



President's message: AIANY weighs in on Intro. 775 Local Law

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By Tomas Rossant, AIA

In April, city council members brought forward Intro. 775, a Local Law to amend the administrative code of the City of New York, establishing a maximum period of time for the Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) to take action on calendared items. The bill was created to address the issues of transparency and consistency at LPC, but it also establishes a moratorium on designations for projects that fail to meet the tight deadlines.

AIANY applauds the bill's intentions to seek procedural changes to make the designation processes more efficient, consistent, and predictable, but the proposed legislation has potential to hinder the commission from properly upholding its mission. As written, the bill will compromise our city's Landmarks Law that so greatly contributes to the uniqueness of our urban realm, gives definition to communities, and increases the value of real estate.

Last month, AIANY, along with the other four AIA chapters in New York City, released a memo in response to Intro. 775. We are sympathetic to the desire of the council to focus on the protocols of the LPC to ensure that this important regulatory body acts efficiently; however, we would prefer if the LPC would propose and adopt reforms by its own volition rather than through legislative action. Should legislative action be inevitable, we put forward a number of possible changes to the bill that to strike a proper balance between procedural efficiency and keeping New York City's architectural heritage preserved and alive. AIANY and our partners are working with city council members and the administration on finding a fitting solution.

The five AIA chapters in New York City continue to support the New York City Department of City Planning's Zoning for Quality and Affordability proposal. As public review begins this fall, we are educating the design community and general public on how the changes will lead to better buildings and communities.

AIANY's "Dialogues from the Edge of Practice" resumes this month. "Dialogues" focuses on 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 need to engage authorities outside the profession on issues that matter to the design community and the general public alike. The next topic, "Edge Digital: The Interactive Building," will explore the technological potential of interactivity between humans and architecture. The related public program will take place at the Center for Architecture on October 5th.

AIANY examines solutions to New York City's contemporary urban design challenges in hopes of informing the de Blasio administration and influencing change citywide. The chapter is currently undergoing its search for a new executive director. Nominations and applications may be submitted

to AIANewYork@PhillipsOppenheim.com.

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