Converting Your Basement into a Liveable Space in New York City

Housing Innovation Lab: Basements

FEBRUARY 7th, 2019

Citizens Housing & Planning Council
Explore cutting-edge ideas, technologies, and practices that can enhance quality of life and safety in basement apartments.

What do we mean by “habitability” when it comes to lighting?

Can electric light mimic daylight in a sub-grade space?

What is the key to good air quality in a basement?

Are basements really less fire-safe than above-grade living spaces?

Which new technologies can help make basements safer and more habitable?
Schedule

8:30 am  Check-in and breakfast

9:00 am  Welcome  
David Walsh, JPMorgan Chase

**Introduction to the Housing Innovation Lab**  
Jessica Katz, Citizens Housing and Planning Council

**What does this mean for our community?**  
Annetta Seecharran, Chhaya CDC

9:10 am  What do we mean by habitability when it comes to lighting?  
Star Davis, WeWork

To what extent can electric light simulate daylight?  
Robert Soler, BIOS Lighting

**Alternative pathways for meeting the code intent**  
Daniel Frering & Jennifer Brons, Lighting Research Center, RPI

**Lessons from London**  
Graham Jacobs, Limitless Ltd

10:10 am  Policymaker Panel  
NYC Council member Lander; Matt Murphy, NYC HPD; Tony Shitemi, Urban Architectural Initiatives

10:45 am  Coffee break

11:00 am  Introduction to Health and Safety  
Mark Ginsberg, Curtis + Ginsberg Architects

**Moisture and air quality**  
John Rockwell, Zehnder America

**Safety and first response in basements**  
David Jacoby, Simpson Gumpertz & Heger

**Plumis automist technology**  
Rick Merck, Plumis
Plastic pipe solutions for faster and cheaper retrofits
Lance MacNevin, Plastics Pipe Institute

Intumescent paint
Tony Scott, Contego International

Policymaker Panel (5 mins following each presentation)
James Colgate, Bryan Cave; John Buckheit, NYC FDNY

12:30 pm  Impacts for homeowners and tenants
Christie Peale, Center for NYC Neighborhoods

Closing remarks
Jessica Katz, Citizens Housing and Planning Council
Presenters

David Walsh, Executive Director, JPMorgan Chase & Co.
David joined JP Morgan Chase in 2011 as Senior VP of Community Development Real Estate overseeing all financing activities of affordable housing transactions in the Northeast Region. Prior to joining JP Morgan Chase, Mr. Walsh served worked in Multifamily Programs for NYS Homes & Community Renewal (“HCR”), and at Common Ground Community, the Wafr Investment Advisory Group, and at the LCP Group. David received a B.A. from Western New England College and a M.A. from Columbia University’s School of Architecture, Planning & Preservation.

Jessica Katz, Executive Director, CHPC
Prior to CHPC, Jessica served at the NYC Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD), most recently as the Associate Commissioner for New Construction. In that role, she oversaw the creation of affordable and special needs housing, serving everyone from the formerly homeless to middle-income New Yorkers. Joining HPD in 2003, she held a variety of leadership roles. She broke up her tenure at HPD with a year-long term as the Executive Director of Lantern Community Services. Jessica holds a B.A. from McGill University and a M.A. in City Planning from MIT.

Annetta Seecharran, Executive Director, Chhaya CDC
Before Chhaya, Annetta served as Director for Policy and Advocacy at United Neighborhood Houses (UNH) and as the Executive Director of South Asian Youth (SAYA!). She has worked at the International Youth Foundation (IYF) and at the United Nations Development Fund for Women in Gender and Development Program. Annetta holds an M.A. in international political economy and development from Fordham University, a B.A. in political science from Manhattanville College, and certificates from Columbia Business School and Harvard Business School.

