he prepared lesson plans and taught music to students in order to better their performance skills at an international competitive level. Hirakawa teaches urban design seminars during the summer semester at the Columbia University Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation (GSAPP). He holds a Master’s degree in Architecture and Urban Design from Columbia University and a Bachelor’s degree in Landscape Architecture from the California Polytechnic University in Pomona, California.



ALICIA FRENCH

Assoc. AIA

Montroy DeMarco Architecture

“Personally my own civic engagement has helped me both process the larger framework of injustice in our urban fabric but also understand that my design and construction knowledge can help make an impact on a granular level.”

Alicia French is an architectural designer at Montroy DeMarco Architecture, where she works on a variety of projects, including multiple large-scale assisted living communities and office renovations at a variety of lower Manhattan locations. She resides in Bushwick, where she attends Community Board 4 meetings and events, works with a tenants’ union advocating for rent stabilization and landmark status, and utilizes her architectural knowledge to assist local nonprofits. While working towards her M.Arch at Columbia University, French was a Research Assistant at the Temple Hoyne Buell Center for the Study of American Architecture. She was part of a team that created the project “Power: Infrastructure in America,” which unveils and critiques private interests in government policy. During this time, she also worked as a Civic Design Assistant for the Mayor’s Action Plan for Neighborhood Safety. Recently, she published the essay “Temporary Homes in Permanent Crisis,” which examines mobile homes in FEMA disaster recovery policy and shows endemic issues within the system that, if addressed, could induce equitable policy. Prior to attending Columbia, she received a Master of China Studies from Peking University where she focused on Architectural History.

2021 LEADERS



NASRA NIMAGA

AIA, NCARB, NOMA
Perkins Eastman

“ I firmly believe that to build equitable cities, we must take responsibility for our work by acknowledging and engaging said issues and this is why civic engagement, awareness and advocacy in the design field is important to me...Representation matters! Fostering spaces where people from all backgrounds feel included, matters! Feeling like there is opportunity for someone “like you” to move up in this profession, matters!

Nasra Nimaga, from Nairobi, Kenya, is a New York City-based architect, photographer, and interdisciplinary designer. She holds a Master in Architecture from Princeton University and currently works for Perkins Eastman's New York office. Nimaga has over seven years of experience working on primary and secondary education projects, cultural projects, and civic work ranging from master plans to new construction to adaptive reuse and renovations both locally and abroad. Nimaga brings strong design, digital, and technical skills, as well as a commitment to delivering quality work that consistently considers the clients' needs and vision as well as the health of and impacts to users, the community, and the environment. Outside of her regular work, Nimaga is committed to working towards celebrating and improving firm culture and advocating for equity and inclusion in the workplace and the AEC industry. She has been working with firm leadership and peers on efforts and initiative for the firm's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee. Nimaga has also volunteered on NOMA Project Pipeline events and is a champion for A4LE's Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee, which is committed to addressing systemic inequities within the profession, learning environments, and society. Nimaga is also a portrait photographer and has shown her artwork at several exhibitions. If architecture is her team sport, portrait photography is her art of expression, affording her the opportunity to combine nuances of the human experience with a sense of space.



ROCKET Q. OSBORNE

NOMA
NYC Department of Design and
Construction

“ Wherever my professional and social endeavors lead me, I want to be empowered enough to organize those affected, listen to their needs, assemble resources, strategize, fulfill an implementation plan, and empower others with actionable plans.

Rocket Osborne's deep appreciation of architecture and the built environment has allowed him to contribute to public space, streetscape development, and public project coordination, ensuring that all projects are completed with his own special brand of excitement, energy, and excellence. With over 11 years of experience in engaging the built environment, Osborne has helped emerging architects, artists, and a growing number of nonprofit organizations bring expression, urban solutions, and a sense of community to the public realm. With a Bachelors of Architecture from the University at Buffalo, Osborne formally began his career in 2015 at the NYC Department of Design and Construction. At DDC, he has led projects from design inception to construction completion and managed a portfolio of over \$5 million via 15 capital projects for the New York Public Library. In 2019, Osborne was promoted to work for the Construction Program Administration unit, where it became his top priority to ensure that all CPMs and the agency had the necessary tools and processes to deliver great projects for the city. Osborne was recently awarded by DDC for his support of the agency's emergency response program in addressing the COVID-19 pandemic. Once the city recovers from the pandemic, Osborne intends to return to fulfilling his lifelong commitment of building equitable public spaces for New York City.

2021 LEADERS



PHILIP POON

Assoc. AIA

PPA

“As a Chinese-American architect from New York City who is engaged in Manhattan Chinatown, it is clear that architecture and design play a crucial role in shaping the lives of immigrant working class communities in the city...Architects and designers can work to uplift working class immigrants and their livelihoods.

Philip Poon is an architect based in New York City. After working in Japan, the Netherlands, and Switzerland, Poon completed his Master of Architecture at the Harvard Graduate School of Design, where his design thesis was titled The New Chinese-American Restaurant. Poon is currently working in New York City, where he recently completed a 5,000-square-foot church in Queens. His proposal for the rebuilding of 70 Mulberry Street in Chinatown has been featured in Chinese-language newspapers like the Sing Tao Daily and World Journal. As an active member of the Asian-American and Chinatown community, he has exhibited his work in two galleries in New York City, one of which was a solo exhibition in Tribeca.



GWENDOLYN STEGALL

Assoc. AIA

PBDW Architects

“Protest and advocacy have always been part of my life. The Million Mom March was my first protest at age eight. In college, I was a peer educator...and I mentored middle school girls through Women and Youth Supporting Each other...I made my projects as civic minded as possible and engaged the communities where my projects were located.

Gwendolyn Stegall is a Junior Architect at PBDW Architects, focusing on preservation projects. Her work experience includes adding accessible entrances to landmarked buildings, navigating projects through NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission and Department of Buildings review, and adapting buildings of various programs and sizes to changing needs while preserving and restoring historic features. She is also a member of PBDW's DEI Workgroup. Stegall graduated from Columbia University GSAPP with a Master of Architecture and MS in Historic Preservation. Her Historic Preservation Master's Thesis, A Spatial History of Lesbian Bars in NYC, documented lesbian nightlife sites from the early 20th century through today. Through her work at the NYC LGBT Historic Sites Project, Stegall's research is available to a wide audience. She has also presented this research at lectures, in press interviews, and at the American Association for State and Local History 2020 Annual Meeting. As president of Queer Students of Architecture, Planning, and Preservation, Stegall edited and co-authored the book, Safe Space: Housing LGBTQ Youth Experiencing Homelessness, which examines best practices from existing LGBTQ homeless shelters in New York City and how the design field can aid in creating more of these essential spaces. Stegall has a keen interest in expanding the reach of preservation to sites important to underrepresented groups, particularly the LGBTQ community and BIPOC communities. She believes strongly in using preservation, design, and community-based planning as tools for restorative justice.

2021 LEADERS



ALEJANDRA ZAPATA

Assoc. AIA, LEED GA
Sidewalk Labs

“My experience not only drove my interest in architecture and the built environment but it made me look at the world through a more critical lens where civic values, equity and advocacy are key in design.

Alejandra Zapata is a Computational Designer and Architecture Customer Success Consultant at Sidewalk Labs. She currently sits on the Delve team, a digital master planning tool to generate, evaluate, and optimize design options. Her background in architecture and data analytics sparked her interest in interdisciplinary projects that seek to rethink the future of urban communities. Zapata strives to create meaningful and innovative spaces by incorporating technology and design to address environmental challenges. Prior to joining Sidewalk Labs, Zapata was an Urban Researcher at the J. Max Bond Center, where she worked on making real estate and land use data available to communities and aiding the strategic planning process for urban communities from New York to Accra. Past professional experience includes residential, commercial, interiors, and community center design, as well as mixed-use and institutional projects in her academic work. She seeks to promote environmental justice and excellence in design through strong narratives and research in every project she embarks on. More recently, Zapata co-founded Ad Hoc Cooperative, a speculative design think tank that believes in design for equity, sustainability, and beauty. Through this effort, she hopes to explore architectural ideas that stimulate emerging professionals to rethink the future of our cities.

