Superblock Stewardship Advisory Committee Meeting
Meeting Summary

Meeting date: Thursday September 24th, 2015 12:30 – 2:00

Meeting location: Bobst 1218, Presidents Conference Room

Members in attendance: Barbara Albrecht, Heather Banoub, Rachel Belsky, Lynne Brown, Jeff Goodwin, Anne Hearn, Michael Hengerer, Neal Herman, Angela Kamer, Alison Leary, Kenny Lee, Larry Maslon, Allen Mincer, Arvind Rajagopal, Rosemary Scanlon, Eero Simoncelli

Guests: Chris Bledsoe

Members not in attendance: Erica Silverman, Ezra Sacks

1. Comments from the Chair

Committee Chair Larry Maslon welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the fall 2015 semester. Malson outlined his vision for the new academic year, including Coles redevelopment project updates, but focusing on a return to the stewardship component of Committee’s mission. Focus will be on four areas: Open Spaces, Governance, Programs and Enforcement. Meetings for the semester will be scheduled every two weeks for 90 minutes with occasional 2-hour meetings with prior notice.

The Committee discussed visible aspects of the superblocks. Comments and questions included: the purpose of the temporary fencing around the Bust of Sylvette in the Silver Towers plaza; why the dog run construction signage reads “Commercial” and not “Residential”; the need for mirrors to aid drivers leaving the Silver Towers parking garage onto West Houston Street; the possibility of NYU working with the NYC Parks Department to enhance the Mercer Playground; and an update on when the window project storage would be removed from behind the LaGuardia Place retail strip. Executive Vice President for Operations, Alison Leary and Kenny Lee from the Coles Project team answered many of the Committee’s questions and said they would report back to address the remaining questions.

2. Update on Coles Replacement Options: Chris Bledsoe

Malson introduced Chris Bledsoe, Director of Athletics, who was on hand to answer questions regarding the interim athletics and fitness plan for the time when the new athletics facility is being constructed. Bledsoe referenced the presentations he gave about the interim plan, which many Committee members had seen at previous meetings, and the communication distributed to faculty, students, alumni and community members about the plan. It was reiterated that Coles will not close until the NYU Fitness Network is in operation – including the new fitness facility at 404 Lafayette Street.
Bledsoe reported that the response to the communication has been largely positive, with most inquiries pertaining to details about how to buy memberships. A communication about purchasing memberships is expected to be distributed to the community later in the fall semester. Areas of concern continue to be reduced access to swimming, and loss of courts for racquet sports.

Malson encouraged Committee members to ask questions to ensure they understand the interim plan since they are ambassadors of the project and should seek to convey accurate information to their various constituent groups. Malson also encouraged the Committee to bring the concerns of their constituencies to future meetings.

It was suggested that a shuttle service be provided from Silver Towers to the Palladium. Leary recommended that modifying existing NYU Shuttle routes or promoting the existing routes may provide service from the superblocks to Palladium.

3. **Update on Coles Project**
   Lynne Brown, Senior Vice President for University Relations & Public Affairs, and Lee, provided an update on the Coles project. Sub-terrain exploratory work was completed in August. This work confirmed the bedrock location, which aligned with the engineer’s previous estimates. The architects are working on schematic designs, which take the number of square feet allotted to each usage area and begin to test localities in order to determine where spaces should be located in relation to each other. The committee will review these designs with the architects, near the end of the calendar year.

   Malson recommended that Town Hall style meetings be held to engage the community and acquire feedback on design features.

4. **Return to Stewardship**
   Malson started the discussion on refocusing the Committee on its charge to enhance life on the superblocks in the areas of representation and input, open spaces, programming and enforcement. Malson recommended the Committee divide into four subcommittees to focus on each area. The subcommittees are charged with generating policy recommendations for the University to develop and return to the Committee with an implementation strategy to react to. The subcommittees were advised to make general recommendations so the University can think through ways to implement the Committees’ recommendations and with professionals with expertise in the areas which the Committee is trying to enhance.

   It was reiterated that the subcommittees should think about policy recommendations that view the superblocks are one unit. The Committee also agreed that it would be beneficial in some stewardship areas, like open space, for the University to engage professional expertise (e.g. urban planners, urban landscapers).
The subcommittees were tasked with drafting recommendations, which will be reviewed and discussed in plenary so the Committee at large can vote on the final recommendations that will be presented to the University. Malson encouraged the subcommittees to think about how recommendations will be perceived by the superblock community. He also asked the subcommittees to consider ways the Committee can engage the superblock community and make them part of the process.

Committee members were asked to indicate their subcommittee preferences and provide their availability to establish a regular semester meeting schedule.