

Chapter Protests To Nixon On Housing Moratorium

The following telegram was sent to President Nixon by the Executive Committee on February 10:

"The Profession of Architecture is dedicated to providing the best possible housing and environment for all people. As members of this profession, we are outraged by your acts which directly oppose this commitment.

"As Americans, we are shamed by the destruction of the people, homes, and environment of Southeast Asia, and we deplore the suspension of Federal subsidy of new housing construction for the low and middle income people of our own country.

"We condemn these acts which increase devastation abroad, and diminish productivity at home."

Institute Protests Housing Moratorium

The Institute January 12 expressed "grave concern" over the decision of the Nixon Administration to put a temporary hold on subsidies for new housing construction and development.

"We believe this action . . . can prove catastrophic in terms of both human need and economic stability," President S. Scott Ferebee Jr., FAIA, said in a letter to President Nixon.

Ferebee offered the assistance of the Institute in developing a "meaningful and innovative national housing policy." Meanwhile, he urged the President to reconsider the decision on the moratorium.

"It will take 18 months to restore needed levels of housing production after the freeze," Ferebee said. The Institute recognizes the needs to keep down federal spending and to reevaluate housing programs. However, Ferebee said, budget reductions in housing and related programs affect those Americans "most in need of assistance and hope" and will have "grave consequences on jobs and the prosperity of an important segment of society."

Reevaluation, he stressed, "does not justify stopping existing programs dead in their tracks, particularly since no clear alternative has been identified by either the Administration or the Congress."

Anonymous Donation For Committee Activities!

Totally unexpected, significant news reached the Executive Committee at its recent meeting. A member, in a precedent-setting action, has earmarked a principal sum, the income from which is to go toward committee programs and activities.

This has never happened before, and the donor would be greatly pleased if others followed his lead. One of the reasons for his action is to set an example for others who have that kind of faith in the future of the Chapter.

What types of committee activity will benefit from this income has not yet been discussed, but it is certain that this extraordinary donation will stimulate effective accomplishment.

Chapter To Be Represented At Public Service Commission Hearings

The New York State Public Service Commission is currently conducting a series of hearings on the use of electric power for heating purposes in areas served by Consolidated Edison. Lighting and other uses of electrical energy are expected to be the subject of later hearings.

Richard Stein, FAIA, has been designated to represent the Chapter. **Oculus** will report on his testimony.
WBN

Optimal Use Of Lighting Energy Discussed at IES Meeting

New York AIA members were invited to attend a discussion sponsored by the Illuminating Engineering Society on November 28, with IES New York Section Vice President Der Scutt, AIA, presiding and Architectural Record Editor Walter F. Wagner, Jr., AIA, as moderator. Speaking were Richard G. Stein, FAIA, whose "Spotlight on the Energy Crisis" appeared in the June "AIA Journal"; John H. K. Shannon, President of the Electric Energy Association; Leonard G. Parks, FIES; and C. L. Crouch, FIES, Director of Research for the Illuminating Engineering Research Institute.

Conceded by all was the well publicized existence of an energy crisis, the imperative need to reduce the consumption of electrical power, including that devoted to lighting, and, to this end, the development of criteria supplementing first cost and operating cost in owner's dollars. Disagreement appeared to center on lighting level practice, with the IES maintaining that figures published in their "Lighting Handbook" represent scientifically obtained data regarding optimal levels for specific tasks, while Richard Stein asserted that the figures were often, though perhaps erroneously, interpreted as requirements for area illumination. They have been transferred to building codes, in some instances, as minimal standards.

Also stressed by Richard Stein was the need for controls permitting lighting to be turned off when not in use, and either modulated or turned off when daylight is available. Such controls may not always be justified by usual cost analyses. A current advertisement stating that lights in a specific new office building are never turned off was cited as an example of obvious waste. The advertisement's further claim that this results in longer lamp life was challenged; longer life in turned-on hours may not represent longer life by the calendar.

It was pointed out by Leonard Parks that approximately 1-1/2 watts of electrical energy is usually devoted, in the cooling cycle, to the removal of heat produced by each watt used for lighting, thus imposing a stiff additional penalty on electric current not justified on a basis of useful lumens per watt.

The desired development of techniques for reducing air pollution resulting from the burning of relatively abundant high sulphur domestic coal was mentioned as a means of alleviating the energy crisis pending the possible emergence of atomic energy as a long term power source with minimal pollution.