AIA NEW YORK LEADERSHIP TEAM



BENJAMIN PROSKY

Assoc. AIA
Executive Director



KAVITHA MATHEW

AIA
Special Projects Director



SUZANNE MECS

Hon. AIA NYS
Managing Director

2021 ADVISORS



COREY ARENA

Assoc. AIA



BETSY DANIEL

AIA



CHARLOTTE LAFFLER



CHRISTOPHER PERRODIN

Assoc. AIA



VERA A. VOROPAeva

AIA



JEAN YOU

Assoc. AIA



TALISHA SAINVIL

AIA • NOMA • NCARB • LEED



PROGRAM KICKOFF & LOGISTICS

Guest Speakers and Panelists:

Ben Prosky, Assoc. AIA, Executive Director, AIANY and Center for Architecture

Kenneth A. Lewis, AIA, President of AIANY, Partner at SOM

Greg Switzer, AIA, NOMA, President of nycoba|NOMA, CEO, Managing Principal of G.Switzer Architecture

Kavitha Mathew AIA, NOMA, LEED AP, Special Projects Director, AIANY and Global Diversity Officer at KPF

Suzanne Mecs, Hon. AIA NYS, Managing Director, AIANY

Adam Roberts, Director of Policy, AIANY

Michael Caton, AIA LEED AP BD+C (Class of 2017), Technical Computing Director at Juno

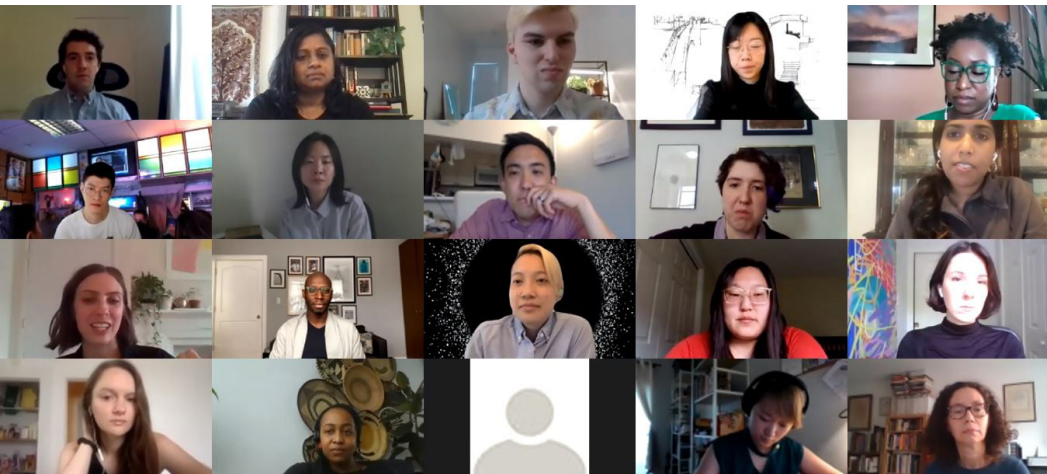
A.L. Hu, AIA, NOMA, EcoDistricts AP (Class of 2017), Design Initiatives Manager at Ascendant Neighborhood Development, Rose Fellow at Enterprise Community Partners

Amanda Miller, AIA (Class of 2018), Project Architect at Hoffman Architects, Inc.

Stephanie Jones, Assoc. AIA (Class of 2020), Project Designer at Architecture Outfit

Faith Rose, AIA, Principal, O'Neill Rose Architects and former Executive Director, NYC PDC

Justin Garrett Moore, AICP, NOMA, Program Officer, Humanities in Place at The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and former Executive Director, NYC PDC



The kickoff day started off with an introduction to the AIANY, Center for Architecture and nycoba | NOMA. Next, the class took part in a CLP Alumni Panel, discussing with alumni their professional paths after the CLP program. Then, the CLP class led by the advisors, took part in an interactive exercise on what is civic engagement. They engaged in discussion with professionals who were practicing advocacy in different fields. Finally, the class ended the day reflecting on the skills and knowledge they wanted to learn and build upon during this six month program.

On Thursday, June 17th and on Thursday, June 24th the CLP Class of 2021 gathered together to brainstorm and strategize for their development sessions. Using what they indicated in their initial reflections from Kickoff day, the class brainstormed potential ideas for their Development Sessions.

Skill Building Workshop #01: Navigating & Influencing NYC Political Systems

Guest Speakers and Panelists:

Petey Routzahn, Public Policy Lab

Rose Christ, Cozen O'Connor



On Wednesday, August 11th, the CLP 2021 Class had their first Skill Building Workshop centered on the NYC Political landscape. The class first heard from Petey Routzahn from Public Policy Lab talking through their strategies of working at the intersection of human-centered design and public policy. Next they heard from Rose Christ from Cozen O'Connor as she described the political structures of NYC and we as civic leaders can advocated within them. Finally the class went through an activity about exercising political influence. The objectives of this exercise included identifying key issues and what systems needed to be navigated, understanding how to build political and community alliances as well as how to develop strategies to appeal to stakeholders.

Skill Building Workshop #02: Civic Voice Workshop led by NPCA

Guest Speakers and Panelists:

Lauren Cosgrove, National Parks Conservation Association Northeast Senior Program Manager

Tyler Taba, **Pamela Pettyjohn**, National Parks Conservation Association



On Wednesday, September 22nd, the CLP 2021 Class had their second Skill Building Workshop led by Lauren Cosgrove from National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA). The class used the case study of public access to Jamaica Bay to center their conversations on how they can use their civic voice. The class took part in two exercises, “Spheres of Influence” and “Power Mapping your Decision Maker.” These exercises helped the class to understand who they already know and are connected to as well as honing on what a good advocacy message can be. By concentrating on these things, the CLP class started to understand better how they can enact change through those who have the influence and power.

Skill Building Workshop #03: Understanding Communication Workshop in Collaboration with nycoba | NOMA

Guest Speakers and Panelists:

Ranieka Weston ACC, SHRM-SCP, Executive Coach, Facilitator and Talent Strategist at pLINK Leadership

Lisa Medley ACC, BCC, Chief Executive, Leadership Coach at Lisa Medley Executive Coaching



On Wednesday, October 13th, the CLP 2021 Class had their third Skill Building Workshop led by Ranieka Weston and Lisa Medley in collaboration with nycoba|NOMA. Through this workshop, the CLP Class as well as nycoba|NOMA members were able to delve into how to understand different personalities, foster leadership skills, as well as work with emotional intelligence. The participants took a DISC personality test in order to better understand how to work with others in the most productive and empathic way possible. By developing these soft skills, the CLP class can become better advocates for the diverse communities that they serve.

Skill Building Workshop #04: Facilitation and Stakeholder Engagement led by 3x3

Guest Speakers and Panelists:

