1. Welcome and Comments from the Chair

Chair Larry Maslon welcomed the Committee and called the meeting to order. Maslon welcomed the representatives from the 181 Mercer Street architectural team and thanked them for presenting to the Committee.

2. 181 Mercer Street Presentation

**Programming**

Richard Maimon from Kieran Timberlake started the presentation by letting the Committee know that there have been no major changes to the exterior building design since the roll out in December. The architects noted that the number of student residential colleges has changed from three to two and will be oriented horizontally across the student housing towers. This change was based on the optimal size
for these communities to be successfully formed. Onwughalu asked how the residential colleges would be accessed. Maimon said there would be a shared lobby for the two colleges and the three towers would be connected across near the top of the towers. Maimon also shared that the number of faculty apartments is still in flux. Chiarelli said a committee has been created to reach out to the schools and work through the faculty housing details. Brown responded to a question confirming that at least a portion of the units will go to Faculty Housing’s general pool of apartments.

_Landscape Design_
Maimon shared some early landscape design concepts developed Michael Van Valkenburg Associates (MVVA), the landscape architect for the project. Beginning with the Greene Street Walk, Maimon shared that the team is working to create a place that people want to occupy and gather in small groups via seating that is both comfortable and interesting to look at. The design seeks to make pedestrians outside the building feel connected to what is happening within the building. This may be accomplished with seating and a paving design that feels like it continues inside the building into the atrium.

Beyond continuing the NYC street trees around the perimeter of the building, the team plans to design landscaping on the Greene Street Walk and in the Toddler Playground that feel very lush throughout the seasons. A Committee member asked how the architects would ensure the space is successful year round. Maimon said that in addition to seasonal plants that would have color and life even in the colder months, the team is working on lighting that is both safe and attractive. The operational maintenance of the space, including snow removal, is another important part of making the space successful year round.

A Committee member questioned the width of the Greene Street Walk. Maimon said the Walk is designed to be 30 feet wide. Brown reminded the Committee that the 181 Mercer Street building is shifted east in comparison to the Coles building. This was prescribed by the City during the approvals process because the City wanted Mercer Street to be activated by pushing the building closer to the street and the Greene Street Walk to become a pedestrian Walk from Soho to Washington Square Park.

Maimon shared some early design concepts for the Toddler Playarea. The Committee asked questions regarding the operations of the space, including if it will be accessed with a key fob or open to the public during certain hours. Brown recommended that once the design is further along that a subcommittee be created to advise on these types of issues for the play areas on the superblocks. She also noted that UPNS and other stakeholders should be part of these conversations.

6th Floor
Krebs from Davis Brody Bond continued the presentation and shared some initial design ideas for the 6th floor terrace area outside the student dining area. He reminded the Committee that there are a number of areas that will be landscaped around the building that will be designed for viewing, but this is one area that will be accessible (another accessible terrace is expected in faculty housing). Krebs shared that the terrace is designed as a series of intimate spaces where small groups can sit or meander among the different seating areas. The architects are working on circulation routes and anticipate that there will be some capacity for sloping variety on the terrace, which would allow for some larger landscaping areas.

The Committee asked about the occupancy limit, which Krebs confirmed is two-hundred, and other operational questions. Brown agreed that there will be operational decisions to make further along the line and that the Committee should share their feelings since many stakeholders would be providing input. One member expressed a concern about having events that are very loud late at night since both Silver Towers residents and other residential buildings are located both east and west of the terrace.
Public Atrium and Commons
Krebs concluded with early design concepts for the public atrium and the Commons. He shared that the architects are working to design the public atrium as a space that works with the character of the space as it will change from weekdays to weekends. The team has been working on the circulation within the building to and from all the different entrances around the atrium. Krebs also showed ideas for the Commons as a flexible space that could be augmented with movable furniture based on the time of year or to accommodate events. He reminded the Committee that the entire building has small lounges and areas for students to meet or study throughout the building.

3. Student Community Agriculture Club Redesign Presentation

Maslon thanked Maimon and Krebs for their presentation and welcomed the Community Agriculture Club to present their proposed garden redesign. The garden is located south of 1WSV and east of the LaGuardia Place retail spaces within the Washington Square Village courtyard area. The students worked with George Reis from NYU Landscaping to design an enhanced space for the students to garden directly into the ground and have a seating area for the education portion of the mission. The Committee asked the students about how they plan to ensure the space is well maintained throughout the calendar year, particularly when students are away over the summer and winter breaks and during the colder months when less planting is taking place. The students shared copies of their guidelines for maintaining the space, which were developed with their NYU Student Affairs advisor, Reis from NYU Landscaping, and NYU Community Engagement. These guidelines also include a protocol for continuity as the club’s leadership transitions between academic years.

The students responded to questions about participation, they have 300 students subscribed as members, and anywhere from 60-30 students actively gardening each semester. They also answered funding questions, they have been given $3,500 contingency funding to redesign the space and the club gets funding each year to operate and maintain the space.

When asked if they would be open to programming and working with Faculty Housing on engaging residents that live around the garden, the students said they would be interested in doing so and they are already working on partnerships with local schools to bring students into the space to garden. A Committee member asked if the students would be open to Washington Square Village residents helping to maintain the space particularly over the summer when the students are not always around. The students thought this was a great idea.

A concern was raised regarding the student’s plans for evening events in the space. The students said evening activities may include an occasional dusk meeting and would not be very large or noisy. Another faculty member thought it would be better for the students to forgo the seating area and maximize their planting area. Maslon asked Banoub to circulate the student’s presentation and their maintenance guidelines and asked the Committee to send comments by the end of Friday, April 7.