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## GREEK REVIVAL ARCHITECTURE BROOKLYN BOROUGH HALL

Brooklyn received its city charter in 1834 and the cornerstone for the building was set in 1836. The land for the building was donated to the city by the Remsen and Pierpont families. A competition to design the building was won by architect Calvin Pollard. However, due to lack of funds the construction was halted until 1845.

When work resumed again it was according to the design of architect Gamaliel King who had been the second place winner in the original design competition. King's design was scaled down to save money but the design paid homage to Pollard's original "Greek Revival Style" The building was constructed of Tuckahoe Marble.\* Construction was completed in 1848. In the year 1895 fire destroyed the cupola that stood at the top of the building. It was made of wood and painted to look like the marble used for the exterior.

Three years would pass before a new cast iron cupola was installed, and about the same time, i.e. 1898 Brooklyn became  
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*photos credit: Anthony Marchese, AIA*

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# **BROOKLYN ARCHITECTS SCHOLARSHIP FOUNDATION INC.**

Formed to raise funds for awarding architectural scholarships to qualified persons and to advance the architectural profession. All members that are in good standing of the AIA/Brooklyn are automatically members of the Brooklyn Architects Scholarship Foundation Inc.

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*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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# COMMITTEE URBAN DESIGN REPORT

October 15, 2014

Topic: Pier 6 Brooklyn Bridge Park Development

The Brooklyn Bridge Park Organization is to be commended for its efforts in seeking the best solution for this important location.\* After reviewing the 14 design proposals the Urban Design Committee reached a consensus nominating scheme number 10, by the team of NV/da + O'Neill McVoy Architects, as the most interesting building concept but, immediately after, unanimously agreed that Brooklyn Bridge park is not the place where it should be built, and could could set a precedent leading to further development in the park.

AIA Brooklyn is opposed to this usurpation of parkland for development. The Urban Design Committee report in the October 2014 Pylon suggests an alternate method of generating revenue for park maintenance which could at the same time contribute to the creation of new parks.

\* To read Pier 6 Development Sites RFP Update - see May 2014 Pylon (right).

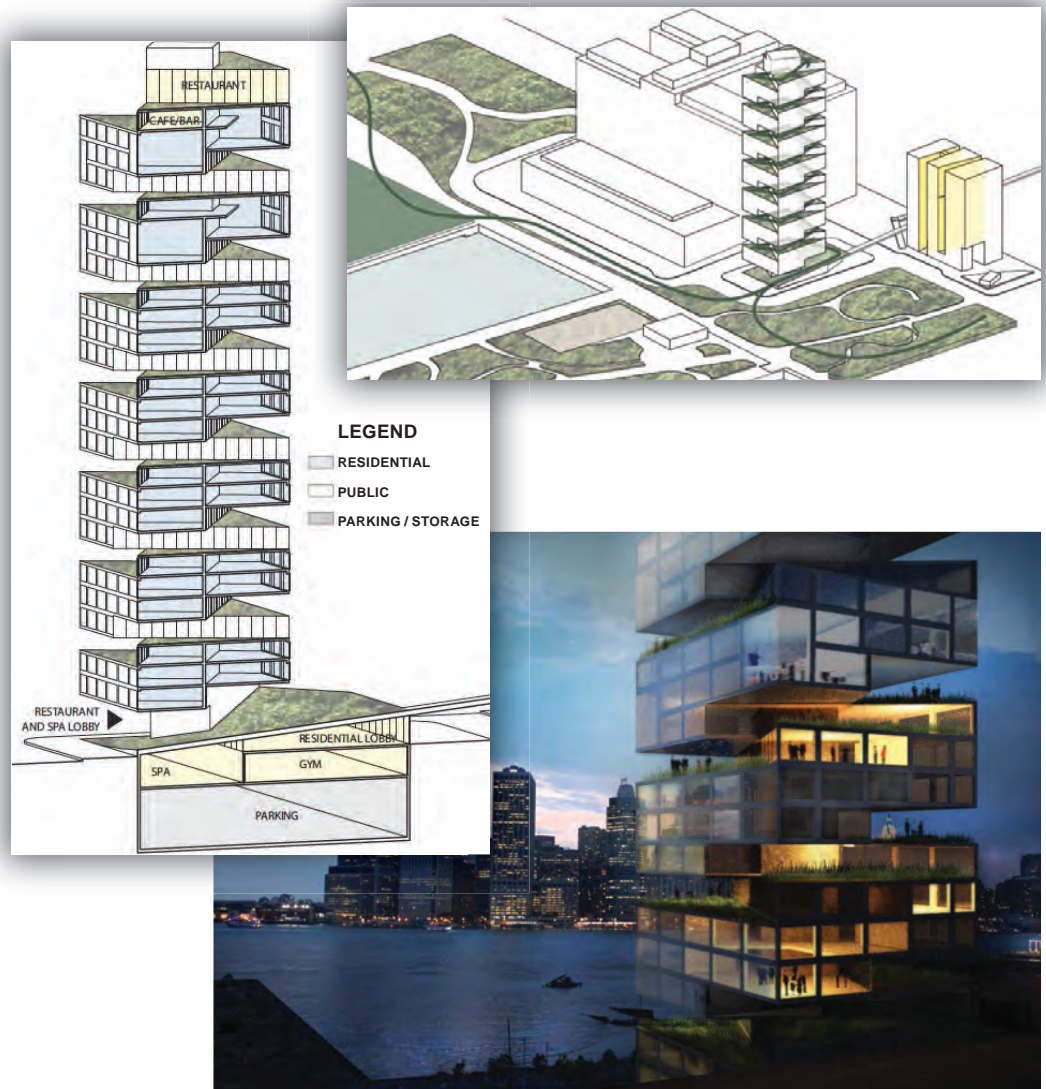
You can also visit our website to obtain a copy: [www.aiabrooklyn.org/pylons](http://www.aiabrooklyn.org/pylons)