The panel also mentioned that a limitation on the use of electrical energy in various types of buildings, possibly in terms of watts per square foot, may be recommended by the Governor's ad hoc Committee on Energy Efficiency in Large Buildings. (Richard Stein is Chairman of the Design Subcommittee, of which Leonard Parks is also a member.) Parallel recommendations are understood to be under consideration by the Mayor's Interdepartmental Committee on Public Utilities.
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Why Should The Wreckers Ball Be Inevitable?

Americans adore strolling the capitals of Europe, and are filled with admiration of these fine old cities. Yet they return to witness mutely the destruction of their own architectural past. . . and this in the name of "progress".

Why are we unable to stop the continuing demise of art from an era which will never be again?

Apparently the answer lies locked within the laws we ourselves have written. Before it is too late, we had best set about rewriting them.

And this is the continuing goal of the Historic Buildings Committee.

Leading the fight this year, Chairman Denis Kuhn works closely with former Chairman William Shopsin. Such a continuum is rare, but exemplifies this Committee's unceasing emotional involvement with their race against time.

To achieve their desired goals, the Committee coordinates their efforts with the Municipal Arts Society, the Volunteer Lawyers for the Arts and other concerned AIA Committees in the state.

Their ambitious plans include revision not only of the Building Code, but the woefully negligent Master Plan and the inadequate Landmarks Law. A proposal will soon be made for a Chapter study on the impact of zoning in the SoHo district. And, finally, in order to alleviate the frustrating task of Architects attempting rehabilitation of old buildings, the Committee hopes to implement a "Landmarks Panel" within the Building Department.

Requests from potential clients come before the Committee continually. So this year, they established a Portfolio of Architects work. Planned as a permanent exhibit at Chapter headquarters, any work on historic

buildings is eligible. It is a remarkable testimony to the apathy of those Architects who should be most concerned that this Portfolio remains unfilled. (And this, despite repeated notices to the NYC/AIA membership!)

When it is not mourning the irretrievable loss of another masterpiece, the Committee relaxes by indulging in explorations of historic areas and buildings.

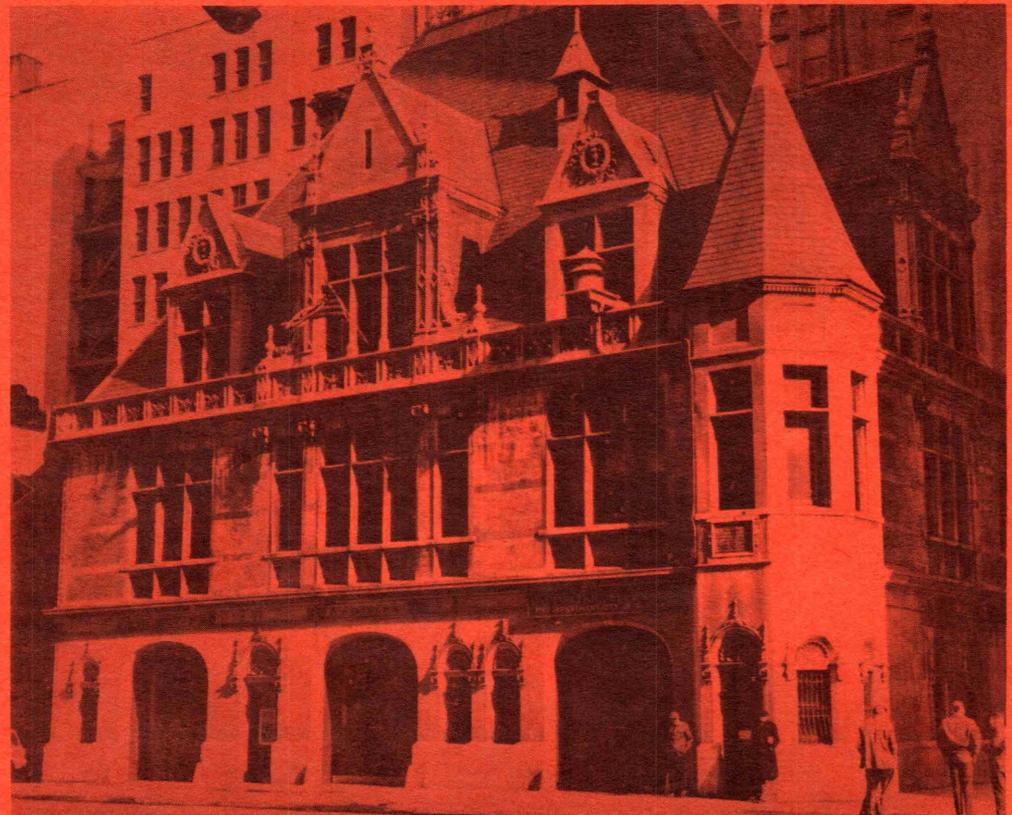
According to Chairman Kuhn, New York City is foremost in the United States in its attempts at preserving its architectural heritage.

