



The future of housing and development in New York City - by David Piscuskas

June 06, 2017 - Owners Developers & Managers

David Piscuskas, AIA New York
and 1100 Architect

By David Piscuskas, FAIA, LEED AP

Last month, AIA New York and the Center for Architecture hosted a trans-Atlantic discussion between New York's deputy mayor for Housing and Economic Development, Alicia Glen, and London's Deputy Mayor for Planning, Regeneration and Skills, Jules Pipe, to overview the future of London and New York housing. There is much to learn from drawing parallels between the two cities, as they both advance plans toward creating fair and equitable communities in the face of exponential growth.

The event was the latest installment of the NY LON series, a key element of our global dialogues program that fosters cross-city conversations between New York and London. In association with New London Architecture and the Urban Design Forum, simultaneous live-video seminars occurred in both cities, bringing together speakers and audiences.

As New York contemplates a major reform in its Fair Share policy and areas are rezoned to unlock more affordable housing, London is working towards mayor Sadiq Khan's City for All Londoners. But change is happening rapidly and dramatically; as stewards of the built environment, how can we ensure healthy densification with the right distribution of community infrastructure? How do we connect new and existing communities with the pace of change?

Central to any discussion of urban expansion is sustainable growth and stemming the creation of "barbell cities," where housing and businesses cater only to the very wealthy and very poor, but have no place for the working and middle class. New York and London share these challenges, though the tools each city's government deploy to ensure equitable housing, transit development, and economic opportunity are different.

Deputy mayor Glen praised New York City for remaking itself into an attractive location for families, even as she also stressed the need to ensure affordable and equitable development for all. Under her leadership, New York City has undertaken the most comprehensive affordable housing program

in the nation's history. As part of the ten-year housing plan, the city is on pace to create 200,000 units of new housing for low - to moderate-income residents across New York. Glen also stressed the importance of community outreach to inform residents about upcoming housing developments and community infrastructure.

Affordable housing is an essential contributor to opportunity and growth for all citizens, especially New York City's most vulnerable populations. As architects engaged at AIANY, we elevate the awareness of our members and our constituents that design is a tool to enhance equity and promote fairness in our communities. We should, and will, continue to collaborate with community stakeholders, developers, and policymakers to push these efforts forward. As the 2017 president of AIANY, I've asked our community to engage these challenges – that we open ourselves as collaborative and community-minded professionals to better connect our services with the people that we serve.

David Piscuskas, FAIA, LEED AP is the 2017 president of AIA New York and the founding partner at 1100 Architect, New York, N.Y.

New York Real Estate Journal - 17 Accord Park Drive #207, Norwell MA 02061 - (781) 878-4540