Bricks & Mortals

# MEMBERSHIP MEETING

**11.30.22**

**3:00pm - 5:00pm**

**https://www.bricksandmortals.org/membership-area (password protected)**

1. **Welcome by Jason Labate (10 mins - 3:00pm-3:15pm)**
    - Welcome - please put introductions in the chat!
    - Introducing our new Community Manager, Journee Harris
        - Journee is a first-year student at MIT, pursuing her Masters degree in Urban Planning. As the new Community Manager she has been sending out the recent news and media updates.
        - Journee's contact: journee@bricksandmortals.org
    - Annual Membership Survey: Please fill out the survey so we know who you are and what you are looking for from B&M. This survey closes 12/15.
    - Annual Membership Contributions: The Fiscal year is from July 1 - June 30th and membership contributions correspond with that, so please make your contribution for the year (July 1st, 2022 - June 30th, 2023) if you haven't already.
        - If there is a hardship you have experienced, we have a formal process to make accommodations for you. There are also sponsorships available to support FBOs/individuals who need financial support.
        - "The more we are, the better we are", please encourage others to become members.
    - Approval of October meeting minutes - *unanimously approved.*

2. **B&M updates - Mayor's Faith-Based Affordable Housing Summit on Dec 7th (Kate Toth - 10 mins - 3:15pm-3:25pm)**
    - The Mayor convened a Working Group on faith-based affordable housing and community development.
    - In September and October three subcommittees met to look at challenges and solutions on: affordable housing, landmarks and air rights.

- Out of those meetings an Action Plan was developed with specific recommendations to help faith communities thrive and develop affordable housing.
- The result of the Action Plan was the Mayor's Faith-Based Affordable Housing Summit held on Dec 7th, 2022 that Bricks and Mortals helped organize.
  - Link to video recording of event
- After the Summit, we will be working to help the recommendations get adopted.
- Q&A:
  - We're at the stage where we are interfacing with the organizations that will be implementing the recommendations; it will only work if we have the force of the Faith Community of NYC behind us in doing it.
  - We cannot afford to lose our momentum.
  - Thanks for leading this challenging and necessary work.
  - The recommendations will be further discussed at the ICNY's Affordable Housing Forum on Dec 16th and will be a part of the NYSCOC's Ecumenical Advocacy Day on Feb 15th and 16th.

3. **Case study: Updates from Pratt Architecture course cases (Meta Brunzema - 45 mins - 3:25pm-4:10pm)**
   - Link to report
   - Houses of worship included in the case study were: St. Paul and St. Andrew United Methodist Church, Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the City of New York, St. Martin's and St. Luke's Episcopal Church, Hudson Yards Synagogue, and Park Slope United Methodist Church
   - Ideas / Proposals for St. Paul and St. Andrew United Methodist Church:
     - SPSA Windcatchers inspired by Persian windcatchers.
     - Solar Roof that resembles terracotta roofs. This can help make the church a carbon neutral building.
     - Hiring an environmental graphic designer to do wayfinding in the building. This would help faith-based organizations that may have many subtenants in the building and who need direction nowhere things are located.