One cannot fail to wonder, if this is what the "Leader" is doing, what nefarious acts are being perpetrated in all the other American cities?
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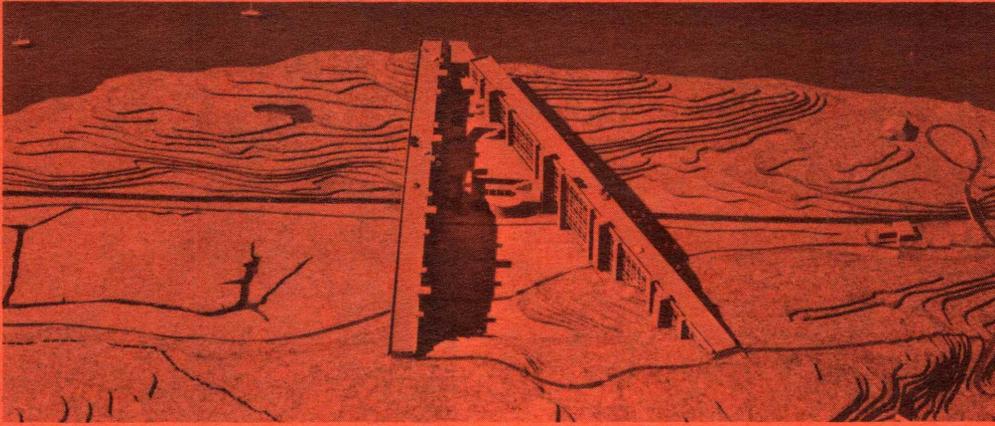


Saved. Detail face, Jefferson Market Court House. Architect of the restoration: Giorgio Cavaglieri. Photograph by Gil Amiagi

Lost? Engine Co. No. 31 FDNY at Lafayette and White Streets. William A. Hall and Associates have been appointed architect's of the restoration by the Public Works Department but the project is in abeyance. Photograph by John Kennedy.



1972 NYC/AIA Residential Design Awards



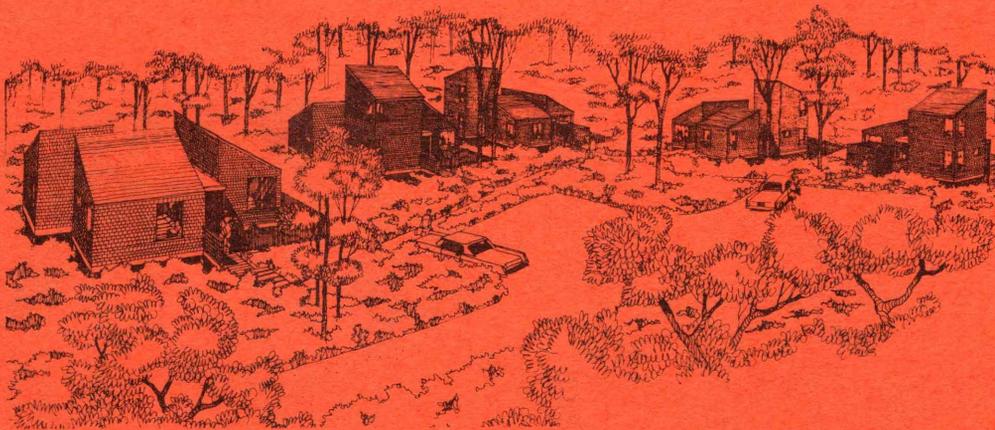
The winners of the NYC/AIA Residential Design Awards program were selected by jury on January 3. Seven citations were given: Five to luxury houses, one to a vacation community project, and one to a housing and shopping complex. Giorgio Cavaglieri, Richard Henderson and Norma Skurka constituted the jury.

