

P Y L O N

MARCH 2012



American Institute of Architects
Brooklyn Chapter

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March 21, 2012  
April 18, 2012

## NEW STORMWATER RULE TO IMPROVE WATER QUALITY

**R**unoff from buildings and pavement adds significant volume in the City's combined sewer system that ultimately discharges a mix of stormwater and sewage directly into the city's surrounding waterways when it rains. DEP has released a new stormwater rule that requires new construction and major building alterations to capture substantially more runoff through cost-effective measures, providing additional capacity in the combined sewer system. This new rule is the result of years of discussions with real estate, development and environmental stakeholders, and is an integral part of the NYC Green Infrastructure Plan, which proposes a more sustainable and adaptive approach to improve the water quality in New York Harbor for improved development and recreational opportunities, while also saving billions of dollars for taxpayers.

The Green Infrastructure Plan represents a fundamental shift in the city's approach to stormwater management. Where the city has historically directed all rainwater to concrete detention tanks, sewers and treatment plants, under the new plan the city will also rely on natural systems so that rain can be absorbed back into the ground and used by vegetation, saving money and improving water quality.

New York City, like other older urban areas, is largely serviced by a combined sewer system where stormwater and wastewater are carried through a single pipe.

During heavy storms, the system can exceed its capacity and must discharge a mix of stormwater and wastewater — called a combined sewer overflow, or CSO — into New York Harbor. Enhancing an already existing requirement, the rule will employ a wide



range of on-site stormwater control techniques to all new development, redevelopment and major alterations in combined sewer areas. DEP estimates that the rule will limit stormwater discharge on development lots to approximately 10% of present permitted flow to the combined sewer system using cost-effective detention, infiltration, and recycling techniques such as blue roofs, green roofs, or subsurface gravel beds and stormwater chambers.

This rule will lead to on-site control systems that are projected to reduce com-

*(Continued on page 3)*

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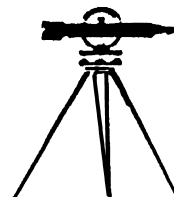


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# NEW STORMWATER RULE TO IMPROVE WATER QUALITY *cont.*

(continued from page 1)

bined sewer overflows by as much as 800 million gallons over the next 20 years based on historic development trends. No existing homes or developments will be affected by the new rule. The goal is to improve harbor water quality by capturing and retaining stormwater runoff before it enters the sewer system. The cost impact of the new standard on a project's development is estimated to be an additional 0.3% to 1.5% of total construction costs.

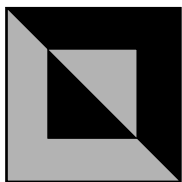
The rule, which can be viewed at [www.nyc.gov/dep](http://www.nyc.gov/dep), was developed through numerous meetings over the past two years between DEP, the building industry and environmental organizations, including the Real Estate Board of New York, the Regional Planning Association, American Institute of Architects, Buildings Sustainability Board, Citizens for Affordable Housing, US Green Buildings Council and the Green Infrastructure Steering Committee. DEP also held numerous task force meetings with the Mayor's Office of Long-Term Planning and Sustainability, the Department of



Buildings, and its other partners across city agencies. Based on extensive feedback, the rule credits stormwater volume reduction from infiltration into underlying soils, recycling for on-site use, and permeable surface cover including rain gardens and porous pavement, all of which can reduce the size of stormwater management systems.

The new rule takes effect July

2012 and DEP has also published a companion document, *Guidelines for the Design and Construction of Stormwater Management Systems*, offering guidance to the applicants with the selection, planning, design and construction of on-site stormwater detention systems. The 137 page manual was developed in consultation with the Department of Buildings, and will feature guidance on siting, design and construction considerations for various stormwater control systems, as well as operation and maintenance recommendations. The guidelines will be continually updated to reflect the latest technology and best practices, and will also include a system calculator to assist developers and licensed professionals in determining space requirements for the most appropriate system for a given site. **AIA**



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# GEHRY RESIDENCE

## NOTES OF INTEREST

The Gehry Residence in Santa Monica, Calif., has been selected for the 2012 AIA Twenty-five Year Award. A seemingly ad hoc collection of raw, workmanlike materials wrapped around an unassuming two-story clapboard bungalow, Frank Gehry's, FAIA, home for his wife, Berta, and two sons found a literal, but unexpected, answer to the question of neighborhood context, and used it to forever re-shape the formal and material boundaries of architecture.