To see the design proposals go to:

[www.BrooklynBridgePark.org/pages/project-approvals-and-presentations](http://www.BrooklynBridgePark.org/pages/project-approvals-and-presentations)



AIA



The message from the voters in this year's election was pretty clear: "We are tired of the gridlock and partisanship." But Congress and the White House have plenty of opportunities to get back in the voters' good graces. As architects on the front lines of job creation, we have two easy-to-implement ideas about how to do just that. Each has as its goal a primary concern of voters – increasing jobs and opportunity for small business. Better still, each has bipartisan support.

First, Congress can take a big step toward reforming how the government spends taxpayer dollars on design and construction. Federal procurement policy currently discourages the best architecture firms from ever competing for Uncle Sam's business. Firms are often forced to spend hundreds of thousands – if not millions – of dollars to compete for a contract they have a small chance of winning. That means small architecture and design firms face the dilemma of 'betting it all' on a contract they may not win, or simply staying on the sideline.

Legislation in both the House and Senate (in the House: Design-Build Efficiency and Jobs Act of 2013 - H.R. 2750; in the Senate: S.2652) would alleviate the strain on small firms by improving the odds that a qualified design firm can win a contract. The "Design Build" legislation would provide more certainty and opportunities

for design firms of all sizes who wish to enter the federal marketplace. It will ensure that agencies have the ability to select the most qualified design-build teams who will deliver the best buildings for agencies and the public. And, it will encourage more of the best talent in the architectural community to bid for Uncle Sam's business, which will benefit not only job creation but tax payers as well.

Second, Congress should restore an important incentive for energy efficient building, the Section 179D incentive, which was first included in the tax code in the Energy Policy Act of 2005. Commercial buildings consume roughly 36 percent of the electricity generated in this country, so by improving a building's energy efficiency, you take a big step forward to energy independence and lower electric bills. In the statute, the more energy-efficient the building is, the bigger the deduction (up to \$1.80 per square foot). Encouraging conservation is that rare bird on environmental issues where there are areas of agreement between Republicans and Democrats. Unfortunately, Congress let the incentive expire at the end of 2013. Restoring it will create jobs and save energy: a win-win for everybody.

- Joe Smith  
Executive Director of AIA Component

## GREEK REVIVAL ARCHITECTURE cont.

consolidated into the city of New York. Thereafter the building went from Brooklyn City Hall to Brooklyn Borough Hall. The building was designated a New York City Landmark in 1996. In 1980 the building was added to the National Register of Historic Places, the gilded statue of justice was placed on top of the cupola.

*\*Note: Tuckahoe or Westchester marble was quarried at Tuckahoe NY and besides the Borough Hall was used on many of New York City's notable buildings – to name a few: Federal Hall on Wall Street., Tweed*

*Courthouse on Chambers Street and Saint Patrick's Cathedral. (note: the Tuckahoe quarries are only about 30 miles from Brooklyn – good for obtaining LEED credits!)*

**On January 21, 2014 the new Commissioner of the Department of Buildings will be at our Chapter's General meeting. See Events section.**

- Anthony Marchese, AIA

## LAST PRESENTER MONTH

*Many thanks to last months presenter...*

**Laurel Christensen**  
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# RUBBERSTAMPING RAMPANT IN BROOKLYN (PART 1)

A disturbing trend within the profession, which has been growing over the last several years but is hard to document, is that of a licensed architect or engineer affixing his or her signature and seal to drawings that were not prepared by the individual, nor prepared under the direct supervision thereof. Commonly called "rubber stamping", documentation from the Department of Buildings web site has shown that this practice is more widespread than heretofore imagined. The rubberstamping phenomenon generally takes three forms. It is by no means limited to Brooklyn.