We publish the following excerpts of the juror's report:

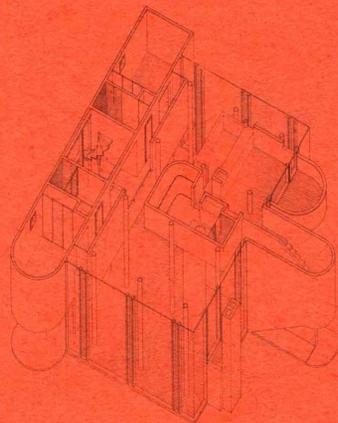
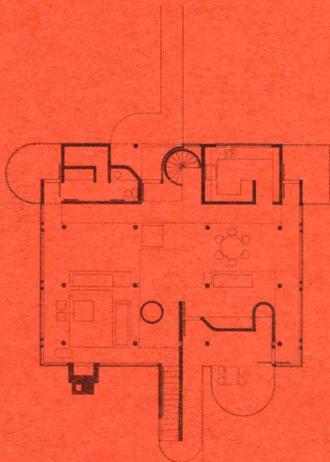
"Is a 20-century "pleasure palace" for a rich client valid in today's pressing need for housing?"
"Is the design of houses becoming an exercise in virtuosity?"



Based on the 55 entries to the competition, residential architecture is still embarked on a course of building pleasure playgrounds for the affluent. There is little evidence of innovation in the area of housing developments and planned communities and industrialized housing design seems to be at a standstill.



Five of the seven citations given to area architects went to luxury houses. Single family, detached houses were the largest design category with 34 designs submitted. Renovations of buildings for apartment units and brownstone remodelings were the second largest category with 15 projects. A vacation community project for Martha's Vineyard and a housing and shopping complex planned for a suburb within commuting distance of New York won awards for planned housing developments, a category that brought in nine entries. Builder house design and prototypes for industrialized housing were almost entirely lacking from the competition, totalling only four submissions.



From top to bottom: Manitou Station, Lee Harris Pomery Associates, Architects & Planners; Cogan Residence, Gwathmey Siegel Architects Photograph by Ezra Stoller; Chappaquonset development, Russell C. Ceil and Gregory K. Hunt; Project: House in Pound Ridge, Richard Meier and Associates.

Architect Richard Meier and associates was cited for the design of a year-round house, a project, whose stylistic brilliance and tight discipline were enough to quell any argument about practicality and cost. Architect Myron Goldfinger won an award for the design of his own vacation house, cited for its innovation as a three-module formual for a prefabricated building system. Architects Gwathmey and Siegel were also cited for the design of a vacation house, whose complex program was resolved in a restrained and elegant rectangular plan.