Paula Kawakami, Engagement and Communications Director of 3x3

Megan Marini, Principle, Director of Strategy and Outreach of 3x3

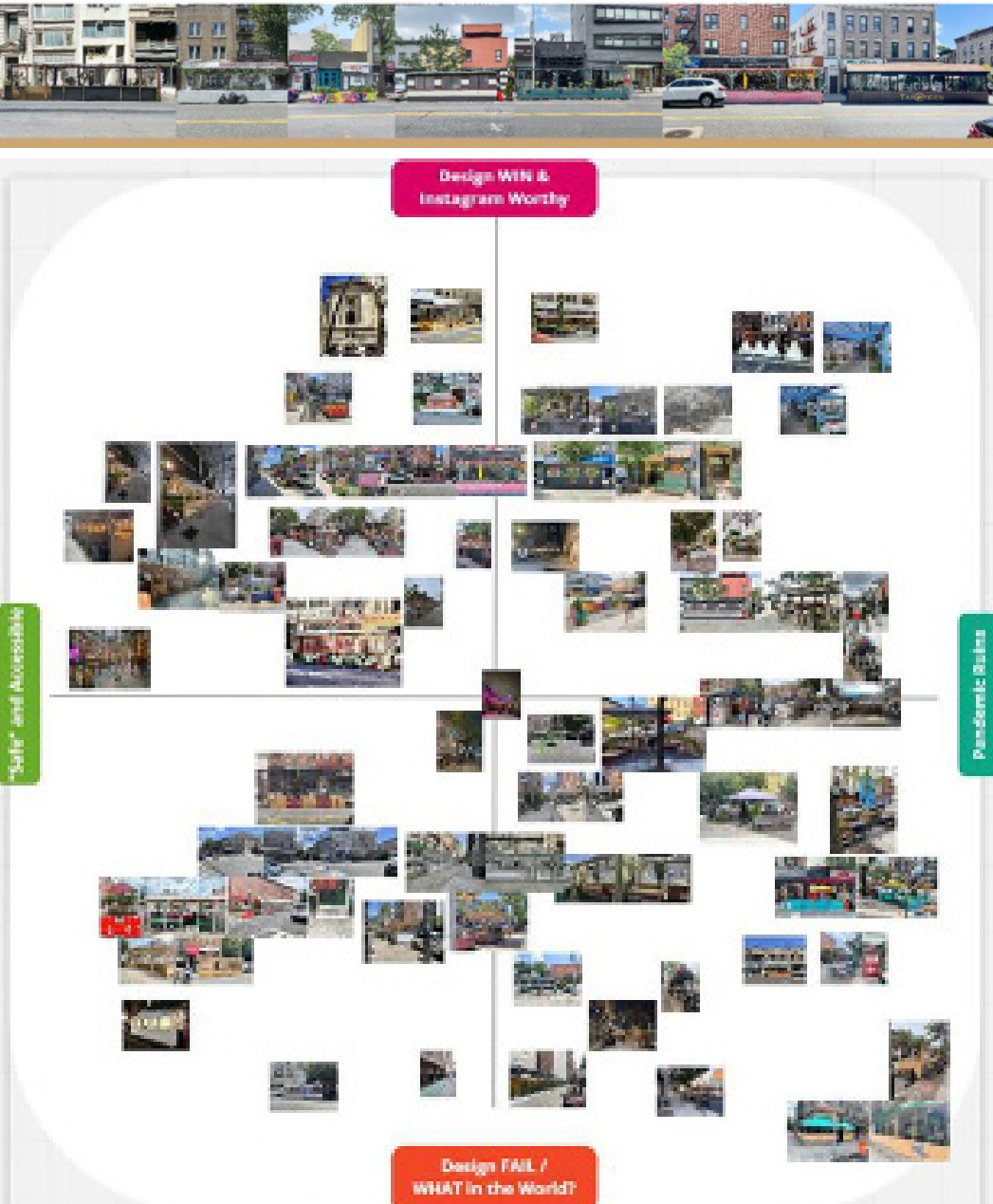


On Wednesday, November 17th, the CLP 2021 Class had their fourth and final Skill Building Workshop led by Paula Kawakami and Megan Marini. This workshop was tailored to understand the fundamentals of inclusive facilitation as well as centering equity into design advocacy work. The CLP Class learned concepts of positionality as a basis for how to manage biases while leading community or stakeholder engagement, tactics for balancing priorities in a group, key skills for guiding a generative discussion and understanding of the agency and power you hold as a facilitator.

streaterie

/ 'street + eateries/

For the purpose of this session, "streateries" are the pandemic driven outdoor dining solutions, structures and expansions of restaurants and bars onto the streets (parking spots, roads and sidewalks) that allowed for the reopening and safer operation of restaurants and bars



DEVELOPMENT SESSION #1

Streateries: Emergency Solution to Permanence?

Christina Brown and Nasra Nimaga,

Guest Speakers:

Andrea Chiney, Co-founder of A+A+A

Mike Lydon, Principal of Street Plans

Emily Weidenhof, Director of Open Space at the NYC Department of Transportation

Steven Picker, Executive Director of the NYC Food & Beverage Industry Partnership (F&BIP) at the NYC Department of Small Business Services

Jane Lea, Co-founder of Design Advocates, Principal & Founding Partner of Lea Architecture

@coronashaxx, Instagram Account

As these structures continue to be a part of our city's landscape, what are the priorities for restaurant owners and workers, designers, public agencies, health experts and the public? How can we take advantage of this pivotal transition to bring about positive change in public life and ensure the process is more equitable moving forward?

On Friday, July 23, the 2021 class of the AIANY Civic Leadership Program (CLP) convened for their first remote development session, organized by Christina Brown, Assoc. AIA, and Nasra Nimaga, AIA, NOMA. The session focused on the pivotal transition of outdoor dining structures from an emergency response to the COVID-19 pandemic to permanence. Outdoor dining structures (also known as "Streateries") were quickly implemented to allow for safer operations by extending dining outdoors; in a matter of weeks, we saw the emergence of a new pop-up typology.

inequities, and the implications of their potential permanence in our city. As these structures continue to be a part of our city's landscape, what are the priorities for restaurant owners and workers, designers, public agencies, health experts, and the public? How can we take advantage of this pivotal transition to bring about positive change in public life and ensure the process is more equitable moving forward?

The development session brought together various voices to explore the multifaceted challenges and impacts of outdoor dining structures: their efficiencies and inefficiencies, their

Overview of Streateries

An introduction to the city's outdoor dining program and its impact during the pandemic overview:

- Most people agree that streateries were crucial for the survival of many businesses, and activated the street in unexpected ways, highlighting the potential for outdoor programming on streetscapes beyond outdoor dining.
- City agencies and other stakeholders have developed guidelines for streateries, but there are still many challenges to long-term usage. Issues of health, safety, accessibility, seasonality, equity, and materiality must be considered as new policies and updates to existing guidelines are developed.
- Public opinion regarding streateries is shifting quickly as pandemic restrictions ease. As the urgency of the typology fades, opposition to streateries is growing. Several examples have posed traffic and structural concerns, in addition to parking and noise complaints by local communities.

Assembly for Chinatown

A presentation from Andrea Chiney, Co-founder of A+A+A, on Assembly for Chinatown, a project developed in collaboration with Think!Chinatown that supported local businesses in the neighborhood during the pandemic through community-driven streatery builds. During the presentation, Chiney introduced the project and discussed their intent to uplift communities, establish an ecosystem, and create long-term relationships with the local community. Through the collaboration, they were able to support thirteen local businesses through ten builds, which included contributions from a team of local mural artists and the involvement of volunteers from the community. The project not only resulted in beautiful outdoor dining structures, it also provided work opportunities for local artists during the pandemic, sourced materials from local community sources, and established a circular ecosystem that could be deployed for future builds. The project enabled the community to come together and support one another while preserving the cultural identity of Chinatown.

Outdoor Dining Structures from Diverse Perspectives

A panel discussion offered insight into outdoor dining from diverse perspectives. Panelists included:

- Mike Lydon, Street Plans
- Emily Weidenhof, NYC DOT
- Steven Picker, F&BIP NYC SBS
- Jane Lea, Founding Partner of Lea Architecture

During this session, the cohort was able to learn about placemaking and the value of using the street as respite. From Lydon and Weidenhof, we learned that there are endless ways to activate the streets—what we previously deemed to be transitory and connective space can present new opportunities.

But envisioning a more sustainable future is not just about reducing car lanes and replacing them with dining, these initiatives have shown us that our streets have enormous potential to add to the vibrancy and resiliency of our cities.

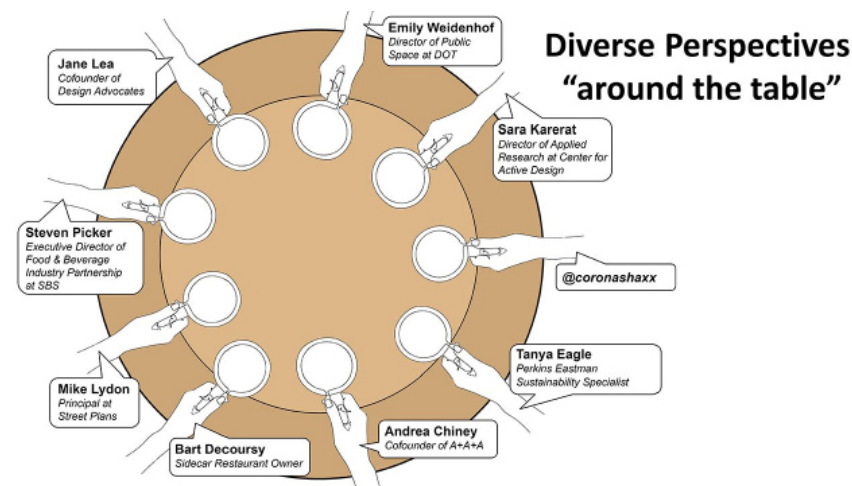
Picker, a former chef and restaurant owner, provided insight into the work done by the Food & Beverage Industry Partnership, including advocating on behalf of the sector and liaising between the industry and government agencies. Meanwhile, representatives from DOT and SBS helped us understand the tremendous effort and thought behind the open restaurants program. Lastly, Lea elaborated on the power of creating partnerships, describing how Design Advocates served as a platform for small firms to support each other, collaborate and share resources during the pandemic, and how they were able to come together to create a guide to reopening.