First, are jobs run by filing reps, also known as expeditors. This first scenario usually begins with a homeowner who wishes to enlarge or improve his home. The first person the owner calls is usually a contractor. Those contractors who are unwilling to work without a permit often steer the owner to an expeditor. Sometimes an owner, through friends or associates, will contact the filing rep directly. The expeditor will discuss the project scope with the owner, design the job and prepare plans or arrange with freelance drafters to prepare plans, and then shop for a professional to sign and seal the plans. The expeditor will file the job and pursue approval at DOB with as little further involvement of the professional as possible.

In most of these cases the expeditor controls the entire job including the financial arrangements. The owner pays the expeditor directly for all services. Cases have been documented where a job has stagnated at DOB, or the job has otherwise soured, and inquiries by the owner were made to DOB. When asked for the architect's name the owner often does not know it, or names the expeditor as the architect.

DOB had, a policy of requiring the applicant of record to attend all examiner appointments after number 5, as a way of requiring direct input of the professional. This policy was recently changed after Borough administration grew tired of repeated complaints from filing reps that they had been turned away from appointments because the applicant could not, or would not attend meetings with examiners.

Cases where an examiner appointment is attended by both the professional and the filing rep have been noted where the professional agrees with the examiner that a change to the plans is necessary, but the filing rep protests. This is often the result of promises made to the owner by the filing rep that cannot be approved. The filing rep is unwilling to go back to the owner and explain that what was promised cannot be built.

Some filing reps who illegally practice architecture in this way use several professionals to aid and abet

them, although it is hard to discern patterns. In some cases the previous arrangement becomes unacceptable to one or both parties. Often, too many changes based on resolution of objections requires more professional input than the licensee bargained for or that the expeditor is willing to pay for. . Jobs involving superseding of applicants are often examples of rubber stamped projects gone sour.

**RA's and PE's, many of them newly licensed, willing to make easy money by participating in this illegal activity.**

Unfortunately, here seem to be plenty of RA's and PE's, many of them newly licensed, willing to make easy money by participating in this illegal activity. AIA campaigns to warn owners to "see an architect first" have been largely ineffectual in reaching homeowners or small businesses. Mainly, since past messages have been targeted at an audience that already knows the value of an architect's services from the beginning of a project.

Second are jobs where licensed professionals actually provide access to their stamp to third parties. In this scenario a formal arrangement between a licensed professional and an expeditor for the use of the stamp is made.

DOB has seen several cases where applicants notify DOB of misuse of their stamp and wish to withdraw from a list of jobs. This often occurs after disagreements occur between the filing rep and the licensee over financial arrangements. Again, owners often do not deal directly with the licensee and often have made all payments for services to the filing rep. For the licensee the arrangement is quick money without the work. For the filing rep the arrangement leads to credibility in the community, and the major part of the fee for services.

This article shall continue within the next Pylon.

- John Gallagher, AIA,  
President Brooklyn AIA (1996-1997)



# KITCHEN RENOVATION ITALIAN STYLE

Working on a farmhouse in Tuscany (near Florence) that is over 200 years old



*inspecting the layout*



*mason building supporting structure of extruded terra cotta blocks and planks*



*supporting structure complete*



*completed supporting structure gets a scratch coat of cement over mesh*





mason sets sink into counter



sink in place mason double coats counter,  
note: working drawing on yellow tracing paper  
taped to wall - has it been examined and  
approved and permit issued ?



scratch coat and finish coat  
done the same day



finish the surface with  
steel trowel, mason has  
a good eye everything  
looks level and  
plumb



counter complete  
clean-up time

All cleaned - up, counter  
ready for cabinet inserts,  
appliances installed - electric oven  
and induction cook top. Walls to be  
painted - put that item on the punch list !



## THE SICCUPS CORNER

The Latin word "Sic" pronounced sik, or sek and meaning "Thus"; or; "it is so" is used in written texts to indicate that a surprising or paradoxical word, phrase, or fact is not a mistake and is to be read as it stands.