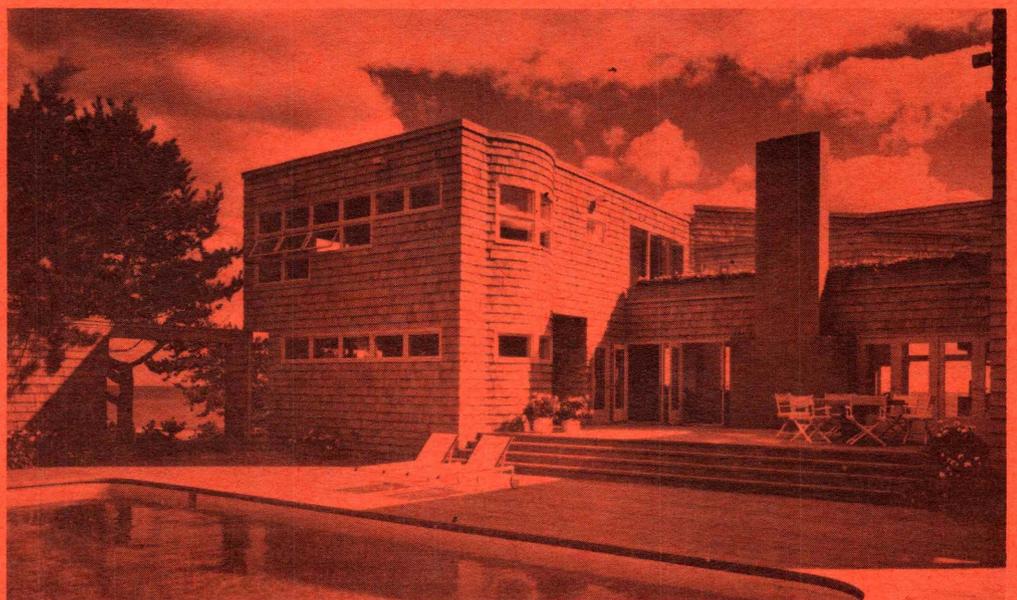
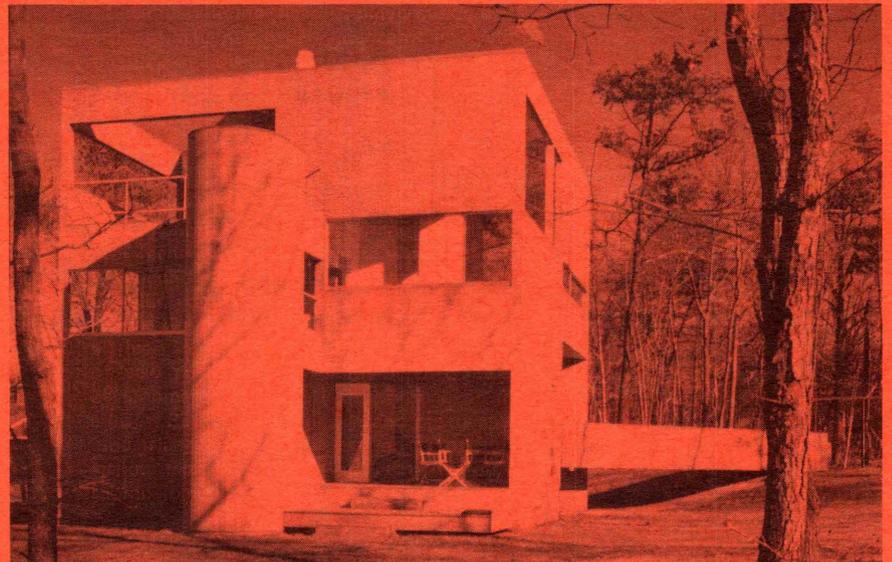
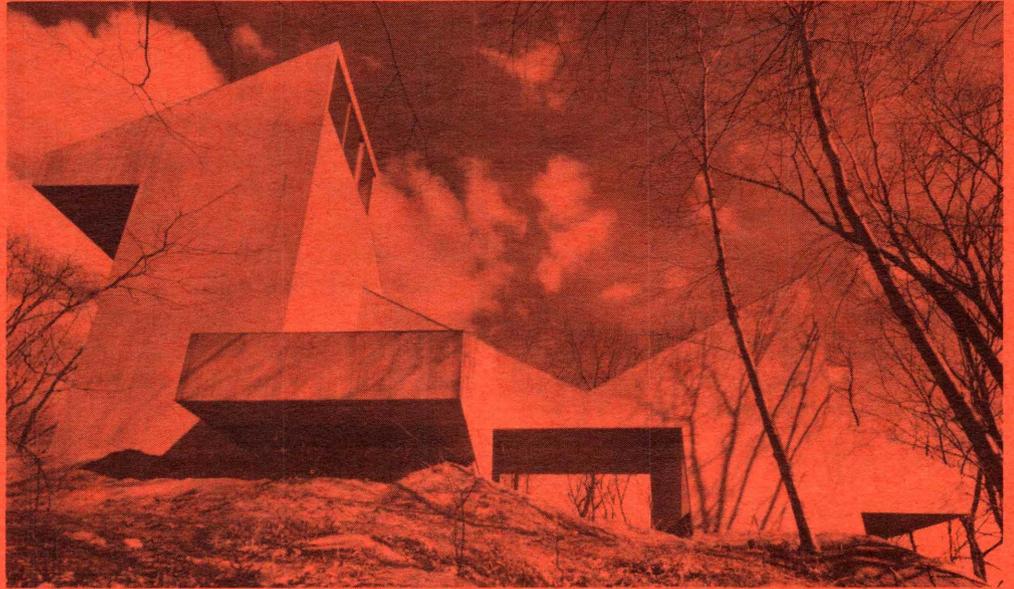
The citation given to architects Barbara and Julian Neski for the design of a vacation house on Long Island was unanimous. The elegantly proportioned multi-level cube, angled on its waterside site to take advantage of the views, was deemed "a gem" by the entire jury.