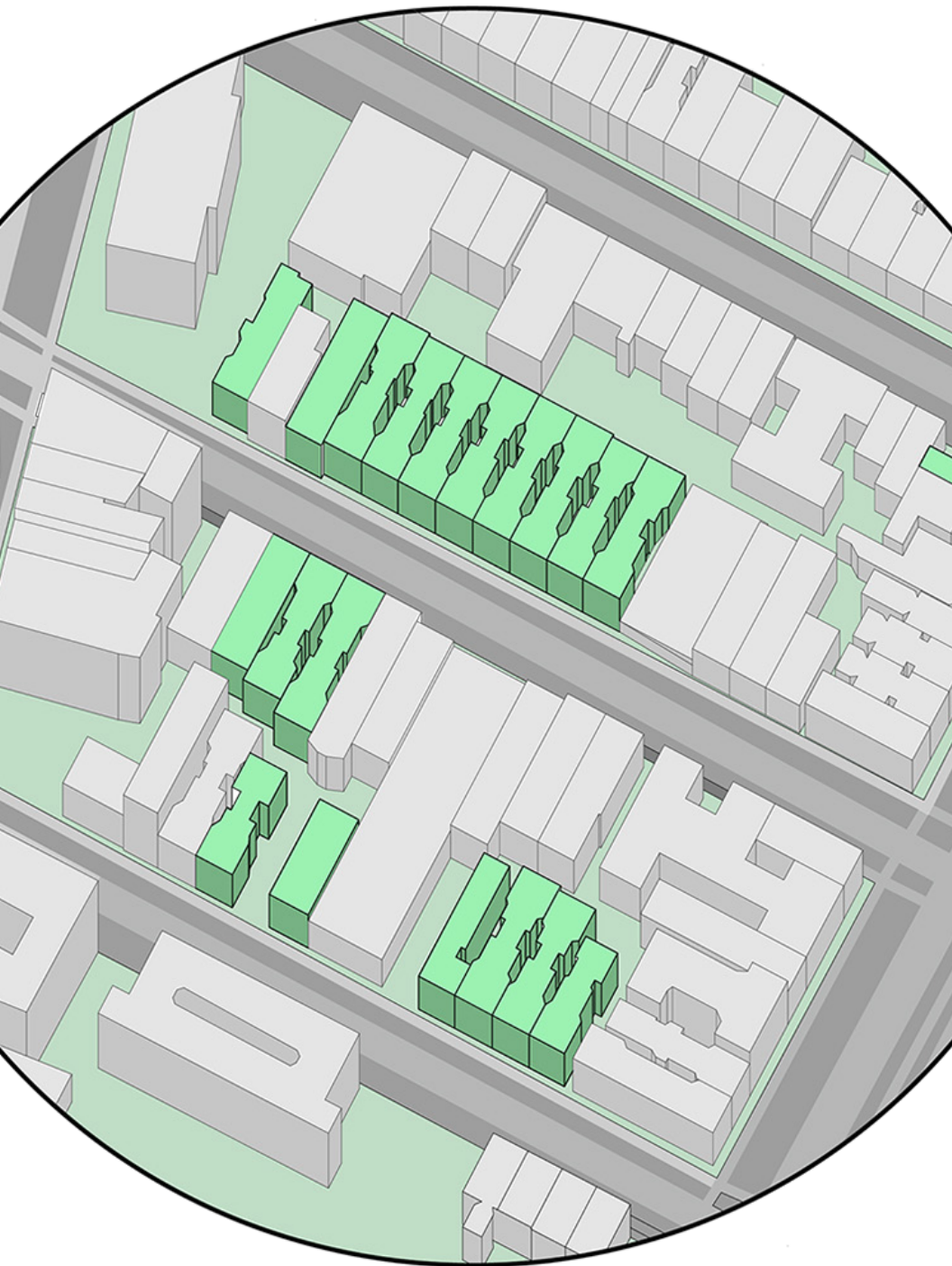
Rate The “Shaxx”

The development session's final segment was an interactive activity that sought to analyze the characteristics of various outdoor dining structures collected by the civic leaders, the 2021 cohort, and guests. The invited guest was @CORONASHAXX, an Instagram account whose focus has been to document this emergent typology that has reshaped our urban landscape during the pandemic. The segment began with a presentation by @CORONASHAXX on their process of documentation, their observations, and their takeaways.

The activity itself was inspired by New York Magazine's Approval Matrix, which humorously categorizes happenings into quadrants guided by a vertical axis of “Highbrow” to “Lowbrow” and a horizontal axis of “Despicable” to “Brilliant.” During this activity, all attendees had five minutes to strive to locate a collection of shacks on a matrix using a Miro board. The vertical axis of our matrix went from “Design Wins” to “Design Fail” and the horizontal axis ranged from “Safe and Accessible” to “Pandemic Ruins.” We collectively discussed the results of placements and reasoning behind our placements.

We closed the development session by carrying out a series of polls to determine whether people thought the structures should be permanent or operate seasonally. This topic of streateries is contentious and the future of the typology is shrouded by many challenges. Solutions are neither straightforward nor easy, but a valuable discussion to shine light on as we transition into a long term solution.





DEVELOPMENT SESSION #2

Zoning and Shared Equity Housing in Community Plans

Alicia French and Philip Poon

Guest Speakers:

Jimena Veloz, Senior Project Manager, Hester Street

Samuel Stein, Housing Policy Analyst, Community Service Society

Rob Hollander, Secretary, Chinatown Working Group

Isella Ramirez, Director of Community Engagement & Capacity Building, Hester Street

Violette de la Selle and Michael Robinson Cohen, Founders, Citygroup

Deyanira Del Río, Co-Director, New Economy Project

Stephen Erdman, Director of Community Land Trust Initiatives and Analytics, NYC Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) and NYC Housing Development Corporation (HDC)

Debra Ack, Secretary, East New York Community Land Trust

Boris Santos, Treasurer, East New York Community Land Trust

The AIANY Civic Leadership Program's second development session explored how communities have sought to empower themselves in the face of these pressures through neighborhood-scale community plans and building-scale shared equity housing models.

Gentrification and displacement are complex and contentious issues in New York City, and the architectural profession occupies a complicated position in relation to these issues due to its relationship to real estate developers and capitalism at large. The AIANY Civic Leadership Program's second development session explored how communities have sought to empower themselves in the face of these pressures through neighborhood-scale community plans and building-scale shared equity housing models. More specifically, the session also explored the importance of rezoning to protect at-risk communities from displacement and the feasibility of community land trusts in New York City, while examining the role and agency of architects with regards to these efforts.

Organized and led by 2021 CLP members Alicia French and Philip Poon, the session was divided into two parts. Part one explored two community plans: the Chinatown Working Group Plan and the Bushwick Community Plan. Architects, designers, policy experts, and community members who contributed to these plans were invited to speak on their plans, the policy recommendations within them, and the role of architects in advocating for their passage.

The session began with Jimena Veloz of Hester Street presenting her community work for the Two Bridges rezoning efforts, a portion of the Chinatown Working Group Plan. Samuel Stein then spoke about the role of zoning in New York City planning at large, as well as the limits and pitfalls of the over reliance on zoning as a tool for neighborhood change. Rob Hollander summarized the history of the Chinatown Working Group since its formation in 2008 in response to the city's East Village Rezoning, and spoke to the current barriers to passage that the community plan is facing. Later, Isella Ramirez spoke about her work on the Bushwick Community Plan. Lastly, Violette de la Selle and Michael Robinson Cohen presented their work with Citygroup, a collective of architects and artists. They discussed Citygroup's theoretical framework, which reverses the standard approach of having the

public try to inform the design process. Rather, self-initiated projects like renderings that visualize the impacts of rezoning on community plans engage through the design process itself.

The second part of the session focused on community land trusts, a non-market affordable housing solution that promotes community empowerment and democratic participation.

Both Deyanira Del Río and Stephen Erdman spoke about the overall state of community land trusts in New York City today, highlighting successful local iterations of the movement. Boris Santos and Debra Ack spoke about their work at East New York Community Land Trust and laid out their plans for the future: mainly, developing "the Hole" on the Queens-Brooklyn border, an area with longstanding health and safety problems,

into deeply affordable housing under the community land trust structure. Finally, David Lynn spoke about potential financing structures for community land trusts and similar affordable housing ventures.

The final part of the session was dedicated to playing an online version of Trustville, a Monopoly-style board game that helps illustrate the types of decisions communities make within community land trusts. John Krinsky of the New York City Community Land Initiative led the game and guided participants through the decision-making process. Members of the cohort were assigned characters and made cooperative decisions with other members of the speculative land trust in order to benefit the community as a whole.



