



## **President's message: This year has gotten off to a strong start!**

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By Lance Jay Brown, FAIA

On January 23rd, Crain's New York Business published an op-ed co-authored by our executive director, Rick Bell, FAIA, and our immediate past-president, Jill Lerner, FAIA, entitled, "Build It Bill-Efficiently." In the piece, Rick and Jill tell the de Blasio administration that to reach its goal of expanding affordable housing in an efficient, cost-effective way, government review must be streamlined. The best way to do this would be to appoint a deputy mayor for housing, design and construction. Rick and Jill make a strong case and we hope mayor de Blasio will heed their recommendations.

AIANY is also engaging the new administration and new agency heads from the Department of Design and Construction (DDC) and the Department of Buildings (DOB), and continuing to advise on new appointments for agencies yet without leadership, including the Department of City Planning (DCP) and the Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD). As the preservation and zoning debate heats up, AIANY has also been advising Manhattan borough president Gale Brewer.

AIANY was happy to hear some familiar names when New York City council speaker Melissa Mark-Viveri announced committee chair assignments on January 22nd. The chapter sent out congratulations letters and copies of our "Platform for the Future of the City" to the chairs of the following committees: housing and buildings, waterfronts, land use, transportation, recovery and resiliency, and economic development. We'll be setting up meetings with these leaders over the next few months to offer our expertise and advocate for our profession and the built environment.

AIANY also collaborated with The Architectural League of New York and the Municipal Art Society to organize a conversation on the Museum of Modern Art's controversial plan for expansion, which includes the demolition of the American Folk Art Museum building by Tod Williams & Billie Tsien. On January 28th, the architectural community got an opportunity to hear directly from Glenn Lowry, director of MoMA, and Liz Diller of Diller Scofidio + Renfro. Their presentations were followed by an engaging discussion between a panel of celebrated critics. It was an important evening, during which the complex issues of our city's changing morphology took center stage.

Finally, I hope you can join me on February 13th for the opening of the Considering the Quake: Seismic Design on the Edge exhibition, which explores the elegant, and oftentimes elusive, intersection between the aesthetics of architectural form and the technicality of structural design through the lens of earthquake engineering. The exhibition will be complimented by a series of programs organized by the AIANY Design for Risk and Reconstruction Committee (DfRR) and AIANY and is a major initiative of my presidential theme, "Civic Spirit: Civic Vision," which will elevate public awareness of design challenges and opportunities in the civic realm.

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