The revival of decorative details reminiscent of Art Deco in architectural design proved provocative to the jurors in evaluating the vacation house submitted by Architects Robert A.M. Stern and John S. Hagmann. The entry was given an award because it epitomized a carefully coordinated effort to integrate a new stylistic vocabulary to today's architecture.

Two awards were granted in the categories of planned communities and mass housing. The project for a vacation community designed by Architect Russell C. Cecil for Martha's Vineyard was judged competent, carefully considered in regard to siting and land use. A controversy arose, less over the project's plan than over the location—and whether a community should be built at all on the precious ecological preserve.

An award was also granted to Lee Harris Pomeroy Associates for the design of a megastructure incorporating 630 dwelling units and convenience shopping linked to a railroad station in Garrison, N.Y.

The jury recommends that the New York Chapter solicit and encourage submissions form a greater number of sources in the future as many categories were not well represented.



From top to bottom: Goldfinger Residence, Myron Goldfinger, Architect, photograph by Norman McGrath; Simon Residence, Julian and Barbara Neski, photograph by Bill Maris; Guest Cottage and Cabana, Robert A.M. Stern and John S. Hagmann, photograph by Bill Maris.

Difficulties With OSHA?

Have you had experience reconciling the provisions of OSHA with the NYC Building Code or with other codes and regulations?

The Office Practice Committee, Nesbitt Garmendia, Chairman, wants to set up an ad hoc committee to assess the difficulties imposed by OSHA and to seek ways to reduce the burden on Chapter office confronted with conflicting provisions. When the provisions in OSHA are the more stringent, they apply.

Please let Garmendia (689-1645) or the Chapter office know if you would be willing to share your experience by serving on this ad hoc committee.

BSA Variance Declared Invalid By Court

In a unanimous decision the Appellate Division of the New York Supreme Court has abrogated a variance granted by the Board of Standards and Appeals in February 1972 to permit the construction of an apartment complex exceeding the bulk limitations of the Zoning Resolution. The variance had been granted under the procedures stipulated in Section 72-21, and had been upheld by a lower court.

The site is between 2nd and 3rd Avenues, without avenue frontage, and extends from 70th Street to 71st Street. The proposed plans would have reduced required open space by 36,552 sq. ft. (53.5%), increased allowable floor area by 128,925 sq. ft. (43.58%), and penetrated the sky exposure plane by 17 stories.

Motivated by a desire to preserve the lower mid-block bulk mandated by the Zoning Resolution, the Chapter joined with the Municipal Art Society and the City Club in an amici curiae brief supporting the petition of owners of neighboring property for rescission of the variance.

With reference to the current case, but with obvious potential effect on future requests for similar variances, the court stated: ". . . .These variances are substantial and in fact amount to an amendment of the zoning provisions rather than the allowance of an exception to them. This is sought to be overcome by supposedly pragmatic reasons, to wit, that the proposed building would supply a badly needed type of housing and the cost of the lot necessitates a building with more rentable space than the regulations permit in order to provide an adequate return. These are not considerations which the respondent Board is empowered to consider. Absent a condition of practical difficulty or unnecessary hardship due to the physical condition of the lot, there is a total lack of power to grant an exception."

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Commissioner Stein Explains "Statement C"

Commissioner Joseph P. Stein of the Building Department explained the new "Statement C—Application for Limited Supervisory Check of Plans" to a well-attended open meeting at the Chapter sponsored by Arthur Seckler's Building Code Committee.

This new approach to filing, having a limited Building Department review incorporating only zoning and egress, was established to expedite approvals. The architect and consultants will now assume responsibility for conformance with the New York City Building Code.

Commissioner Stein hopes that architects will avail themselves of this new option.

Trend Of Office Activity

Mailed with this issue are graphs showing the level of office activity on June 30. Sixty-nine firms responded to the questionnaire prepared by the Office Practice Committee.

The survey which is based on the number of technical personnel in offices, shows a continuing downward trend as of last summer except for office of a size 21 to 30. A more hopeful sign, not indicated on the chart, was in the response to the question "for the next six months our office will increase, decrease, remain about the same." To this, 22 firms expected an increase, 8 a decrease, and 41 expected to remain about the same.