Past Present and Future of the Public Review Process

Anne Chen and Jesse Hirakawa

Guest Speakers:

Edwin Marshal, Senior Manager, NYC Department of City Planning

Rosaura Mendez, Director of Community Planning Boards, Manhattan Borough President's Office

April Adams, Deputy Director of Community Affairs, Manhattan Borough President's Office

Adam Hartke, Chair of Land Use Committee, Manhattan Community Board 6

Elizabeth Canela, Project Manager, Totem Development

Matt Melody, LEED AP, Senior Associate, Curtis + Ginsberg Architects

Kristina Drury, Founder and Principal, TYTHE

Priyanka Jain, Co-founder and Principal, 3x3

Adriana Valdez Young, Director of Community, 3x3

Attending public hearings and speaking with elected officials can make a difference in what gets built; public participation in ULURP has led to changes large and small and leads to better final projects.

According to the NYC Department of City Planning (DCP), "The New York City Charter requires certain actions that are reviewed by the City Planning Commission to undergo a Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP). ULURP is a standardized procedure whereby applications affecting the land use of the city would be publicly reviewed."

ULURP consists of many participants and bodies of governments: DCP and the City Planning Commission (CPC), community boards, the borough presidents and the borough boards, the New York City Council, and the mayor. The procedure is set up to allow community members and local government officials to weigh in on land-use proposals. The process, which begins after the CPC approves the application, takes a maximum of 215 days, during which these different bodies have an opportunity to review the project.

New York City's Statement of Needs for Fiscal Year 2020, an annual report required under Section 204 of the City Charter, reported that 25% of community boards noted that land use trends are a pressing issue in their community districts, and expressed the need for increased community input on large developments. Several community boards have issues with ULURP and have advocated for changes in how land is developed. However, before ULURP, community members had very few opportunities to comment on decisions that shaped their neighborhoods. While the system isn't perfect, it is nonetheless an important way for people to make their voices heard. Attending public hearings and speaking with elected officials can make a difference in what gets built; public participation in ULURP has led to changes large and small and leads to better final projects.

Timeline

Slower thoughtful process

As early as possible, and even before site is selected

Following through to keep the neighborhood apprised of construction progress

Taking it from beginning to end and controlling the process.

Scale

Ensure everyone is part of the process

Deeply rooted engagement - transform culture while transform space

Target those people who are directly interacting and impacted

Small scale - large impact

Who

Representation of the community

Diversify input, multiple groups multiple sessions. Measuring demographics

Incentivizing community to engage - compensated, offer metro cards, support child care.

Method

Take engagement to the people by taking survey to community and providing them with information

Create equity or more separation by going digital

Deep listening and learning - going in without a proposal in mind and not assume the challenges they have

Timeline

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As early as possible, and even before site is selected

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Understanding the Status Quo

During the New York's 2019 General Election, a ballot question was passed to amend ULURP, adding 30 more days community boards and borough presidents to review projects to the original 60-day community board review period. In addition, the amendment mandated DCP to inform community boards of project applications 30 days in advance of the start of ULURP. Supporters of the amendment stated that this was a good move towards greater transparency and providing more time for public review. Meanwhile, much of the opposition noted that what is needed isn't more time, but more effective methods for community input. Others opposed to the amendment stated that the additional review time simply created roadblocks to development.

Even more recently, the New York City Council introduced legislation to develop a new comprehensive planning framework, outlining goals for private- and public-sector design and construction. However, as noted by AIA New York, there are a few concerns regarding the development of a comprehensive plan. For one part, the plan would not be adopted until four years from now at the earliest, meaning architects would have

to wait years to know what the city's development targets are. Furthermore, while community districts would determine these targets and goals, these districts are outdated and have not been adjusted to demographic changes.

At the beginning of the pandemic, the city's 59 community boards migrated to online platforms. Civic engagement soared as members of the public were able to participate in meetings from the comfort of their homes. As the state lifted the emergency order, community boards were once again subject to the state's open meetings law, requiring physical public access to official gatherings. At the moment, however, Governor Hochul has suspended the Open Meetings law. While some argue that online participation has allowed more diverse members of the public to join, others contend that holding public meetings remotely ultimately silences individuals who do not have access to the necessary technology.

Points of View: Forms of Community Engagement

A history of redlining and a process that is overly technical has led to a lack of trust in the government's ability to lead the public review process. Following

conversations with public officials, individuals from the, private sector, and community board members, it is clear that there are aspects of the process that need to change. For one part, the makeup of community boards often fail to adequately represent community members.

In addition, the public must set goals for community engagement and figure out how to better share information so the public doesn't feel like the decisions have already been made without them. Furthermore, community engagement can take many forms, and it is important to identify what form is appropriate at any given time.

The Future of Public Review Process

During the development session, the CLP participated in an interactive activity to further understand types of engagement, with categories ranging from non-participation (manipulation, therapy), to tokenism (information, consultation, placation), and citizen power (partnership, delegated power, citizen control). The group was dove into the topic by exploring four different criteria:

Timeline and duration of engagement.

- The time set aside for community engagement is rarely sufficient. Advocate for a slower, more thoughtful process.
- Be conscious of how early to start and how late to stay in the process.
- Scale of engagement
- Whether a group is large or small, engage everyone equally and make sure everyone is part of the process.
- Deeply rooted engagement transforms the culture while transforming the space. Target those people who are directly affected to make a larger impact.

Who to engage

- Ensure diversity of input across demographics.
- Incentivize community engagement by providing compensation such as metro cards or supporting childcare costs to ensure participation.
- Method of engagement
- Ensure equity and ease of access by bringing the information to the stakeholders
- Particularly in the post-pandemic context, it is important to explore whether digitization of processes fosters or hinders equity.
- Practice deep listening and learning



Community Engagement Workshop for School Project. 2020.
Photo source: Anne Chen



Public Engagement Workshop for HPD. 2019. Photo source: Jesse Hirakawa



Affordable Housing, Preservation & Data

Consulting

On Friday, September 17, 2021, the 2021 class of the AIANY Civic Leadership Program (CLP) convened for their fourth remote development session, organized by Gwendolyn Stegall, Assoc. AIA, and Alejandra Zapata, Assoc. AIA, LEED. The session, "Affordable Housing, Preservation & Data," explored how

architects can use housing preservation, historic preservation, and data as tools to combat the affordable housing crisis. New York City, while new luxury towers remain largely vacant, there are not enough affordable units to meet demand. As gentrification overtakes naturally occurring affordable housing and rent controls expire, many people who have lived in the same neighborhood



for generations can no longer afford rents. This occurs disproportionately in neighborhoods that have historically housed large BIPOC populations; once forced into disinvested neighborhoods by racist practices like redlining, they now find themselves without protection from predatory landlords and unchecked market forces.

Historic Preservation and Affordable Housing

Historic preservation, and especially formal landmarking, is often pitted against affordable housing, but affordable housing in historic structures can be essential to alleviating the housing crisis. Caroline Cheong, Assistant Professor of History at the University of Central Florida, introduced us to what she labeled “An Equity Preservation Agenda,” in which marginalized groups have greater participatory agency, leading to processes and outcomes with distributive, reparative parity. This approach requires preservationists to engage in the fight for affordable housing and housing justice advocates to engage with preservation.

Much of the naturally occurring affordable housing and the rent-regulated housing in NYC is located in older buildings.

Cheong explained how community-based tools such as community land trusts can preserve affordable housing in existing historic structures by sidestepping market forces and putting power in the hands of residents.

Data and Affordable Housing

According to the NYC Housing and Vacancy Survey, 44 percent of NYC is rent burdened, meaning that over thirty percent of their income goes to rent. The CLP cohort agreed that housing is a human right and should not be a commodity. However, the complexities of profit-driven market and the inner workings of the city make it more difficult to find solutions. Ryan Brenner, Research Analyst at the NYU Furman Center, discussed how data can help agencies make evidence-based decisions and unveil insights that otherwise would be almost impossible to quantify.

Brenner shared a series of platforms that the Furman Center has made available to the public, such as CoreDataNYC and NYC Neighborhood Data Profiles. These data-driven tools have been critical to understanding the current state of affordable housing. However, while data is critical for communities to make informed decisions, there is

currently a lack of publicly available data that communities can access and understand.

Affordable Housing in NYC: Tenants’ Rights

Preserving affordable housing in NYC is as crucial as creating new units, and the tenants rights movement is a key actor in that fight. Two speakers from the Metropolitan Council on Housing, Andrea Shapiro, LMSW, Director of Program and Advocacy, and Kathy Wakeham, Hotline Volunteer, joined us to discuss the many battles their organization has been instrumental in winning, including a law passed in 2019 that made all existing rent control laws permanent and eliminated the incentive for landlords to evict rent-controlled tenants.

