Superblock Stewardship Advisory Committee
Meeting Summary

Meeting Date: Thursday, September 29, 2016, 12:00pm – 1:30pm

Meeting Location: Kimmel Center (60 Washington Square South), Room 909

Members in attendance: Anne Hearn, Neal Herman, Angela Kamer, Larry Maslon, Joseph Onwughalu, Ezra Sacks, Erica Silverman, Eero Simoncelli

Members Not in Attendance: Barbara Albrecht, Lynne Brown, Allen Mincer, Arvind Rajagopal, Robert Shapley

Representatives: Arlene Peralta, Senior Director, Community Engagement (ex-officio)
Rachel Belsky, Project Director, University Relations (ex-officio)
Heather Banoub, Assistant Director of Communications, Community Engagement (ex-officio)

Invited Guests: John Beckman, Vice President for Public Affairs
Renee Burillo, Project Manager, Construction Management
Karen Gulino, Associate Vice President, Public Safety
Erin Lynch, Assistant Vice President, Faculty Housing
Marlon Lynch, Vice President, Global Campus Safety

1. Welcome and Comments from the Chair
Chair Larry Maslon welcomed the Committee and invited guests and called the first meeting of the fall 2016 semester to order. Maslon thanked the Committee for attending some meetings over the summer and thanked Banoub for helping to coordinate the fall schedule. Maslon also welcomed the new undergraduate student representative on the Committee, Joey Onwughalu, and thanked Shawn Thibault, the outgoing undergraduate student representative.

2. Superblock Enhancements Status Update
Banoub reported that Mark Gordon, the project manager for the superblock open space enhancements, announced that he would be leaving the University over the summer. Linda Chiarelli, Vice President of Capital Projects and Facilities asked Kenny Lee and Renee Burillo to take his place and continue the work Gordon has previously presented to the Committee. Gordon briefed Lee and Burillo before his departure and they are working to move the enhancement projects forward during the fall semester. Banoub shared the progress that took place over the summer and noted that projects that did not move forward, have been prioritized for completion by Construction Management.

Work completed to date and in the planning stages includes:
- Lawn renovations behind Bareburger took place over the summer and annual lawn work around WSV and ST is expected to continue during the months of September and October.
• Juniper bush replacement in Sasaki Garden, ground cover and hydrangea planting along NW perimeter of 3WSV, and the location of sidewalk planters along the SW perimeter of 1WSV.
• Asphalt was removed and mulch laid between the trees along WSV driveways. These areas are being prepared as dog-friendly areas on the north block. Research for dog-friendly ground cover for these areas is underway.
• NYU Public Safety has started installing the wiring to place upgraded emergency call boxes around the campus, including 8 around the superblocks. Boxes will soon be installed near the open space on LaGuardia Place, on the north side of Houston Street between the dog run and parking garage, on West 3rd between LaGuardia and Mercer, and on either side of the WSV parking garage. Installations around campus are expected to continue throughout the academic year.
• The NYU Open House Space renovation is nearing completion. This space, located on the ground level of 2 Washington Square Village (at the corner of W 3rd and Mercer Streets), will eventually hold renderings for 181 Mercer Street and can also be used as a meeting space.
• Planning and design is underway for the fabrication and installation of new fences around the Key Park and the lawn behind Bareburger. This installation is expected to be complete by the close of the fall semester.
• The team is also planning to begin the processes for creating signage around the site to direct open space usage protocols around the superblocks.

Maslon asked the Committee to look at the SSAC’s fall superblock open space enhancement report to see if there were any final recommendations for edits before the report is distributed to Faculty Housing residents via email. Hard copies and a poster board sized version will also be available in the WSV and ST lobbies.

Maslon also let the Committee know that after walking through the superblocks with Gordon (before his departure), with Committee member Sacks, and with Brown, he noted a number of things. One is the necessity of creating dog friendly areas on the north block for WSV residents. Dog friendly areas are now being established in the tree beds along the north-south WSV driveways. Maslon also noticed the condition of the lawn behind Bareburger was in need of some restoration. This included leveling uneven terrain and covering a drain, both of which would make it difficult for children to play. Maslon asked Burillo for an update on the fence installation around the Bareburger lawn. Burillo shared that the fence will be three-feet high on all but the western side, which will be six-feet high and include a screening feature to block the rear of the retail spaces.

Maslon asked for an update on the status of lawn work around Silver Towers. Banoub shared that the temporary fence surrounding the Silver Towers traffic island was scheduled to be removed the following week, and that NYU Landscaping would reseed the Oak Grove next. The Committee discussed concerns about residents using the Oak Grove as a short cut to Bleecker Street now that the Greene Street path is inaccessible due to the 181 Mercer Street construction fence. The issue of dog owners bringing their pets to the Oak Grove was also discussed. The Committee expressed the need for a plan during the time when the construction fence is installed. Sacks recommended having a guard stationed at the Oak Grove during the daylight hours to enforce this policy for a time, until residents acclimate to the new policy. Other recommendations included signage and a temporary path through the Oak Grove. Belsky reminded the Committee that the Oak Grove is landmarked as part of the Silver Towers complex and since the Landmark Preservation Commission just had the University remove the diagonal path since it was not part of the original landmarked design, she did not think Landmarks would support a temporary
path. Belsky and Peralta said the team would work with Brown to think about a plan that can be put in place when the Oak Grove is being reseeded.