Only 69 firms answered as compared to 123 for December 1971. Another questionnaire will be mailed as of June 30, 1973, and every effort will be made to obtain a broader response—and to publish the results sooner.

It should be mentioned that information for all of the years shown was submitted by the 69 responding firms; i.e., each year shown indicates the number of technical personnel for those particular firms.

Building Industry Corruption Progress Report

The New York Building Congress reports that they are compiling additional data on building industry corruption to present to the New York City Department of Investigation along with the results of the AIA New York Chapter Survey. Details of the latter were outlined in the November 1972 *Oculus*.

On another facet of the corruption issue the New York Times has ascribed the new review procedure alternatives of the Department of Buildings to an attempt to eliminate corruption; except for actually rooting out the corrupt individuals the obvious strategy is to relax regulations so difficult to follow that they induce the payment of bribes. Whether architects will take the option is another question, the Times also notes.

A description of the new procedure appeared in the January *Oculus*.
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Executive Committee Actions

January 10, 1973

- Appointed Bernard Rothzeid as Director to complete the term of George Brown.
- Noted Jan. 3 *Newsday* article on political contributions by architects following up on its 1970 series. Discussed possible resolution for AIA Convention.
- Resolved to write to the Mayor referring to the speed with which Gordon Davis was appointed to succeed Ivan Michael as a planning commissioner and registering a strong complaint that the Chapter was not consulted nor had an opportunity to make recommendations.
- Noted a coming meeting with Senator Marchi's counsel concerning the possibility of an AIA/Regional/Urban Design Assistance Team for a charette-type approach to the development of South Richmond.
- Noted the appointment of an ad hoc committee, Jordan Gruzen, chairman, to prepare a memorandum for submission to Senator Goodman's Charter Revision Commission on city planning procedure—centralized vs. decentralized, etc.
- Resolved to wire the President protesting the housing moratorium (see article this issue).
- Heard George Lewis report on the present status of the public relations program. Reactivated a public relations advisory committee with Walter Wagner as chairman; T. M. Prentice, Margaret Taylor members, others to follow.
- Appointed Danforth Toan Chairman of the Urban Planning Committee to succeed Charles Thomsen.
- Resolved to support the Hospitals and Health Committee's plans to see established a Health Facilities Resource Center at the Hospital Planning Council of Southern N. Y.
- Noted that the Chapter's past recommendations for establishment of a Building Code Commission had not been followed; discussed further efforts in view of the difficulty of getting changes in the Code through the City Council.
- Heard Ms. Edelman describe an

upcoming regional conference of students from AIA, AID, NSID and AIP.

- Discussed with Saul Edelbaum, chairman, and Fritz Frost the plans of the Public Service Fund Committee to seek funds from the building industry outside the profession in support of the Chapter's minority scholarship program.
- Approved a statement prepared by the Natural Environment Committee in support of the City's suit against the Federal Environmental Protection Agency to free the \$5 billion appropriation for Federal Water Pollution Control.

Candidates For Membership

Information received by the Secretary of NYC/AIA regarding the qualifications of candidates for membership will be considered confidential.

Corporate

Donald E. Grossmann
Guillermo H. Lois
Richard Potofsky
Peter Ripullone
Carl Stein
John Anthony Varacchi

Associate

Gary William Lewis (AIA)

Welcome To New Members

The NYC/AIA welcomes the following members:

Corporate

Edward A. Rosen
Eduardo Leoncavallo
Joseph A. Mandelkern
John C. Ziegler
Jeffrey P. Spanier

WAA

Welcome To New Members

The Women's Architectural Auxiliary—whose membership is open to all women committed to helping young people to obtain an architectural education and specifically to wives of members of the NYC/AIA and to women members of the Chapter—is happy to announce the following new members:

Mrs. Ronald Allwork
Mrs. Irwin Jay Feifer
Mrs. Barie Fez-Barrington
Mrs. Michael Loenig
Mrs. Richard Newman
Mrs. Everett Rader
Mrs. Arthur Seckler, Jr.
Mrs. William D. Wilson
Mrs. George Wright
Mrs. Robert W. Yokom

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George S. Lewis, Executive Director

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T. M. Prentice, Jr., 1st Vice President
Robert F. Gatje, Vice President
Samuel M. Brody, FAIA, Vice President
Kurt Karmin, Secretary
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Judieth Edelman, Director
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