- St. Paul and St. Andrew United Methodist Church shared these ideas proposed by the Pratt team with their Trustees and they are excited about what direction this will go. They enjoyed working with the students and seeing how their designs changed.
- <u>Ideas / Proposals for Hudson Yard Synagogue:</u>
  - Rabbi Herman challenged the studio to include the synagogue, the corner site, and the Brookfield property site.
  - The studio came up with two scenarios: residential developments and commercial development. Both with the goal of preserving the historic facade and incorporating new development.
  - Feedback from HYS: the vision started with bringing in Jewish nonprofits who have office space in the area. There is interest in developing this further, so currently they are matching the needs with the possibilities.
- <u>Ideas / Proposals for The Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the City of New York</u>
  - The class looked at the history of the site and the history of the religion
  - Taking inspiration from the persian gardens; building should have humane labor practices and be environmentally responsible.
  - The new spiritual assembly the class designed, maxes out zoning, includes roofs with plants and envision it being built with Mass Timber since it stores carbon rather than emitting it.
  - Sepidah Behzadpour, representing The Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the City of New York, says their community is really excited about the design.
- <u>Ideas / Proposals for Park Slope United Methodist Church</u>
  - The main architectural issue the studio sought to explore is that it has sloped floors and has fixed pews.
  - NYSCOC: Heat pumps bring with it a substantial tax credit from the Inflation Reduction Act. Contact NYSCOC to discuss your options.
- <u>Ideas / Proposals for St. Martin's and St. Luke's Episcopal Church</u>
  - The church has so many treasures that have fallen into disrepair. The church has a cross shaped sanctuary, a rectory, and a giant basement.
  - The class had the idea of maintaining the existing sanctuary or moving it into the parish hall. They conducted an analysis to see how many

churches could fit into the church to fill the sanctuary…9 churches the size of St. Martin's and St. Luke's could fit in the building!
    - The students designed a residential tower as a revenue generator for St. Martin's and St. Luke's. Keeping in mind the NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission approval process, they designed the condo to be "minimally visible" meaning someone across the street could only see a small part of the new development.
    - Possible next steps include developing a campaign to save and rebuild St. Martin's and St. Luke's.
    - Feedback from SMSL: The project with the Pratt students began to animate the congregation and allowed the congregation to think about the future.
  - Q&A
    - *Who funded the Pratt Studies?* This was done pro bono Pratt and by students.

4. **Resources: DYCD Commissioner Keith Howard (45 mins - 4:10pm-4:55pm)**
    - The DYCD Commissioner introduced the Department of Youth and Community Development to Bricks and Mortals Members, discussing how DYCD can work with houses of faith to find community assets to be based in faith properties as well as other DYCD resources.
    - The mayor has a faith-based initiative and wants to explore how we open up our network of community development to FBOs in real ways.
    - DYCD works on workforce development programs, community development programs, summer youth employment opportunities, or other initiatives FBOs may want to consider.
    - DYCD has a network of over 1,000 community-based organizations that address a variety of issues and there is opportunity for collaboration with FBOs; for example there is a training program on workforce side that teaches young people a trade and their welding, janitorial or admin skills could be valuable to FBOs
    - There are two sectors of DYCD:

        - Youth Services: this provides young people work during the summer; this includes opportunities in administration, social media, computer science etc.
        - Community Development: this includes immigrant services, legal services, fatherhood initiative in mentoring young fathers, food service/pantries
    - DYCD is also looking to deal with trauma and mental health services especially coming out of the pandemic and they can connect young people in churches with their services
    - DYCD is encouraging FBOs to guide young people, so they can be mentored, protected and removed from cycles of violence. Commissioner Keith Howard is available to connect FBOs with the youth population in NYC.
    - Q&A
    - How would an FBO who doesn't know where to start, begin?
        - Start by visiting the DYCD PORTAL: https://discoverdycd.dycdconnect.nyc/home
        - Look into the strategic partnership run by Darrel Warthway
        - DYCD will also come out to the church and work with you https://discoverdycd.dycdconnect.nyc/home
    - Some churches are in neighborhoods with demographics that have language needs. How can DYCD help with that?
        - There is a language line that DYCD can provide and DYCD can be a third party connector. They also have bilingual staff that can put people in contact with.
    - Are there organizations that have space needs that could be fulfilled by an FBO?
        - Yes! For example, one community organization uses film and teaches young people how to shoot film and create stories;  they don't have a space and they are looking for one. There are plenty of start-up organizations doing groundwork coming to DYCD all the time with space needs and FBOs can help fulfill that need.

5. **Closing (Jason Labate)**
    - Thank you Meta and DYCD for the great work!
    - Meeting adjourned.