Superblock Stewardship Advisory Committee
Meeting Summary

Meeting Date: Monday, May 1, 2017, 2:30pm – 4:00pm

Meeting Location: Kimmel Center Room 406, 60 Washington Square South, 4th Floor

Members in attendance: Barbara Albrecht, Juan Bello, Anne Hearn, Neal Herman, Larry Maslon, Allen Mincer, Joseph Onwughalu, Ezra Sacks, Robert Shapley, Erica Silverman

Members Not in Attendance: Clare Aronow, Angela Kamer, Eero Simoncelli

NYU Representatives: Lynne Brown, Senior VP, University Relations & Public Affairs (ex-officio)
Erin Lynch, Assistant VP, Faculty Housing
Arlene Peralta, Senior Director, Community Engagement (ex-officio)
Rachel Belsky, Project Director, University Relations (ex-officio)
Mark Courtney, NYU Visual Identity Director
Heather Banoub, Assistant Director of Communications, Community Engagement (ex-officio)
Erin Donnelly, Community Liaison, Faculty Housing (ex-officio)

Invited Guests: Juan Calero, NYU Student Senators Council, Chair Elect
Brian Brindisi, Gensler
Sophie Reid, Gensler
Kelly Combs, Gensler
Rusty Trump, Gensler

1. Welcome and Comments from the Chair
Chair Larry Maslon welcomed the Committee and called the meeting to order. Maslon applauded the Committee for the many accomplishments achieved throughout the 2016-2017 academic year and let the Committee know that their role in the coming academic year would shift to stewardship and maintenance of the spaces enhanced across the superblocks. Maslon thanked Brown and her team for their hard work and Brown thanked the Committee for the guidance they have provided to the University. Maslon and Brown invited the Committee to join them for an Open House event for WSV and ST residents on Tuesday, June 6, 2017, in the 181 Mercer Street Open House Space in 2WSV.

2. Ratification of Open Space Policies
Donnelly directed the Committee to two documents that will be used to publicize and support the programming efforts in “The Backyard” space (see below). These documents included policies for both using the space and making reservations to hold private events in the space. The Committee reviewed and discussed the documents, and accepted the policies. The Office of Faculty Housing (OFH) will communicate the official opening of “The Backyard,” including the policies, via an emailed newsletter and on the lobby screens. The policies will also be posted near the entrance of “The Backyard.” Donnelly
also reported that the first two OFH events were very successful and invited Committee members to the upcoming “Sasaki Garden Spring Awakening” event on Saturday, May 6, 2017.

3. Open Space Updates
Belsky reported that new gates for the Sasaki Garden have been ordered and installation is expected to take place in June. The Garden gates will continue being opened at dawn and closed at dusk. Mesh screening for “The Backyard” fence has also been ordered and is scheduled for installation in early May. Sidewalk bridging removal around 1 and 2 Washington Square Village has commenced. George Reis is scheduled to clean and install new plants in the planting beds along West 3rd Street as the bridging removal progresses. The fencing along West 3rd Street is also scheduled to be removed to match Bleecker Street along 3 and 4 Washington Square Village. Brown added that Reis was honored in late April by the group New Yorkers for Parks for all his great work around NYU and for his partnership with the organizations Daffodil Project. Redesign work in the student agriculture club has progressed well and work in the urban farm is expected to commence in the coming weeks.

4. Signage Presentation and Discussion with Gensler
Maslon welcomed the team from Gensler who will be working on a design for a comprehensive signage and wayfinding plan for the superblocks this summer. The Gensler team used their time with the Committee to “workshop” ideas about how best to use the open space locations around Washington Square Village and Silver Towers. Aspects discussed included materiality, “tone of voice”, and typography. They also asked the Committee to react to having a similar design aesthetic for both superblocks, or signage that is unique for both blocks; use of NYU branding; and, scaling the wayfinding to a macro, city-wide level, including streets beyond the superblocks, or micro-level that would be more focused on navigating within WSV and ST. The group discussed using signage and degrees of branding as a way to build community in anticipation for the opening of 181 Mercer Street and also as a way to designate locations around the superblocks as open to neighbors who live around the University. Gensler recorded the Committee member’s feedback and thanked the group for providing input that would guide their design process. They will report back in the fall.

5. Committee Housekeeping
Brown reported that the Department of Transportation (DOT) has agreed to study the need for traffic calming measures on West 3rd Street and Bleecker Street between Mercer Street and LaGuardia Place following a Community Board 2 resolution. The timing of the study is unclear although the University is pressing for as soon as possible given the evident safety hazards.

Brown reminded the Committee that the School Construction Authority (SCA) has until December 2018 to decide if they would like to use the current location of Morton Williams as a K-8 school. The SCA has not indicated to the University if they intend to use this space and it has not been included in their capital plan to date. If SCA does not use the space, the University can use the space for academics, once the 181 Mercer Street building is substantially enclosed.