Met Council also emphasized that there is still significant work to do to preserve and create affordable housing. COVID-19, for example, has exacerbated many pre-existing problems: unemployment is twice as high as it was in 2020,

1.4 million tenants owe rent, and the homelessness rate has increased despite the eviction moratorium. In addition, the way affordability is calculated, by determining a region’s area median income (AMI), means “affordable” units are often out of the price range of existing residents. Despite these challenges, Met Council provided an encouraging reminder that the collective power of tenants is a force to be reckoned with.

Case Study of a Non-Profit Developer

Developers are a main agent in the creation of affordable housing, which makes it crucial to understand their points of view.

We were joined by Wendy Holmes, Senior Vice President of Consulting and Strategic Partnerships at Artspace, one of the nation’s leading non-profit arts developers, committed to creating and preserving affordable spaces for artists. Holmes shared two projects that focused on housing affordability and historic preservation, including a local project in the refurbished PS

Park Ownership and Operational Models

Brooke Dexter and Rocket Osborne

Guest Speakers:

Danielle Goldfarb-Bedrick, Park Manager, NYC Department of Parks and Recreation

Anthony D. Macari, Director of Concession Architecture & Development, NYC Department of Parks and Recreation

Timothy Marshall, Principal & Owner, ETM Associates

Donna Kirkland, Senior Community Engagement Director, New Jersey, The Trust for Public Land

Council Member Peter Koo, NYC Council Member, District 20; Chair, Committee on Parks and Recreation

Maura Lout, Executive Director, Central Park Conservancy Institute for Urban Parks

Jeff Sandgrund, Chief Operating Officer, Brooklyn Bridge Park

Emily Sherrod, Director of Partnership Development, City Parks Foundation

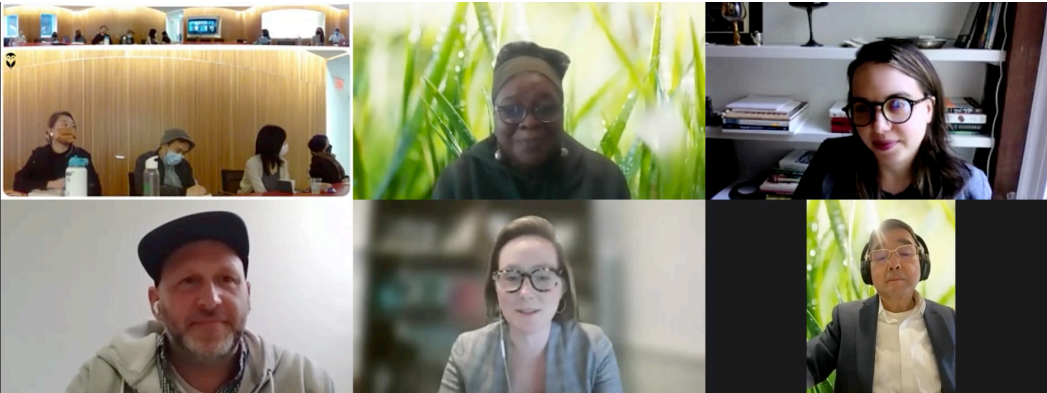
In NYC, parks are essential, serving as our shared backyards and providing benefits for our health and wellbeing, a fact that was made increasingly evident during the COVID-19 pandemic.

On Friday, October 1, Brooke Dexter, Assoc. AIA, and Rocket Osborne, NOMA, led the 2021 AIANY Civic Leadership Program's fifth and final development session. Titled "Advocating for Park Improvements via NYC's Prevalent Park Ownership and Operational Models," the session provided background into existing challenges to the parks system and explored how to advocate for park improvements. Through a presentation by Dexter and Osborne, a series of quiz questions, and a panel, "Understanding Existing Ownership Models, Funding and O&M," the first portion of the session focused on understanding how the condition of NYC's parks hinges on understanding who owns them, who funds them, and who manages operations and maintenance..

"The pandemic brought back to light exactly how important open space was and gives the space for someone like

Eric Adams to say we have to at least pledge one percent, because look how needed our parks were in this moment, in this global pandemic," said Jeff Sandgrund, COO, Brooklyn Bridge Park.

In NYC, parks are essential, serving as our shared backyards and providing benefits for our health and wellbeing, a fact that was made increasingly evident during the COVID-19 pandemic. While park use skyrocketed, we also saw the challenges our parks face on a regular basis exacerbated, including:



Ongoing Maintenance & Operations

Effective park management balances programming, maintenance, and operational needs, but many public parks face shortfalls from year to year. Without a steady stream of reliable income for ongoing operating expenses and/or support from private partnerships, parks find themselves understaffed and unable to keep up with maintenance.

Deferred Maintenance

Oftentimes a park's maintenance needs do not align with how the budgeting process works; as a result, these fixes can get delayed and compounded over time, turning into deferred maintenance. Consequently, park management often find that it's easier to find capital funding for larger fixes, rather than expense funding for ongoing operations to prevent aging assets from becoming deferred maintenance in the first place.

Park Equity

While we do have many large, world-renowned parks, many low-income New Yorkers have limited or no access to parks. According to an analysis by the

Trust for Public Land at the height of the pandemic, more than 1.1 million New Yorkers did not have access to any park within a 10-minute walk of where they lived.

Taking into consideration these challenges, a second panel, "The Future of NYC Parks," brought together industry leaders from The Trust for Public Land, the Central Park Conservancy Institute for Urban Parks, Brooklyn Bridge Park, the City Parks Foundation, and the New York City Council's Chair for the Committee on Parks and Recreation.

Building on work by New Yorkers for Parks (including the Play Fair Coalition and the Five Point Plan for Park Equity) these bold, leaders envisioned a public park system where equity is placed at the forefront of maintenance and delivered through a citywide public-private partnership, channeling private dollars into public parks with the most needs. They spoke to a future where we invest in our community leaders to deliver neighborhood-centered stewardship; a future that cultivates a skilled workforce by expanding existing programs to train

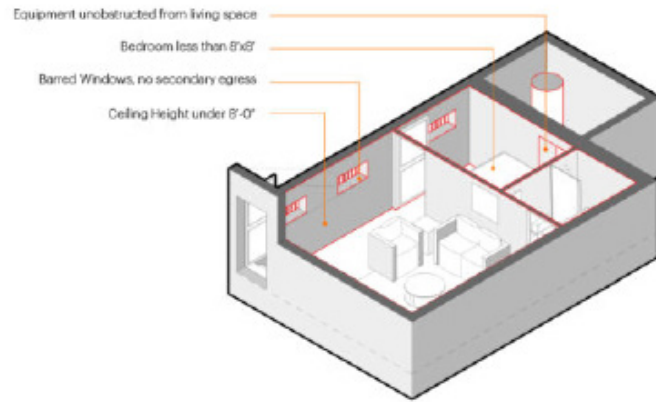
the formerly incarcerated to help meet the city's park needs; and a future with a Director of the Public Realm at the forefront, enabling a holistic vision for NYC's parks.

As NYC relies on a blend of ownership models for its parks, it must consider the role of public and private funding moving forward. The speakers in the second panel referenced the City Parks Foundation's ongoing feasibility study, which investigates how the city can utilize private funding to pilot new approaches to park management for citywide adaptation. The conversation also asked, "How do we keep pressure on the city to continue providing the necessary public funding for parks, particularly as non-profits and conservancies raise additional funding?"

Advocacy and public participation are critical to how well our parks serve their communities. Whether at the scale of the individual, a "Friends of" group, or a licensed conservancy, actions such as calling 311 to report an uptick in garbage, attending a community board meeting, and contacting an elected official to express the urgency of restoring crumbling infrastructure are all viable ways to utilize the power we each hold. By finding ways to unify our power beyond district lines and zip codes, we have the ability to create large-scale and long-lasting systemic improvements for parks and hold the city accountable for providing this essential infrastructure that benefits our communities.



Before Conversion

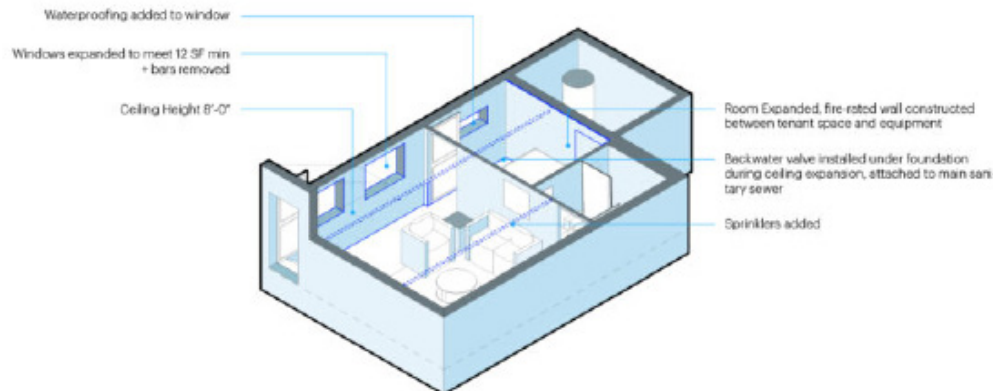


Note: This is an illustrative diagram, specific context may require different solutions and expertise.

