

September 20, 2016

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Executive Director

Hon. James Van Bramer, Chair  
Committee on Cultural Affairs, Libraries and International Intergroup Relations  
City Hall, Committee Room  
New York, NY 10007

Re: Public Design Commission

Dear Chair Van Bramer,

The American Institute of Architects New York represents over 5,200 architects and design professionals, and is committed to positively impacting the physical and social qualities of our city, while promoting policies beneficial to the welfare of our members.

Through their review of the design, construction, renovation, and restoration of our public buildings as well as the building and rehabilitation of our City's parks, the Public Design Commission has unquestionably helped shape New York's built environment –for the better.

The AIANY fully supports the Public Design Commission's role in city capital projects review and approval process, which ensures the quality and consistency for the design of the city's public realm. The Public Design Commission has continually exhibited an evenhanded approach when balancing the necessary values required of any design review process—including aesthetics, the quality of materials, functional needs, the preservation of cultural resources, environmental stewardship and the impact to our communities.

Furthermore, the Public Design Commission's range of interdisciplinary expertise and the scope of its' purview, which extends into the details of design, materials, maintenance and longevity, contextual appropriateness, is essential to achieving high-quality public spaces and facilities at a citywide level.

At AIANY, we believe high-quality design not only adds value, but helps to make our communities safer, healthier and more livable. The Public Design Commission has championed these values and recognizes the lasting impacts high-quality design can have on the vibrancy of an entire community -helping buildings work better for society and enabling society to perform better. This is what drives architects and design professionals in any project, large or small.

In regards to the proposed bill requiring annual reporting at the PDC, the AIANY supports legislation that provides greater transparency. An approachable, open Public Design Commission would be positioned better to promote and expanded upon the values mentioned.

In short, we continue to support the Public Design Commission and look forward to working collaboratively in the future.

*Submitted on behalf of AIANY.*



Benjamin Prosky  
Executive Director