

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ARCHITECTS & CITY AGENCIES COME TOGETHER TO IMPROVE PUBLIC HEALTH AT FITCITY 9

***NYC Commissioners Bassett, Calise, Corrado, and Peña-Mora to
discuss promoting physical activity through design on May 19, 2014***

Press are invited to attend. RSVP to Camila Schaulsohn, cschaulsohn@aiany.org, 212-357-6114

NEW YORK, NY, May 5, 2014 — In an effort to improve public health and prevent obesity and chronic diseases such as diabetes, heart disease, and asthma, the American Institute of Architects New York Chapter (AIANY), in partnership with the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, will host FitCity 9 at the New School University Center at 63 Fifth Avenue on Monday, May 19, 8:30 AM - 5:00 PM.

Speakers and participants will examine how design of the built environment can create opportunities for increasing physical activity and access to healthier food and beverages and help to improve health equity across neighborhoods. The program brings together architects, planners, designers, landscape architects, developers, public health professionals, and community residents and leaders to discuss how design, policy, and practice decisions can address the key health epidemics of our time: obesity and related chronic diseases such as diabetes, heart disease, cancers, and asthma. The entire program schedule is available [here](#) and at the end of this release.

This year's event will also explore the alignment of health-promoting design with the priorities of the new administration, including the creation of affordable housing that promotes resident and community well-being and the safe and equitable access to active transportation and transit with Vision Zero's street safety goals.

Hundreds of attendees will hear speakers and panelists including commissioners from New York City agencies including NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene Commissioner Mary Bassett, Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities Commissioner Victor Calise, NYC

Department for the Aging Commissioner Donna Corrado, and NYC Department of Design + Construction Commissioner Feniosky A. Peña-Mora.

Rick Bell, FAIA, AIANY Executive Director, said, “Active Design is of increasing importance in a city that cares deeply about equal access to public services and recreational opportunities. It speaks to how we move through our communities in all five boroughs and how our buildings provide physical activity that combats the epidemics of a sedentary society.”

“Everyone deserves to live in a healthy and vibrant neighborhood,” said Dr. Mary T. Bassett, NYC Health Commissioner. “We are proud to partner with communities to create play spaces for children and safe streets for cyclists and pedestrians. Ensuring that design practices support opportunities for physical activity help combat the epidemics of obesity and reduce the risk of chronic diseases like diabetes and heart disease.”

Conference participants will also hear how the strategies included in the [Active Design Guidelines](#), released in January 2010, are being implemented by multiple government and non-government organizations in communities throughout NYC and across the country. The *Active Design Guidelines* provide architects and urban designers with strategies for creating healthier buildings, streets, and urban spaces, based on the latest academic research and best practices in the field. They include urban design strategies for creating neighborhoods, streets, and outdoor spaces that encourage walking, bicycling and active transportation and recreation, and building design strategies for promoting active living where we work, live and play.

The conference will also include an exclusive tour of the recently-completed University Center, led by Lia Gartner, FAIA, VP of Design and Construction for The New School.

FitCity 9 continues at The Center for Architecture at 536 LaGuardia Place on Tuesday, May 20, 9:00 AM-12:00 PM. The second day of the conference will create the opportunity for participants to discuss the issues raised during the panels and presentations on the first day. The half-day gathering will include a variety of roundtable conversations and hands-on workshops related to the intersection Active Design, affordable housing, and transportation access in all of New York City's five boroughs.

For more information about FitCity 9, including the program schedule, visit www.aiany.org.



About the AIA New York Chapter

AIA New York is the oldest and largest chapter of the American Institute of Architects with almost 5,000 architect, allied professional, student, and public members. AIANY is dedicated to three goals: design excellence, public outreach and professional development. www.aiany.org



About the Center for Architecture

The Center for Architecture is a destination for all interested in the built environment. It is home to the American Institute of Architects New York Chapter and the Center for Architecture Foundation, vibrant nonprofit organizations that provide resources to both the public and building industry professionals. Through exhibitions, programs, and special events, the Center aims to improve the quality and sustainability of the built environment, foster exchange between the design, construction, and real estate communities, and encourage collaborations across the city and globe. For more information, please visit cfa.aiany.org.

Monday, May 19, 8:30 AM - 5:00 PM - Program Schedule

8:30 am

Registration

8:45-9:00 am

Welcome and Introductions

Joel Towers, Executive Dean, Parsons The New School for Design

Lance Jay Brown, FAIA, 2014 President, AIA New York Chapter

9:00-9:45 am

Health Keynote

Introduction: Elizabeth J. Garland, MD, MS, Associate Professor, Departments of Preventive Medicine and Pediatrics, Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai

Angela Glover Blackwell, Founder and President, PolicyLink

9:45-11:00 am

Active Design in a Progressive City: Commissioners Panel

Moderator: Rick Bell, FAIA, Executive Director, AIA New York Chapter

Mary Bassett, Commissioner, NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

Victor Calise, Commissioner, Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities

Donna Corrado, Commissioner, NYC Department for the Aging

Robert Garafola, Deputy Commissioner for Management and Budget, NYC Departments of Parks and Recreation

Jon Orcutt, Policy Director, NYC Department of Transportation

Dr. Feniosky A. Peña-Mora, Commissioner, NYC Department of Design and Construction

11:00 am

Break

11:15-12:45 pm

Active and Affordable: Stepping Up Housing in New York City

Moderator: Sarah Wolf, MPH, RD, Active Design Manager, Active Living Program, NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

Colleen Flynn, Director, Green and Healthy Neighborhoods, LISC New York City

Elyzabeth Gaumer, Director of Research, NYC Housing Preservation and Development Corporation (HPD)

Jack Robbins, AIA, LEED AP, Senior Associate, FXFOWLE Architects

Katie Swenson, Vice President, National Design Initiatives, Enterprise Community Partners, Inc.

12:45-2:15 pm

Lunch Break

Exclusive tour of The New School University Center: **Lia Gartner, FAIA**, VP of Design and Construction, The New School

2:15-3:45 pm

Safe Streets and Equitable Transportation Access Get People Moving

Moderator: Wendy Feuer, Assistant Commissioner Design of Art & Wayfinding, NYC Department of Transportation

Cecil D. Corbin-Mark, Deputy Director/Director of Policy Initiatives, WE ACT for Environmental Justice

Michael King, RA, Principal, NelsonNygaard

Caroline Samponaro, Senior Director of Campaigns and Organizing, Transportation Alternatives

Edie Zusman, MD, FACS, Director, Adult Neurosurgery, Sutter Neuroscience Institute

3:45 pm

Break

4:00-4:45 pm

Design Keynote

Introduction: Joanna Frank, Executive Director, Center for Active Design

Martin Dunn, President, Dunn Development Corp

4:45-5:00 pm

Closing Remarks

David Burney, FAIA, Chair of the Board of Directors, Center for Active Design; Professor, Pratt Graduate Center for Planning and the Environment