Enormously influential in both theory and practice, the home's fundamental material modesty and formal experimentation marks a Rubicon in the history of contemporary architecture, tearing down inherited stylistic standbys to declare a new design language for the modern suburban architectural condition. Recognizing architectural design of enduring significance, the Twenty-five Year Award is conferred on a building that has stood the test of time for 25 to 35 years as an embodiment of architectural excellence. Projects must demonstrate excellence in function, in the distinguished execution of its original program, and in the creative aspects of its statement by today's standards. The award will be presented this May at the AIA National Convention in Washington, D.C.



### Who are we?

Quite plainly, the Gehry Residence is a suburban house totally unconcerned with traditionally pleasing aesthetics. As soon as it was completed in 1978 reactions ranged from hagiography to anathema. Over time, critical reactions mirrored the role the house would play in the larger canon of contemporary architecture. A 1979 review by New York Times archi-

tecture critic Paul Goldberger, Hon. AIA, recognized the house as an extremely successful provocation—if not much more. He called the Gehry Residence the most significant new house in Southern California in years, admiring its central conceptual conceit: an old house wrapped in jagged panels of corrugated metal, creating a new band of patio-like indoor/outdoor space on three sides. Windows were inflated into small skylight atriums, canted and distorted into sculptural expressions of transparent mass. A thoroughly collaged composition, plywood and (most infamously) chain-link fence punctuate the house's rough-hewn exterior. Inside the added indoor/outdoor space, the floor was asphalt, and the now-interior wall was still the original painted (salmon-pink) siding. Throughout the interior, Goldberger appreciated the abundance of natural light and the exposed wood beams Gehry revealed after he gutted the original house, which communicate a sense of structural honesty not often associated with his work.

The exposed structure, chaotic fusion of disparate materials, and aggressive juxtaposition of old and new communicate a sense of real-time formal evolution and conflict, as if the building were dynamically, violently creating itself with found objects. This notion of embracing unfinished imperfection has been powerfully influential among progressive building designers, especially in Gehry's home base of Southern California. The sculptur-



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al qualities of Gehry's house presage the wild eruptions of form at the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao and Walt Disney Concert Hall that would make him a world design icon, still recognizable under the



rectilinear massing of the old bungalow and its curious new armature.

Goldberger was careful to note Gehry's exacting, though superficially obscured, compositional hand. "What Mr. Gehry is saying, then, is that there can be beauty in such harsh elements when they are carefully wrought and precisely put together, that they can create a new kind of order which can yield as much physical ease and comfort as a conventional house," he wrote.

By 1993, the next Times critic, Herbert Muschamp, concluded that the house was much more than a well-played provocation: It was a residence that defined modernity in built form just as Jefferson's Monticello, Wright's Taliesin, and Johnson's Glass House had before it. The Gehry Residence exemplified its age because it was made of its age, cheap-looking construction, chain-link, and all. When Frank Gehry surveyed the suburban Southern California landscape where he'd built a career as a moderately successful commercial architect, he seized on the omnipresent elements that are easiest to ignore: concrete block

and chain-link fence, RVs and boats on trailers hauled into driveways, and cars up on cement blocks stranded in front yards—coarse, utilitarian, and cozy, with not a brick of travertine to be seen for miles. The post-WWII exodus from central cities was carpeting Southern California in inexpensive wood-framed tract homes, their skeletons offering sweet glimpses of structural honesty and expression before being papered over in anachronistic style book patterns.

For Gehry, these were the fundamental symbols of the vast American middle class that he found himself a part of, and they had to be taken seriously and integrated honestly. Instead of the historicist styles (Tudor, Cape Cod, etc.) that still dominated suburban home building, Gehry drew from art traditions like Cubism and Pop Art, and in the process became a standard bearer for the Deconstructivist strain of architecture that gained prominence throughout the '80s and '90s.

But the Gehry Residence was most fundamentally derived from Frank Gehry's own searing self-critique of who he and his economic cohort truly were—not from any external design tradition. From the house's award submission portfolio: "I agonized about the symbols of the middle class to which I belonged, and to the particular symbols of my future neighbors. I searched for an interpretation of

*(Continued on page 9)*

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The scholarship awards were presented to each of the fourth-year architectural students at the AIA Brooklyn Chapter's Year-End Holiday Party.

Funds for the Student's Scholarship awards are raised with our Biennial Scholarship Dinner Dance as well as a grant provided by AIA National. We thank all who make this event possible and look forward to this year's Scholarship Dinner Dance to be held on Wednesday, March 28, 2012 at the El Caribe Country Club located in Brooklyn, NY.

