



AIA New York president's message: Upcoming events

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In January, John Lee from the New York City mayor's office of sustainability presented the details of One City, Built to Last: Transforming New York City's Buildings for A Low-Carbon Future, the mayor's initiative to reduce carbon emissions 80% by 2050, to the AIANY board of directors. The board swiftly voted to make an enduring commitment to helping New York City achieve the mayor's goal over the next 35 years. As a first step towards solidifying this sustainability initiative, 80x50 and the concerns of how climate change mitigation and adaptation will reshape the practice of architecture in NYC will be the focus of February's "Dialogues from the Edge of Practice" programming.

The 2015 "Dialogues from the Edge of Practice" series consists of intimate interdisciplinary conversations and corresponding public forums on the city's design and policy priorities and contemporary advances in the practice of architecture. The monthly roundtable discussions and related events highlight ways in which architects are broadening the scope of practice and bringing their unique problem-solving skills to issues previously considered outside their purview.

Architects are a large part of the solution to mitigate and adapt to climate change effects. Contributors at the February events will evaluate how to raise awareness among architects and their clients and start to determine what new skills and technologies are needed for architects to succeed. The group will also discuss how to influence policy that will change the way we build. The resulting public program will take place on March 10th at the Center for Architecture, 536 LaGuardia Place.

The first "Dialogue" on January 21st, "Edge Construction: The Future of Modular," focused on alternative construction methods that could potentially reduce development costs and construction time. Modular construction has not yet been employed at a large scale in New York City, but considering the Mayor's affordable housing goals, participants debated whether modular construction techniques can be employed to deliver more affordable housing to the city. The expert panelists at the public program on February 2nd concluded that, although modular construction is not yet broadly competitive in New York City's market, particularly for the development of affordable housing, it has the potential to rapidly deliver housing efficiently and cost effectively. The panelists agreed that to do so the department of buildings must be prepared to approve modular projects in a timely fashion, developers should be granted FAR bonuses for adopting modular construction, the embryonic modular industry should be granted incentives to continue to invest in skilled labor and advanced technology, and modules should be dimensionally standardized for efficient transportation.

AIANY will continue to work through the city's pressing urban design challenges throughout the year in hopes of informing the administration and influencing change citywide.

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