Star Davis, Head of Lighting, WeWork
Star leads a team of international designers focusing on light and daylight. Guiding her approach is a deep understanding of architecture, visual perception, physics, and manufacturing and construction methodology. Formerly at Arup, her projects include Fulton Center, SFMOMA, the Lowline, and the Metropolitan Museum of Art.
Prior to BIOS, Robert worked with the Kennedy Space Center, where he helped design and build the first LED for use on the International Space Station (ISS). After NASA, he led research into the development of the ISS photobiologically corrected white light that is responsible for circadian entrainment of astronauts and the spectrally tunable adaptable light that manipulates spectrum based on its surrounding environment. He holds a M.A. from the Lighting Research Center at RPI and is finishing a Ph.D. in Behavioral Neuroscience at the U.C. San Diego.

**Daniel Frering**, Director of Grants Development & Educational Programs, Lighting Research Center, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (RPI)
Daniel directs the institute’s educational programs, including teaching, and course and curriculum development. He holds a Lighting Certification from the National Council on Qualifications for the Lighting Professions and a graduate degree in education. In addition to teaching courses and seminars, Daniel currently conducts research on the evaluation of daylighting technologies, photovoltaic outdoor lighting systems, and energy-efficient lighting for commercial buildings.

**Jennifer Brons**, Director of Design Demonstrations, Lighting Research Center, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (RPI)
Jennifer is a research scientist and adjunct professor of architecture at the Lighting Research Center (LRC). Her work focuses on lighting design applications and human factor studies for new technologies. She heads the “DELTA” Program, a series of lighting case studies that are available to the public online, and also coordinates a light pollution program entitled “Outdoor Site Lighting Performance” on behalf of companies in North America and Europe. She earned her B.A. in architecture from U.C. Berkeley and her M.S. in Lighting from RPI.

**Graham Jacobs**, Director, Limitless Ltd
Graham is driven by the desire to bring natural light into every dark home and business where people live and work. He has fueled his passion by designing homes using the latest technology in heating, water conservation, lighting, and low carbon building techniques. His award-winning designs have gained recommendation from Kevin McCloud of Grand Designs; the Home Office, a UK Government organisation, the Federation of Small Businesses, the NHS, and international developers/architects such as Kier Construction, Arup and Buro Happold.
Matthew Murphy, Deputy Commissioner for the Office of Policy & Strategy, NYC Housing Preservation & Development (HPD)

Matthew directly oversees two divisions: Housing Policy and Strategic Operations & Analytics. Matthew came to HPD as Assistant Commissioner for Strategic Planning in 2015, after having served as a Senior Project Manager and Policy Advisor at HDC since 2011. He has played a central role in many of the City’s signature achievements, including the Mandatory Inclusionary Housing program, the reform of 421-a, and the new Certification of No Harassment policy, among others. He holds a M.A. in Urban Planning from NYU and a B.A. from DePaul University.

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Tony Shitemi, Principal & Co-founder, Urban Architectural Initiatives

Tony has long focused his attention on serving grass-roots, nonprofit organizations. His first experience in this work was in the mid-1980s at Pratt Center for Community Development. He participated in the reconstruction of urban areas that had declined precipitously in the 60s and 70s, improvements that were fostered by sensible housing and urban redevelopment policies. Tony’s priority has always been developments that are valuable to local neighborhoods such as community centers, affordable residences, and homes for special needs populations. His work has encompassed rehabilitation, historic renovation, and new construction, from rowhouses to new multi-family developments.

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Mark Ginsberg, Principal, Curtis + Ginsberg Architects LLP

Mark has over 33 years of professional experience in planning, urban design, institutional and housing projects. His expertise in affordable and mixed income housing, resiliency and green design, has been recognized through his many lectures at national and local conferences. Mark has held leadership positions on the boards of many esteemed organizations, including the AIA New York Chapter, New York New Visions (NYNV), the New York State Association for Affordable Housing (NYSAFAH) Board of Trustees, and the National Housing Conference Board of Trustees. He is President of Citizen’s Housing and Planning Council. He holds a B.A. from Wesleyan and an M.A. from the University of Pennsylvania.
Lance MacNevin, Director of Engineering, Plastics Pipe Institute
Lance is a mechanical engineer with expertise in codes and piping standards. He joined PPI in 2015 as the director of engineering, building and construction, and conduit divisions. He is responsible for each division’s technical, marketing, educational, and industry outreach programs. A 25-year veteran of the plastic pipes industry, Lance joined PPI from The REHAU Group, where, most recently, he managed the company’s training academy for contractors, engineers, and architects. Lance is a contributor to HPAC magazine and serves on the technical committees of AHRAE, ASME, ASPE, ASTM, AWWA, CSA, IAPMO, NEMA, RPA, and UL.