**- Dmitriy Shenker, RA, AIA**  
President, Brooklyn Architects Scholarship Foundation

## AIANYS 2012 LOBBY DAY SAVE THE DATE!

The date for the 2012 Architects in Albany Lobby Day has been set—May 1, 2012! This is your chance to meet with your legislators one-on-one and discuss issues that are important to all architects. More information will be forthcoming so be sure to check [www.aianys.org](http://www.aianys.org) for updates.

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# COMMITTEE REPORTS



## URBAN DESIGN COMMITTEE

**Date:** January 18, 2012  
**Place:** Ft. Hamilton  
**Present:** Jane McGroarty, Woody Blaubeux, Pam Weston, Gary Mangus, Tony Marchese, Jim Bear, Jean Miele, Don Weston

### Discussion:

1. The committee discussed the proposed new building to be located at 30 Henry Street in Brooklyn Heights. There was some concern that the building's façade was too bland for such a prominent site. However, since the design was already approved by the Landmarks Preservation Committee the committee decided it would serve no useful purpose to comment on the design at this time.

2. The committee created a sub-committee, to be chaired by Jean Miele, to select the the best design for a hotel to be built in the Brooklyn Bridge Park from the seven submissions received by the Park. Based on the sub-committee's report the committee will advise Ms. Regina Myers, president of the Brooklyn Bridge Park, of our selection and our comments regarding the design of the proposed hotel.

3. The committee discussed the proposed residential buildings at the Atlantic Yards site that will be the tallest pre-fabricated structures ever built and decided to ask the developer if they would like to make a presentation at one of our Chapter meetings. Don Weston will contact Forest City Ratner to see if they are interested.

**Date:** February 15, 2012  
**Place:** Ft. Hamilton  
**Present:** Joe Trivisonno, Woody Blaubeux, Jean Miele, Jerry Goldstein, Larry Stelter, Don Weston

### Discussion:

1. The sub-committee chaired by Jean Miele, did not finish their evaluation of the seven designs for a hotel in the Brooklyn Bridge Park. The sub-committee will submit their selection of the best design for the Brooklyn Bridge Park hotel at the March meeting for the committee to discuss and report our selection to the President of the Brooklyn Bridge Park.

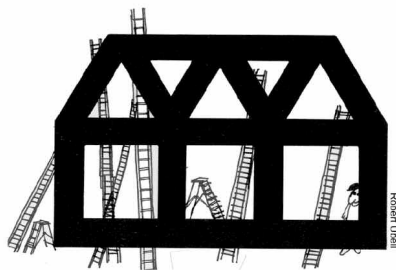
2. The committee discussed the

potential sale of the former MTA headquarters building at 370 Jay Street to NYU who plans on converting the building into a center for urban studies and progress. NYU plans on redesigning the building's façade to be more interesting and that will certainly improve the architectural character of the Jay Street area. Woody Blaubeux will try to contact and commend NYU for their proposal and also send the committee's thoughts to the local press.

3. The committee discussed the issue of a proposed grocery supermarket on Third Avenue at Third Street which is being opposed by a coalition of manufacturers and artists who want the area saved for manufacturing and creative industries. The committee, feeling that Third Avenue was suitable for various uses, did not want to get involved in the issue of use, preferring to reserve its comments to the design of the building whatever its use. Therefore, the committee decided to take no action at this time.

4. The issue of the Skyscraper District, for the tall buildings on Court Street came up again. The committee had previously opposed the landmark designation, known as the Skyscraper District, because so few buildings fit the requirements of being a skyscraper and being landmark worthy. The committee still felt that the landmark designation for Court Street was ill advised, as most of the buildings included in the district would be non-contributing, but would still be subject to Landmark review for every change that might be made. **AIA**

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# AN URBAN GREEN COUNCIL TOUR

Urban Green Council organized a tour of Building 92 at the Brooklyn Navy Yard. The architect,

Beyer, Blinder & Belle, and their consultant, RKF Group, gave the group a tour of the building from the basement to the roof. The tour gave us an inside look at the renovation and addition to the original 1857 building by T.U. Walter. They presented the history of the Navy Yard, some of their design process and 'green' features in their pursuit for LEED platinum certification. The building's green features include a vegetative roof, solar hot water PV system on the roof, rainwater collection to flush the toilets, geothermal system, heated concrete first floor, plenty of natural light, especially from

the full height atrium, and an exterior solar screen across one facade that reveals the image of a Navy ship on a launching stage.