Maslon asked for an update on the WSV and ST lobby screens. Beckman shared that the plan was to have this project completed over the summer, but it became more complicated than the team had originally expected. Beckman said the team was currently working through finding a system that will serve the purpose the Committee recommended. He explained that many options are “too smart” and others have software interface complications that did not have the means for displaying the types of messages and images that would be typical in the lobbies. The Committee recommended the team look at the monitors in the Tisch building on Broadway as another model that can be used. One Committee member suggested using the columns in the middle of the lobbies since they already have outlets and another recommended the team look into photo frames where the images displayed can be uploaded onto a website. Maslon recommended that a service like one used in the 10 Astor Place elevators not be used in the residential lobbies as many residents’ elevators rides are too short to actually read the messages.

One Committee member asked if the University has plans to patch and repair parts of the Washington Square Village driveways. Banoub and Burillo said they would look into the condition of the driveways during their upcoming superblock walk through.

3. Updates on Mercer Street Construction

Banoub provided an update on the progress of work on the 181 Mercer Street site. Work commenced in the late summer with the installation of the construction fence and interior demolition. Installation of the construction fence is complete and the project site is now enclosed. Interior demolition continues within the Coles building and is scheduled to continue through October. The removal of the exterior brick façade and abatement commenced in September and will also continue through October. One Committee member asked why the asbestos container was located near the Silver Towers driveway on Bleecker Street and not closer to the site. Banoub confirmed that the container would be moved east on Bleecker Street, closest to the corner of Mercer Street within the week. Banoub noted that structural demolition of the building to grade is expected to follow brick removal and abatement, beginning in late October/early November. This work is expected to continue through February. A question was posed about pest mitigation around the site. Belsky let the Committee know that rat bait stations have been installed around the 181 Mercer site, within the Coles building, and within the Silver Towers garage.

Maslon let the Committee know that Linda Chiarelli would provide an update on programming and design at the next meeting. A Committee member asked if the architects would also attend the next meeting. Maslon said the Committee should expect the architects to return with an updated presentation before the end of the semester.

4. Updates on Personnel

Maslon welcomed Marlon Lynch, the new Vice President for Global Campus Safety and thanked him for attending the meeting. Lynch shared that he was very familiar with the types of issues being discussed by the Committee and said he did not think public safety officers should be responsible for approaching pet owners who bring their dogs to lawns. Maslon agreed that without clear policies, alternative locations for dog owners to bring their dogs and signage to reinforce both the policies and locations, public safety will not be able to enforce these quality of life policies effectively. Lynch agreed that he would not want to put public safety officers in this role without options for redirecting pet owners.
Erin Lynch provided an update on the new faculty housing position. She shared that not many candidates applied for the position, but was happy to say that an offer was extended and accepted by a candidate who is mature, well-spoken, has ten years combined experience at NYU, including experience working with faculty, and who currently works in the arts. Lynch shared that HR is performing the customary background checks on the candidate and if all goes well the candidate will begin attending these meetings and begin working on ideas for programming. Maslon asked if there was a way the Committee could have been involved in the process. Lynch noted that Banoub was on the selection panel and the Committee’s guidelines were used to help select qualified candidates. One Committee member asked if the position would be located on WSV. Lynch confirmed the candidate would sit in the suite where Cushman & Wakefield (NYU’s lease administrator) is located on the ground level of 2WSV.

5. Updates on Borough President’s Construction Committee and CB2 Report
Peralta let the Committee know that the 181 Mercer Street team attended a Community Board #2, Arts and Institutions Committee meeting the previous night (Wednesday, September 28, 2016) to provide an update on the project. The report included an update on the construction and mitigation measures taking place on the project site. Peralta reported that 30-35 people attended, which is fewer than usual, and it was a good meeting. Peralta also gave an update on the Borough President’s Construction Committee, which was established per the Restrictive Declaration. The committee is a vehicle to address construction concerns and a forum for the University to provide construction updates, address concerns, and answer questions. Members are appointed by the Borough President and include Anne Hearn representing the WSV; there is also a representative from ST. The Borough President has hosted two meetings to date.

Maslon asked for an update on the Open Space Oversight Organization (OSOO). Belsky reported that the Organization has started their work monitoring the University’s maintenance of the public open spaces on Bleecker Street and LaGuardia Place. The Organization sets their own meetings schedules and in June 2017, approximately one year after the open spaces opened, the University will submit a report to the OSOO showing the maintenance performed. After the OSOO reviews and comments on the report it will be sent to the NYC Department of City Planning.

A Committee member asked about progress in the creation of a Washington Square Village Affiliate Tenant’s Association. Maslon shared that Banoub has offered the group space to meet and it is now up to them to organize.

6. Landmark Preservation Commission Update
Belsky reported that the applications for the urban farm and new path along the north side of Silver Towers II have been submitted to the LPC. The LPC staff is reviewing the applications and the University expects comments on the applications. After a Community Board review a hearing is expected to be set by the LPC in the fall or early next year.

Maslon thanked Belsky for the update and reminded the Committee that the next meeting would include an update on the final programming in 181 Mercer. He also reminded the Committee of their responsibility to share the information discussed at meetings with their constituencies.