1. Welcome and Comments from the Chair
Chair Larry Maslon welcomed Committee members back after the winter break and thanked them for all their work in 2016. Maslon said today’s meeting would be used to look back at what the Committee has accomplished and look forward to what they have left to do. Maslon said with the 181 Mercer Street programming nearing completion and design development underway the Committee’s focus will be on quality of life on the blocks. Brown agreed and shared that Linda Chiarelli and the 181 Mercer Street team are scheduled to continue working on design development through June. With a fixed design in hand, Chiarelli will price out the building to bring it in line with the budget. In terms of communications, Brown thought the University should wait until the building design is budgeted before presenting the final building design. Brown has asked Chiarelli to return to the Committee with the architects for the April meeting (scheduled for Monday, April 3, 2017) to provide updates on their progress developing the interior circulation of the building, especially with the Commons, as well as their ideas for the Greene Street Walk and details about the exterior façade. Brown anticipates a 181 Mercer Street website update with some new renderings before the end of the semester, with another update to the community on final design in the fall.

2. 181 Mercer Street

Reaction to Roll Out and Programming Discussion
Maslon asked Brown to share feedback and reactions to the 181 Mercer Street Open House with the architects that took place in December 2016. Brown said most people fell into one of two categories, those who were reacting to the building as a whole, and those who wanted to understand in more detail the impact of the building on their unique living situation. The media reaction to the building was
neutral to good and the external community has been reacting more to the construction and mitigation measures taking place rather than opining on the building itself.

Silverman asked if a meeting could be set up with the architects and student leaders in the University Committee on Student Life to discuss ideas for the Residential Colleges including the possibility of gender neutral dorms. Brown said she would work with Chiarelli to coordinate a meeting with the architects for student feedback and ideas.

Shapley asked what will happen if the final design of the building surpasses the budget allotted for the building. Brown confirmed that Chiarelli and her team have budget touchpoints with the construction management team and architects throughout the design process. If the design comes in over budget, value-engineering will take place, which involves changing aspects of the design to bring costs down. Brown confirmed that with the University’s attention to affordability concerns, the goal is to hold to the budget and Chiarelli has a successful track-record of constructing buildings on-budget and on-time. Mincer shared that very often value engineering results in turning good spaces into spaces that are just okay. He hopes that during the value engineering process there is oversight to ensure spaces do not become inefficient and ineffective for the users’ needs.

Sacks asked how the rents in the new 181 Mercer Street Faculty Housing will compare to those in Washington Square Village and Silver Towers. Brown said those conversations, as well as conversations regarding the number of apartments, apartment size, and ownership of apartments, are now underway with the Faculty Housing Committee. Mincer shared that he understood a portion of the apartments will be owned by individual schools and those schools have an existing system where they set their own rents. Brown said that while the details of Faculty Housing are being worked out, her understanding was that at least a portion of the apartments will go to Faculty Housing’s general pool of apartments and will meet needs that cannot be met due to compression in Washington Square Village and Silver Towers. There was a discussion about the size of apartments in the 181 Mercer Street Faculty Housing tower. Brown said there will be a variety of 2-, 3-, and 4-bedroom apartments and Gulino confirmed that Faculty Housing is always in need of 2- and 3-bedroom apartments.

**Construction Update**
Banoub shared that structural demolition to grade was completed in January and below grade demolition and excavation are expected to begin in February and are scheduled to continue for 7-months (through September 2017), site and weather conditions permitting. Below grade demolition is scheduled to continue 1-2 months and excavation, which includes the removal of the existing foundation, rock, and soil, will take place throughout the entire 7-month phase. Sacks asked when the Con Edison cable relocation work was scheduled to begin. Banoub confirmed that the 181 Mercer Street team was waiting for Con Edison to share their final plans, but work was expected to begin in February as part of the excavation work.

**Open Space Enhancement Update**
Maslon announced that this evening (Thursday, February 2, 2017) there would be a Community Board meeting to discuss traffic calming measures recommended for West 3rd Street and Bleecker Street at the Our Lady of Pompeii church.

**Urban Farm and North Path Update**
Belsky let the Committee know that the Urban Farm and North Path applications would be presented at a public hearing at a Community Board meeting on Thursday, February 9. Belsky and Peralta asked for
the Committee’s support either through written testimony or attendance at the meeting. They also requested that the Silver Towers Tenants Association spread the word and encourage attendance, as the Community Board’s recommendation to the Commission, though advisory, could have an impact on LPC’s review of the application. While Belsky and Peralta will make the case for the applications, if residents are there to support the farm and path as resident and constituent issues, rather than institutional requests, the applications will have a better chance of being approved. A Committee member recommended Faculty Housing send the Silver Towers residents an email letting them know about the meeting and Donnelly agreed to have that communication distributed.

5. Faculty Housing Programming Update

Survey Feedback

Donnelly shared the Faculty Housing open space survey results with the Committee (the survey results were also distributed to the Committee via email for review in advance of the meeting). 103 submissions were received from Silver Towers residents (29.9% of population) and 241 from Washington Square Village residents (70.1% of population). Donnelly noted major take-aways which included feedback on the need to define what passive activities entail. The Committee discussed identifying types of activities that are and are not permitted in the various open spaces on the superblocks and denoting those activities on signage. The Committee discussed the designation of the Silver Towers traffic island where the Bust of Sylvette is located, since there were a number of comments in the survey that said this space should not be a place for passive activity, but should continue being a place where children can play. Brown let the Committee know that her office had done some research on the Bust of Sylvette, which lends to the importance of establishing rules that will preserve the physical integrity of the statute, since it was a major feature of the Silver Towers Landmark process. One Committee member recommended designating the space as active, but prohibiting ball playing, while another advocated for having the open space remain passive as there is no other space on the south block for quiet activity. The Committee agreed that no playing ball off the bust was the solution since one of the group’s guiding premises was looking at the superblocks as a whole and providing space for all activities across the blocks, but not allowing every activity (like ball playing) at every site.

Community Lawn Protocol

Donnelly presented some ideas on rules and signage for the lawn behind Bareburger, which the Committee discussed naming “The Lawn.” Faculty Housing plans to have the space open from dawn to dusk, similar to the hours of Sasaki Garden. The facilities team will lock and unlock the gates daily. Donnelly shared that Faculty Housing planned to charge residents a modest $15/hour reservation/equipment usage fee to help defray the cost of staffing and maintaining the space. This is a common practice at other park and housing sites, The Committee agreed that this was a reasonable fee.

The discussion about these rules included the importance of specifying that “The Lawn” is an amenity intended for resident use only and that there should be a system where those who reserve the space for an event can obtain assistance if neighbors refuse to abide by the reservation calendar. A Committee member recommended that a key fob system be installed, similar to Key Park, and residents who want to use the lawn would apply for a key fob. Donnelly said she would look into whether this type of system would be an option for “The Lawn.”

Upcoming Event Schedule

Donnelly shared ideas for a calendar of upcoming Faculty Housing events. The Committee responded positively to the event ideas and one Committee member recommended an events committee be created, which Donnelly agreed was a great idea. Maslon asked if there was an update on the design for
screening the fence along the west side of “The Lawn.” Belsky shared that George was working on planting ideas and Maslon recommended the team look into non-plant options to reduce the amount of required maintenance. The Committee recommended an April grand-opening of the space with one of Donnelly’s events and that temporary signage be placed on “The Lawn” gates to advise residents that the space is not yet open for usage. But stay tuned for April.