Building 92 is a visitor's center for the Navy Yard that houses an exhibition of the Navy Yard, museum, offices, a large atrium, lecture hall and cafe. The Brooklyn Navy Yard Center at Building 92 celebrates the Navy Yard's past, present and future and promotes the Yard as a platform for job creation and as a model for sustainable urban industrial growth. Visit their website for more information ([www.bldg92.org](http://www.bldg92.org)). They have tours of the Brooklyn Navy Yard (not the building) on Sat and Sun.

- Sean Boyd, AIA, LEED, AP bd + c



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# AIA NATIONAL

## 2012 FAIA ANNOUNCEMENT

The Fellowship program was developed to elevate those architects who have made a significant contribution to architecture and society and who have achieved a standard of excellence in the profession. Election to fellowship not only recognizes the achievements of architects as individuals, but also their significant contribution to architecture and society on a national level.

The 2012 Jury of Fellows from the American Institute of Architects (AIA) elevated 105 AIA members to its prestigious College of Fellows. Out of a total AIA membership of over 80,000 there are over 3,000 members distinguished with this honor.

The 2012 Fellows will be honored at an investiture ceremony at the 2012 National AIA Convention. **AIA**

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# GEHRY RESIDENCE

## NOTES OF INTEREST *cont.*

(continued from page 3)

what I found that could suit my family, myself. I dug deep into my own history and education for cues and clues and then followed my intuitions.”

### Authenticity and modernity

The Gehry Residence’s confrontational use of materials is meant as a sly comment on how homes are made and what is appropriate to make them out of. Its superficial crudeness points out the still relatively primitive way houses are built, and the upfront use of chain-link makes it harder to ignore that this ungainly materi-

al covers vast tracts of cities. The use of these types of materials has been hugely influential. The Gehry Residence has probably done as much as any other contemporary building to de-stigmatize the use of simple, raw, industrial materials for the bourgeois urban class.

As a commercial architect, Gehry had only started using such inexpensive materials



to please clients on tight budgets, and it’s a supreme irony of his career that once he took this approach to it apotheosis in his own home, he soon found some of the world’s largest, most lavish commissions headed his way. Gehry responded in kind by building in titanium.

And from the

glitz and shimmer of his Guggenheim at Bilbao, it’s easy to forget the fundamental humility of the Gehry Residence. Whether you question its formal resolution or not, it’s an authentic attempt to define the contemporary American suburban architectural condition—a building context many architects don’t touch. It uses modest, inexpensive materials to renovate an existing home on a typical suburban block. Architects stifled by the recession might be comforted to know that for her book *Conversations with Frank Gehry*, the architect told Barbara Isenberg that purchasing the house and renovating it cost only \$260,000.

Despite its brazen forms and material selections, Gehry has denied designing his house as any kind of built manifesto. It’s class conscious, but only in the sense of attempting to define the position of the largest, most “ordinary” species of American. Over the years, Gehry has added another bedroom and turned the garage into flexible living space for his children, now grown. His aspirations for the house are as uncomplicated as those of his neighbors. “All in all,” he wrote in the house’s submission portfolio, “the house has graciously adapted to our changing family.” With his home, Frank Gehry may have defined a new modernity in architecture, but he’s kept the brick fireplace all along.

- Zach Mortice,  
Managing Editor, AIArchitect

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# COMMITTEE REPORTS



## BROOKLYN INDUSTRY MEETING

1) A big issue is getting an appointment. We are getting initial plan review (after getting the objection sheet and plan examiner's name) six weeks out. There is a shortage of plan examiners. DOB KNOWS THERE IS A SHORTAGE OF STAFF. THEY REQUEST THAT INDIVIDUALS, AS WELL AS AIA BROOKLYN, WRITE TO BOROUGH PRESIDENT'S OFFICE, MAYOR'S OFFICE AND THEIR LOCAL REPRESENTATIVE ABOUT THE DELAY IN THE CONSTRUCTION PROCESS.

2) Please have the plumbing division at the meeting to discuss the discrepancy between what is approved by examiners and what the plumbing division requires. This conversation may eliminate the multiple plumbing post approval amendments.