Christina Brown | Alicia French | Jesse Hirakawa | Rocket Osborne | Alejandra Zapata

AIANY | NYCOPA NOMA | Civic Leadership Program 2021

After Conversion



Note: This is an illustrative diagram, specific context may require different solutions and expertise.

Christina Brown | Alicia French | Jesse Hirakawa | Rocket Osborne | Alejandra Zapata

AIANY | NYCOPA NOMA | Civic Leadership Program 2021

PUBLIC EVENT #1

Legalization of Basement Units After Hurricane Ida

Christina Brown, Alicia French, Jesse Hirakawa, Rocket Osborne, and Alejandra Zapata

Guest Speakers:

Kate Leitch, Citizens Housing and Planning Council (CHPC)

Deborah Gans, Gans and Company

Mark Ginsberg, Curtis + Ginsberg Architects

Laura Heim, Laura Heim Architect

Xiomara Pedraza, NYC Department of Housing Preservation and Development

On November 4, the 2021 nycoba|NOMA & AIANY Civic Leadership Program (CLP) presented their first public event of the year, “What’s Next for Basement Apartments after Hurricane Ida?”, organized by Christina Brown, Alicia French, Jesse Hirakawa, Rocket Osborne, and Alejandra Zapata. The program focused on the legalization of basement units, exploring issues of climate resilience, the housing crisis, life safety, and local and state policy improvement.

Illegal basement apartments make up nearly 40% of the new housing created from 1990 to 2005, a rise that is partially due to the lack of affordable housing options in the city. According to the city, this results in roughly 100,000 New Yorkers living in 50,000 or more illegal basement apartments. Despite its importance, this vital housing stock often does not comply with current building codes, can pose serious health and safety risks, and often lacks proper means of egress during emergencies such as fire or flooding. Extreme weather events, such as 2021’s Hurricane Ida, only further exacerbate the safety issues of basement dwellings, especially as climate change disproportionately affects the most vulnerable in our communities.

In response to the vulnerability of NYC’s basement units, the city has launched programs like the NYC Department of Housing Preservation and Development’s Basement Apartment Conversion Pilot Program (BACPP), which started in East New York in 2019. Such programs are attempting to find ways to make basement apartments safe and legal so that crucial housing isn’t lost during the current crisis. Despite these programs, challenges remain, including how to continue ongoing program efforts despite budget cuts during the pandemic, the implementation of solutions to extreme weather events, and the re-evaluation of existing zoning and code policies to allow for larger basement conversion eligibility while preserving safety

standards for the occupants.

The program began with a keynote presentation by Kate Leitch, a researcher and senior analyst at the Citizens Housing and Planning Council (CHPC), where much of her work is focused on the intersection of building codes and housing policy objectives. Leitch discussed the myriad ways in which CHPC works to improve the safety, habitability, and quantity of affordable housing in NYC, from advocating for Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) legalization via Senate Bill S4547 to consulting on the BACPP. Leitch also highlighted current barriers in regulatory frameworks that prevent basement conversion approvals and provided an overview of proposed strategies for moving forward with legalization.

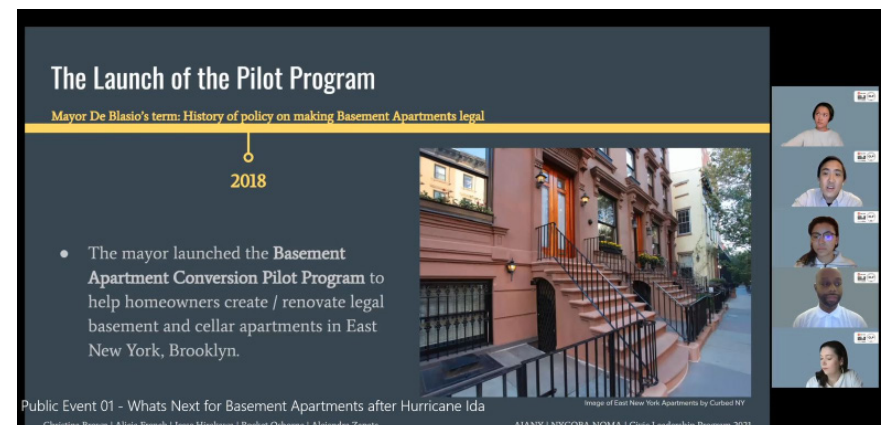
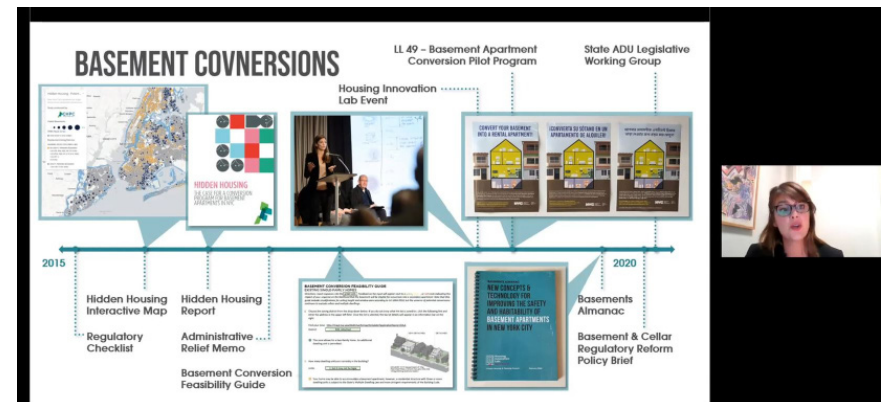
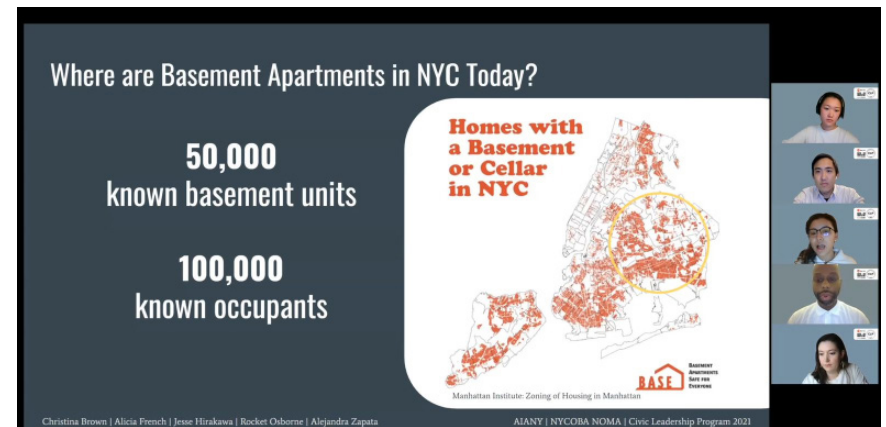
Following the keynote, Deborah Gans, founder and Principal at Gans and Company; Mark Ginsberg, founding partner at Curtis + Ginsberg Architects; Laura Heim, founder and principal at Laura Heim Architect; and Xiomara Pedraza, Chief of Staff of Preservation at the NYC Department of Housing Preservation and Development, discussed their experiences working on basement housing in NYC, and shared their outlook for the future.

Takeaways ranged from the potential future of the basement pilot program to the financial, policy, and architectural possibilities of basement conversions, but

all speakers underscored the importance of exploring ways to support home owners in making their basement apartments safe and livable. Furthermore, speakers stressed the potential for the city to explore the tapping into various funding sources, such as federal funding for inland and coastal resiliency, to support basement conversions as part of neighborhood-wide flood mitigation strategies.

A key consideration for homeowners and developers is the environmental impact of construction and the comparative costs of building new affordable housing versus renovating existing basement units. The potential cost savings from using less material in developing existing land can allow for more units to be renovated when compared to initiating new construction. The speakers also acknowledged additional challenges of basement conversion—such as renovation costs, defining legal basement heights, and policy/zoning changes.

