Superblock Stewardship Advisory Committee Meeting
Meeting Summary

Meeting Date: Tuesday, December 2, 2014

Members in Attendance: Barbara Albrecht, Rachel Belsky, Lynne Brown, Jeff Goodwin, Anne Hearn, Michael Hengerer, Neal Herman, Angela Kamer, Alison Leary, Kenny Lee, Larry Maslon, Allen Mincer, Julia O’Connor, Michael Patullo, Rosemary Scanlon, Heather Skolnick, Eero Simoncelli

Members Not in Attendance: Sewin Chan

1. Subcommittee Meetings

Construction/Mitigation
Members of the Construction/Mitigation Subcommittee discussed the next steps for engaging STV—the firm recommended to perform the independent consultant work, pending the agreement of the entire Committee. Members agreed that an initial meeting with STV should be set for December 15, wherein the Subcommittee and the firm would review project scope and parameters. It was noted that particular mitigation categories might have a higher priority to residents than others, and members expressed that STV should be able to respond to these preferences. Senior Director Kenny Lee noted that he would request a preliminary project matrix from STV in advance of the kick-off meeting. Project Director Rachel Belsky conveyed a draft scope of work, drawn from the USPWG Final Report and the proposal submitted by STV, which indicated the timings of several meetings and the delivery of a final report in mid-February 2015.

Stewardship
Members of the Stewardship Subcommittee continued their discussion about the development of policies to govern the usage of open spaces on the Superblocks. The focus of the meeting was on the two plots of land located behind the LaGuardia retail strip. Members agreed it would be beneficial for the University to establish an application process whereby different community and student groups can request use of the spaces for a set amount of time. Executive Vice President Alison Leary noted a committee would need to be established to evaluate these applications. The Subcommittee agreed that their next meeting would include a discussion about the Sasaki Garden in Washington Square Village.
2. Architect Selection Update

Senior Vice President Lynne Brown and Kenny Lee indicated that the architect selection process is ongoing, with the goal of finalizing a selection prior to the winter break. Brown noted that, since the Committee last met, both finalist firms have provided additional presentations; some members of the Committee attended both sessions. Those members who attended the architect selection were encouraged to convey their thoughts and feedback to the Committee.

In addition, Lee noted, there are site visits scheduled to allow some members of the Committee to further examine the completed projects of one of the finalist firms. Following those site visits, Brown indicated that the decision team would meet with those members of the Committee who attended the latest round of interactions with the firm to gather feedback prior to a decision being reached.

Committee members emphasized the importance of evaluating the finalist firms on the basis of the guiding principles that were developed in the RFQ and RFP processes. Executive Vice President Alison Leary affirmed that those principles would be the basis for a decision. Brown, however, cautioned against the expectation of an entirely objective comparison, given the inherently subjective nature of evaluating and responding to architecture. Since both firms have met all the “quantitative” requirements we set out, it will now be a matter of assessing the “qualitative” differences. Lee agreed to develop a matrix comparing both firms on those quantitative measures and against the RFQ guiding principles.

3. Independent Consultant Selection

Construction/Mitigation Subcommittee Chair Barbara Albrecht provided an overview of the independent consultant interviews, and indicated that the Subcommittee was unanimously recommending that STV be selected. The full Committee endorsed that selection.

4. Superblock Project Progress Update

Communications Manager Heather Skolnick updated the Committee on various projects currently underway on the superblocks. Skolnick noted that the window replacements are progressing in Washington Square Village, with the top two floors in Building #4 having been completed. All measurements have been completed in Silver Towers as well, she indicated, and residents will be notified about scheduling replacement following approval from the Landmarks Preservation Commission. Members of the Committee reported receiving positive feedback about the window replacement project in Washington Square Village, including regarding the security measures added to the sidewalk bridging, which were implemented in response to feedback from residents.

Skolnick also reported that the Urban Canvas program—which provides for the limited aesthetic improvement of sidewalk bridging—has been discontinued by the City. Sidewalk
bridging, she said, will remain the current evergreen color. It was also noted that the sidewalk bridging would remain in place to allow for the completion of roof repair and Local Law 11 façade repair work, the timelines of both projects having been altered to allow for all of this work to be done while the sidewalk bridging is already up, rather than taking it down, putting it back up, etc. In that way, the bridging to be up for less overall time than if the projects were completed independently.

Finally, Skolnick relayed that the repairs to the North-South sidewalks in Washington Square Village are nearing completion. Members reported being pleased with these repairs, and also expressed positive feedback at the recent increased security measures, including improved lighting and Public Safety patrols.

5. **Draft Policies Governing Open Spaces on the Superblocks**

Chair Larry Maslon provided a brief overview of the draft framework for use and governance of the open spaces on the superblocks developed by the Stewardship Subcommittee. He indicated that the Subcommittee has worked to determine discrete uses for each space, with some to be used for “passive” means and others for more “active” purposes. A full presentation of the Subcommittee’s draft typology will be presented at the next meeting.