HENRY SNYDER, THE PLUMBING CHIEF, ATTENDED THE MEETING. HE BELIEVES THAT ONE PLUMBING AMENDMENT SHOULD BE FILED AT THE END OF THE JOB. HE WANTS TO KNOW EXAMPLES OF THE MANY PLUMBING AMENDMENTS REQUIRED. *Please email me examples of plumbing amendments, with address and job number, so we can set up a meeting with head plumb-*

*ing chief Arthur Cordez.*

3) There is a Fast Application Priority filing for Professionals, under the G ticket.

There is a Fast Application filing for Non-Professionals, under the H ticket. Pre-filing and applications processing combined. If there is a same day filing, the procedure is to get stickers from customer service and bring the package to Mark before 9:30 AM.

4) If a final TR-1 needs to be submitted and the inspector is the same as the initial TR-1, but the paperwork is missing from the virtual folder, the CO room will accept the final TR-1 form without needing to recreate the initial TR-1.

5) A TR-1 for change of applicant must be submitted at Required Items Drop Off Basket for approval.

6) There is now a list for reinstatement, and civil penalties.

- Pamela Weston, Assoc AIA

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*Deadline for submission to the Pylon is the second Wednesday of each month.*

*Articles or notices may be submitted to the Editor by e-mail, fax or on disc. Handwritten articles or verbal comments are cheerfully received.*

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## EVENTS

**MARCH 4** - 'The Grand Exhibition' will celebrate winners and show off the submission of designs to reimagine Parkside Avenue between Flatbush and Ocean. It is organized by The Parkside Prize. The exhibit is free and open to anyone and the venue is at Play Kids on Flatbush. See their website for more information ([www.theparksideprize.org](http://www.theparksideprize.org))

**MARCH 16** - The Pratt Center for Community Development is hosting 'Greening from the Ground Up: A Sustainability Leadership Conference.' The goal is to bring together community organizations to share lessons learned to help make urban neighborhoods healthier and more sustainable. This will be an all day event with lectures and workshops. I will be attending the event and will have more information about it. The conference is free on Friday, Mar 16 starting at 9 am at Pratt Institute Higgins Hall, 61 St. James Place, Brooklyn.

Check out their website  
([www.prattcenter.net/event/sustainability-conference](http://www.prattcenter.net/event/sustainability-conference)) for more information. An agenda and registration will be available soon.

**MAY 16 - 19** - 'AIA 2012 National Convention' in Washington DC 

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## LOOK AHEAD

### REGULARLY SCHEDULED CHAPTER MEETINGS

Unless otherwise noted, all meetings  
are scheduled at:

Committee meetings: 5:30 PM  
Cocktails: 5:30 PM  
Dinner: 6:00 PM  
Program: 7:00 PM

**Wednesday,  
March 21, 2012**

**Presenter:**

**David Laudadio**  
Terrazzo & Marble  
Supply Companies

**Joe Luisi**  
Luisi Insurance Brokerage, Inc.

**Location:**  
US Army Garrison  
Fort Hamilton  
(Fort Hamilton Army Base)  
Building #207  
Brooklyn, NY 11252

**Wednesday,  
March 7, 2012  
at 6:00 PM**  
AIA Executive Meeting

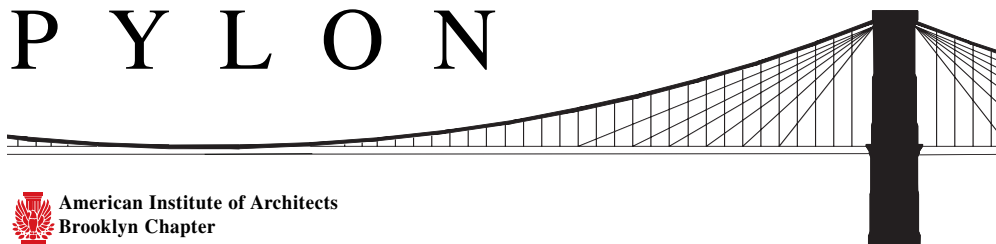
**Location:**  
T B A

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## MESSAGE BOARD

### SAVE THE DATE!

Brooklyn Architects Scholarship Foundation, Inc.

### Biennial Dinner Dance

Wednesday, March 28th, 2012

*Honoring*

**Richard Ferrara, RA, AIA**  
Lifetime Achievement Award

**Gerald I. Goldstein, RA, AIA**  
Advancement of the Architectural Profession Award

**John Gallagher, RA, AIA**  
Distinguished Achievement Award

**Ira Gluckman, RA, AIA**  
Distinguished Service Award

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