With these considerations in mind, the group ended wondering what a future citywide basement pilot program would look like. What policies and legislations would need to be taken on by the next mayoral administration to continue the legalization program? What state partnerships would be needed in order to expedite program expansion before the next major weather event?



PUBLIC EVENT #2

Ethical Approaches to Community-Based Design

Anne Chen, Brooke Dexter, Nasra Nimaga, Philip Poon and Gwendolyn Stegall

Guest Speakers:

George Aye, Co-Founder and Director of Innovation, Greater Good Studio

Seb Choe, Associate Director, MIXdesign

Shalini Agrawal, Director of Programs, Open Architecture Collaborative; Founder, Public Design for Equity

Michael Miller, Associate, OLIN + OLIN Labs

Peter Robinson, Design & Education, BlackSpace; Founder, WorkUrban

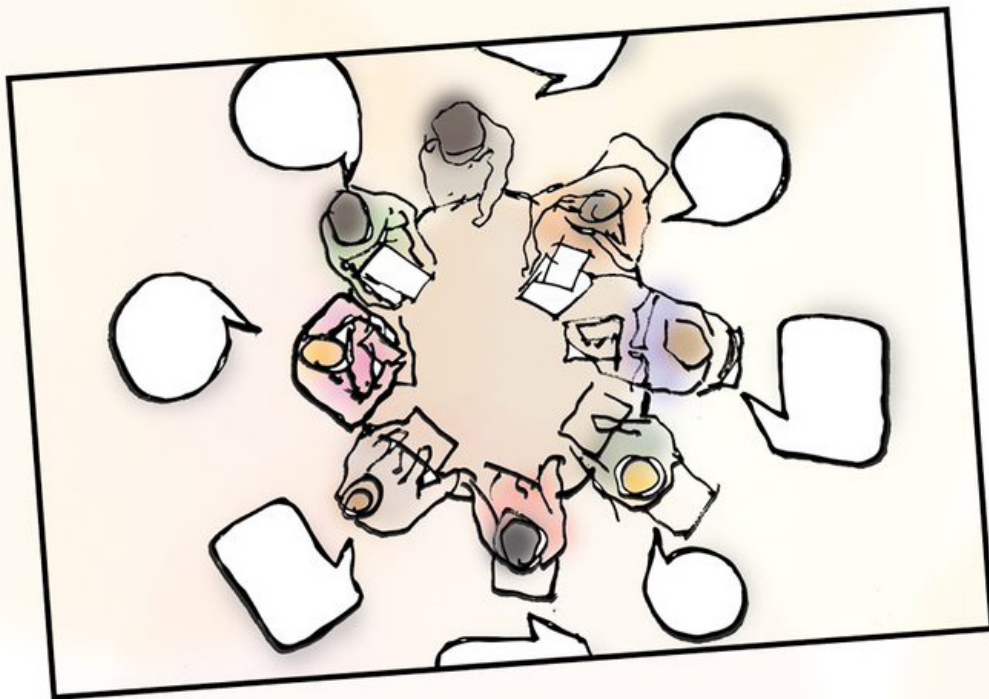
On December 2, the AIANY Civic Leadership Program's (CLP) Class of 2021 held their second Public Event. As we experience shifts in practice and pedagogy, many within the design community are reevaluating our agency as designers, questioning our approaches to work, and grappling with the social impact of this work.

Design awards and third party certifications and rating systems like LEED and SITES have become widespread measures of our work's successes, but what are we missing from these types of evaluations? And more importantly, who are we missing? and the re-evaluation of existing zoning and code policies to allow for larger basement conversion eligibility while preserving safety.

While designers approach projects with the best of intentions, it remains difficult to gauge social outcomes. There still often remains a disconnect between good intent and positive impact. On December 2, Anne Chen, Brooke Dexter, Nasra Nimaga, Philip Poon, and Gwendolyn Stegall the second public event for the 2021 AIANY Civic Leadership Program, titled "Intent to Impact: Approaches to Community-Based Design." The event featured designers and educators who put their principles into practice, creating design rooted in equity and bridging the gap between intent and impact.

Four guiding questions informed the event:

- How can design professionals practice community-based design in earnest and without causing harm?
- How can we honestly approach and leverage community engagement as an integral design tool?
- How can we shift these approaches to work from a small subset of the profession to making it integral to more modes of practice, "traditional" or otherwise?
- How can we assess the social impacts of our projects and how can we establish lasting feedback loops—from intent to impact to applying lessons learned?



George Aye from Greater Good Studio, Seb Choe from MIX design, Shalini Agrawal from Open Architecture Collaborative and Public Design for Equity, Michael Miller from OLIN Labs, and Peter Robinson from BlackSpace and Work Urban shared their approaches to community-based design and lessons they have learned through that work. Several common themes emerged:

Acknowledge Power Dynamics

George Aye illustrated ways that “human-centered-design” can be used in harmful ways, and encouraged the group to challenge asymmetrical power relationships between clients, users, and designers. He posed a series of questions that included “What is design’s relationship to power and privilege?” and “What right do I have to do this work?” Seb Choe recommended lifting up existing knowledge by studying existing research and reports. By doing our homework, designers can have more meaningful conversations with communities, building power and working alongside those who are most impacted, better closing the gap between technical expertise and lived experience.

Expand the Design Process

Both Michael Miller and Choe argued that project timelines need to be reevaluated to include an engagement phase before any design work is started. Choe underscored that inclusive design may cost more up front, but overall value is added by ensuring a successful project, and that designers have agency in putting pressure on clients to both build in an engagement phase and log feedback post completion. Using three public park projects as examples, Miller shared the role of post-occupancy surveys in measuring the successes and shortcomings of a project.¹

Slow Down

Design Shalini Agrawal started her presentation by urging the group to “slow down,” as centering equity within the design process requires taking a step back and taking the time to ask difficult questions. Agrawal asked the audience to challenge ingrained systems that perpetuate inequity, and suggested that designers need to “work at the speed of trust” in order to effectively make positive change in communities. By giving ourselves time to step back and reevaluate, we allow space to continuously learn and adapt. Peter Robinson shared interconnections between his work with BlackSpace, work done through Work Urban, and his approach to teaching. Robinson reiterated the importance of “moving at the speed of trust” as one of BlackSpace’s guiding principles. He shared how his approaches to pedagogy and design strive to establish new processes that center communities. Robinson introduces students to community engagement by embracing a co-design approach that recognizes the value and expertise of community partners

Learn, Unlearn, and Relearn

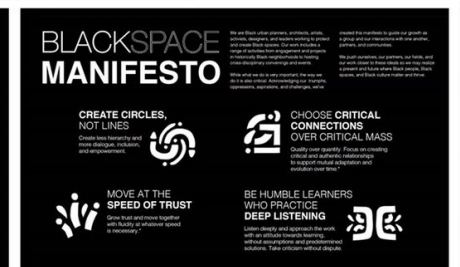
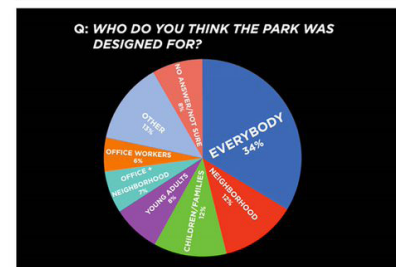
Agrawal asked the group to write their names using their non-dominant hand, illustrating that incorporating equity into practice requires letting go of perfection. We are educated to be experts, but we are not necessarily experts of the communities in which we work or in community engagement. Agrawal spoke about her “learning journey,” and her work with the design leadership program Pathways to Equity, stressing that unlearning that we are the sole experts is important to relearning how to effectively engage communities. Choe similarly implored designers to “abandon the perfection complex,” and accept pragmatic messiness in service of iterative sketches,

deeper conversations, and full-scale prototyping. Both Agrawal and Robinson challenged designers and educators to rethink pedagogy to ensure future generations of designers understand that establishing dialogue and building trust with communities is paramount to addressing inequities in the built environment.

Establish Precedent

Aye stressed the need for more examples of successful community-based design,

as the current dearth of precedents can make it difficult for clients and designers to recognize its value. Establishing more precedents of this nature will help shift design culture and change perceptions of what is considered common practice or feasible within the profession. Lastly, the speakers recognized that current assumptions and systems within the design profession must be challenged in order for them to be made more equitable. Successfully upending these systems is difficult work, but is essential to moving the profession forward.



Meetups

Though limited by social distancing and the pandemic the cohort managed to meet up in person a couple times during nice weather. They were able to meet up both at development sessions, happy hours and program conclusion.



