Superblock Stewardship Advisory Committee Meeting
Meeting Summary

Meeting Date: Monday April 13, 2015, 3:30-5:00PM

Meeting Location: President’s Conference Room, Bobst Library, 12th Floor

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

Members Not in Attendance: Jeff Goodwin, Rosemary Scanlon

Invited Guests:
Dom Brewer, Dean, Steinhardt School of Culture, Education, and Human Development
Allyson Green, Dean, Tisch School of the Arts
Jason Hollander, Senior Director, Communications, University Relations and Public Affairs
Ted Magder, Former Chair of the University Space Priorities Working Group and Associate Professor of Media, Culture, and Communication
Richard Maimon, KieranTimberlake Architects
Carl Krebs, Davis Brody & Bond Architects
Mayine Yu, Davis Brody & Bond Architects

1. Comments from the Chair

Committee Chair Larry Maslon welcomed the committee members and called the meeting to order.

Committee members were provided with summary points from the 3/30 roundtable panel discussion with outside experts on managing and programming open space in dense urban environments with multiple stakeholders. Mason asked members to use the list to think about how the panelists’ ideas could be used to improve life on the superblocks. Malson asked the committee members to be prepared to discuss ideas in smaller groups at the next meeting.

Lynne Brown, Vice President for University Relations & Public Affairs, with Jason Hollander, Senior Director Communications, presented the first cut of a video that would introduce the architects to the NYU community. Brown and Hollander said the video would live on the Coles Redevelopment site. The committee recommended subsequent videos be produced; highlighting the architecture firms’ past projects and developments as the architectural partnership makes progress on designing the new building.
2. Coles Redevelopment Update
Maslon welcomed the architect team back and the architects reintroduced themselves and their respective firms. The architect team presented on the programming process to date, having met with new building’s eventual end users, various stakeholders, and after holding a number of open houses, which were open to the University community. The team discussed the synergies and aligned visions identified through these meetings as well as the challenges of designing a “multi-use” building that has to accommodate many uses and users.

Their presentation covered the following areas:

- Faculty Housing
- Student Housing
- Dining
- Student Life/Study Spaces
- Classrooms
- Athletics
- Performing Arts
- Other Program Needs

Committee members commented on a variety of points throughout the presentation. There was a discussion about the difference between an analysis of the volumetric and square footage of the new building. The architects explained that while the overall square footage of the new building will fall below those recommended by the University Space Priorities Working Group (“USPWG”), the buildings’ “volumetric” requirements -- because of the need for multi-story theaters and basketball courts -- are putting pressure on the space. The architects also explained that the USPWG recommendations failed to allocate space in the new building for operational spaces (e.g. media control rooms, space for boilers, garbage collection; loading docks, elevator maintenance), that will be needed for the building to operate.

The architects discussed the potential for locating uses including dining space, communal space, and student study space, higher in the building so they can be closer to student housing; freeing up space in the lower portions of the building for classrooms, athletics, and performing arts. The Committee also heard about the variety of dining options ranging from traditional dining to “grab and go” models. There was a recommendation that a traditional dining space could be used for other uses during non-meal times.

The discussion shifted to the new classroom spaces and what the classroom of the future might encompass. The Committee recommended that the classrooms be designed in a way so the spaces can be easily updated as technology and teaching methodologies evolve.
Dean Brewer and Dean Green from Steinhardt and Tisch respectively discussed the needs of their departments as they have changed since the recommendations of the USPWG were developed. Dean Green said Tisch needs large acting studios and workshops located near the theaters they will be supporting. The number and types of performance space are undergoing some revisions based on the user’s preferences and may vary from the USPWG recommendations. The Deans agreed that a theater being designed for acting will require different features than one designed for musical performances. Dean Brewer added that Steinhardt’s greatest need is academic space. The Deans explained that they have been working with the architects and faculty from their respective departments through the programming process to identify the design details required to create theater and academic spaces that work for their needs.

The architects will come back to the Committee when they are further along in the programming and space allocation process to report on the potential solutions for how different user needs can be met and compromises considered based on space limits and funding.