The advent of the computer allows us to make mistakes faster than ever before. Most spell checking programs will not pick up every misspelling and will do nothing for correctly spelled but out of place words. The following are taken from actual working drawings, applications and correspondence filed with the DOB, along with some commentary.

Open porche (sic)  
– a convertible sports car  
Proposed beating (sic) and drinking establishment  
– a new S & M bar?  
Garbage chew (sic)  
– not very appetizing  
Dinning (sic) Room  
– too noisy too eat  
Elevator sing (sic) off  
– sounds even better than in the shower  
Herewith Submitting Super Structural (sic) Drawings  
– and the sprinkler drawings aren't so bad either

- John Gallagher, AIA

## THE QUOTES CORNER

*"A truly great book should be read in youth,  
again in maturity and once more in old age,  
as a fine building should be seen by morning light,  
at noon and by moonlight."*

- Robertson Davies

*"A doctor can bury his mistakes,  
but an architect can only advise his clients  
to plant vines."*

- Frank Lloyd Wright

## AIA BROOKLYN NEWS

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# LOOKING AHEAD

## REGULARLY SCHEDULED CHAPTER MEETINGS

Unless otherwise noted,  
all meetings are scheduled at:

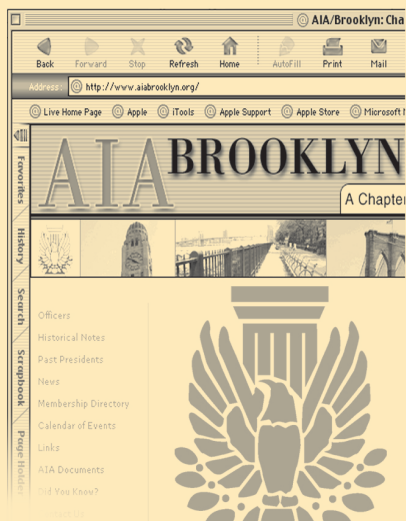
Committee Meetings: 5:30 PM  
Cocktails: 5:30 PM  
Dinner: 6:00 PM  
Program: 7:00 PM

General Meeting  
during the  
ANNUAL HOLIDAY PARTY  
**Wednesday,**  
December 3, 2014

### Location:

The Liberty Warehouse  
260 Conover Street  
Brooklyn, NY 11231

## AIA Brooklyn Chapter website



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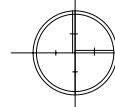
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P Y L O N

NEWSLETTER

**UPCOMING  
CHAPTER  
MEETINGS**

Dec. 3, 2014  
Jan. 21, 2015



## EVENTS CALENDAR ACTIVITIES

### CHAPTER'S GENERAL MEETING

*Jan. 21, 2015*

*The new location:  
Brooklyn Borough Hall  
Community Room 209  
Joralemon Street, Bklyn, NY 1120*

The new  
Commissioner of the Department  
of Buildings will be speaking at our  
Chapter's General meeting

### SAGRADA FAMILIA GAUDÍ'S UNFINISHED MASTERPIECE: GEOMETRY, CONSTRUCTION AND SITE

*September 29, 2014 – May 8, 2015  
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141 Convent Avenue (at 135th Street)*

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of La Sagrada Familia,  
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be featured on American soil. Many  
institutions have vied for this singular  
opportunity, and City College is honored  
to offer this extraordinary experience.  
Not to be missed.

### AIA BROOKLYN HOLIDAY PARTY

*Wednesday, December 3, 2014*

*The Liberty Warehouse  
260 Conover Street  
Brooklyn, NY 11231*

### LATIN AMERICA IN CONSTRUCTION: ARCHITECTURE 1955-1980

*March 29, 2015 - Sunday, July 19, 2015  
New York, NY - MoMA*

In 1955 The Museum of Modern Art  
staged Latin American Architecture since  
1945, a landmark survey of modern  
architecture in Latin America (photo right).  
On the 60th anniversary of that important  
show, the Museum returns to the region to  
offer a complex overview of the positions,  
debates, and architectural creativity from  
Mexico and Cuba to the Southern Cone  
between 1955 and the early 1980s.

### 2015 CAE SPRING CONFERENCE

*April 15 - April 18, 2015  
Detroit, Michigan*

The American Institute of Architects  
Committee on Architecture for

Education (CAE) connects architects  
and allied professionals interested in  
designing, building and using superior  
educational, cultural, and recreational  
facilities that meet the needs of  
students of all ages. AIA-CAE members  
educate the public about the value of  
quality educational facility design.

*Brasilia under construction, 1957*