John Rockwell, Technical Sales Engineer, Zehnder America
John has worked in residential design, municipal clean energy management, utility-funded weatherization, building science, and Passive House construction. While designing and building his own low-energy, high-performance home, he began working with Swiss-owned Zehnder America, a manufacturer of among the most efficient Heat Recovery Ventilation systems available in America. John received his B.A. in Architecture from Wentworth Institute of Technology his M.A. from the University of Miami.

David Jacoby, Principal, Simpson Gumpertz & Heger
David joined Simpson Gumpertz & Heger Inc. (SGH) in 2012 as principal and leader of its Fire Engineering Practice. David has more than 20 years of experience in fire protection engineering that has included work on large assembly type occupancies, stadia, arenas, convention centers, mixed-use high-rise facilities, airports, assembly facilities, casinos, residential facilities, hospitals, federal courthouses, and office buildings. He has a broad range of code consulting, design, modeling, and fire testing knowledge reinforced with firefighting experience.

Richard E. Merck, PE, DFE, EFO, CFEI, CFPS, Plumis
Rick is a fire protection engineer, inducted as a Board Certified Diplomat into the National Academy of Forensic Engineers, graduate of the Executive Fire Officer Program from the National Fire Academy, a Certified Fire and Explosive Investigator, and an NFPA Certified Fire Protection Specialist. He has over two decades of public sector service in the Building Department and Fire Service. He is an Instructor and Subject Matter Expert at the National Fire Academy in Emmitsburg, Maryland. He is a member of the NFPA, the Society of Fire Protection Engineers, International Code Council, National Association of Fire and Explosive Investigators and International Association of Arson Investigators. He graduated from the US Naval Academy with a B.S. in Electrical Engineering.

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Tony Scott, Executive Vice President, Contego International

Tony Scott is the Executive Vice President of Corporate Development at Contego International, which he joined in 2001. Tony has over three decades of experience in the corporate development, marketing, and operations of multiple firms invested in high-tech solutions for a wide range of industries, including the commercial, medical, and engineering sectors. Prior to this work, Tony worked in media advertising and founded a computer and information systems company. He also served for ten years in the U.S. Navy as a cryptologist and in public affairs.

John Buckheit, Deputy Assistant Chief, Fire Department of New York (FDNY) Bureau of Fire Prevention

John has had a distinguished career at FDNY, where he currently serves as the Deputy Assistant Chief. He received his bachelor’s degree in geological engineering from SUNY Brockport (Magna Cum Laude) and his master’s degree from CUNY College John Jay Criminal Justice. He also holds numerous training certifications through FDNY and DHS.

James Colgate, Partner, Bryan Cave Leighton Paisner LLP

James is a real estate lawyer and an architect who advises developers, lenders, non-profit institutions, and public agencies on a wide variety of land use issues, including special permits, zoning variances, and navigation of NYC’s building codes and regulations. Before joining Bryan Cave, James was an Assistant Commissioner at the NYC Department of Buildings, where he issued complex interpretations, co-authored laws, and managed the department’s legislative efforts to revise the NYC Construction Codes. He has also worked at NYC HPD and DCP. James is a member of AIA; is a certified floodplain manager; and served as FEMA’s floodplain administrator for the City of New York from 2004 to 2014.

Christie Peale, CEO & Executive Director, Center for New York City Neighborhoods (CNYCN)

Under Christie’s leadership, the CNYCN has become a leading voice for affordable homeownership. Christie has been instrumental in organizing foreclosure prevention services statewide, raising millions of dollars for homeowners recovering from Hurricane Sandy, and launching a $7.5 million resiliency program for coastal communities. Before joining CNYCN, she worked for the NYS HFA, for affordable housing developers in Washington Heights and Bushwick, and in healthcare advocacy. Christie has a B.A. from Harvard College and a Master’s of Social Work in Community Organizing and Planning from Hunter College.
Special Thanks

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