

**The Hong Kong Institute of Architects
Second Quarterly General Meeting
18 June 2020**

President's Report

Dear Members,

Thank a lot for joining the second Quarterly General Meeting (QGM) of The Hong Kong Institute of Architects (HKIA) in 2020. Even with the latest social distancing measures due to COVID-19 minor local outbreak, we manage by amending the onsite-cum-online format a bit, so as to accommodate more Members onsite, though still need to cap at 50 due to the need for observing social distance. We are glad that we can connect with more via online too. I do hope that by the time of the next QGM, Hong Kong and the globe can revert to “normal” – so that we can have the face-to-face dialogue with as many Members as possible.

In previous QGMs, we always made full use of the gathering opportunity to invite our industry related heavyweights to share their wisdom with us. Even the coronavirus outbreak would not deter us from continuing with this good practice. Tonight, we are honoured to have our member Mrs. Sylvia LAM, JP, Director of Architectural Services, as our distinguished guest speaker. In her speech on “Collaboration for Opportunities”, she would share with us her insight in collaboration amongst architects, other professionals and ArchSD for a better built environment in Hong Kong.

Support for Members in Ups and Downs

I hope that the COVID-19 outbreak would continue to subside. Yet, with the local economy already having suffered from the earlier global trade war and social movement, the severe blow of the outbreak over these months means it may take some time, hopefully not too long, for economy recovery. Our profession and our Members have been bracing for the turmoil and the financial challenge for quite a while.

The HKIA Council has been working over these months in an attempt to support our Members to tide over the difficult times. We have been liaising with various government bureaus and departments and succeed in, among others, fighting for:-

- extending the Anti-epidemic Fund coverage to all of our Registered Practices including small and medium firms in addition to those on the List of Consultants of the Architectural and Associated Consultants Selection Board (AACSB)
- earlier release of payment for prolongation claim instead of awaiting for end of a contract
- a subsidised job retention and job creation scheme for architectural fresh graduates or young trainees, details of which would soon be finalised
- working with government or public bodies on build design competitions of varied scales

The Institute also helps our Members to look beyond Hong Kong. We have produced a new page on HKIA website “Opportunities in Mainland 機遇·內地” to keep Members updated of various architectural design competitions and tender information of Guangzhou, Shenzhen and other Greater Bay Area cities.

On the community front, the Institute’s COVID-19 Volunteer Group, which comprises about 60 HKIA Members of different generations, have been utilising their architectural expertise to help the public fight against the outbreak and sustain healthy built environment. Since March, they have visited 1 elderly residential complex and 7 schools to inspect and advise on their hygiene and safety conditions. They have also outreached to underprivileged families in Kennedy Town and Tsuen Wan to provide them with care, facial masks and supermarket coupons with the donated masks from local business enterprises and cash donations from our Council members. More outreach activities are in the pipeline with the support from the Institute and our volunteer team. Our volunteers are also making use of their design talent to work on building health check online game and health tips smart cards.

In the longer term, we also aim to bring silver lining to the coronavirus outbreak by working on healthy building policies or guidelines in collaboration with related professions or institutes.

The outbreak has led to cancellation or suspension of many activities. Yet, I would still like to share with you some of our endeavours in the second quarter of 2020.

Promoting Architectural Excellence

Young Architect Award (YAA) 2019

The prestigious award this year is bestowed on Mr. WONG Yuk Fai Arnold. Honorable Mentions go to Ms. TANG Chi Hang Javian and Mr. YIU Kam Po Vince. Congratulations to all. Our heartfelt gratitude also goes to our jurors who have taken up a challenging, yet I believe fruitful, task of selecting the winners through a series of interviews with shortlisted talented candidates conducted from 30 March to 25 April. In response to this year’s YAA theme of “Housing+ Reimagine Affordable Housing & Better Living”, many of the 21 entries have come up with innovative and unique design proposals of housing communities demonstrating forward-looking ideas. The annual YAA is co-organised by HKIA and Asian Cultural Council Hong Kong to acknowledge the talents and contribution of architects aged 35 or below.

Events Postponement due to COVID-19 Outbreak

The 17th Venice Biennale International Architecture Exhibition – Hong Kong Exhibition and Response Exhibitions (VB 2020)

The event is sponsored by Create Hong Kong of the HKSAR government, the HKIABF and Hong Kong Arts Development Council. La Biennale di Venezia announced on 18 May 2020 that the event in Venice will be postponed for a year, to be held from 22 May to 21 November 2021. Consequentially, we are working on revising the project schedule and budget for the Hong Kong collateral event. Yet, before the organiser’s deferral announcement, we have conducted a press conference at HKIA Premises on 13 May.

CADSA Core and Roving Exhibitions

The Core Exhibition is now scheduled for 23 June to 7 July 2020 at the Main Concourse of One ifc Hong Kong. The roving exhibitions in Shenzhen and Malaysia will be staged later in the year.

Hong Kong & Shenzhen Bi-City Biennale of Urbanism\Architecture (UABBHK2019)

The Hong Kong exhibition of UABBHK2019, themed “2x2: *Imagine to Innovate*”, was held at The Mills from December 2019 to 15 March 2020 – though the venue needed to be closed from 29 January to 9 February due to the outbreak. The series of events originally planned for February and March, such as symposium and innovative community activities, are tentatively rescheduled to June and afterwards this year. UABBHK is organised by the Hong Kong Institute of Architects Biennale Foundation (HKIAB”) in association with HKIA, The Hong Kong Institute of Planners and Hong Kong Designers Association, and sponsored by Create Hong Kong of the HKSAR government.

Communication within Institute

HKIA Online Live Chat with Members

We have organised the second online Live Chat with Members of this year on 1 June evening. Office Bearers and the six Boards presented the changed plans or activities resultant from the COVID-19 outbreak, as well as the initiatives for supporting Members and the community to face the challenges. A few young Members also presented to share their experiences of joining volunteering and sports activities under HKIA.

We plan to have at least one more Live Chat in the fourth quarter of this year for having interactive and constructive dialogue with Members.

HKIA WeChat Group 「HKIA 會員交流微信群」

To enhance communication with Members, HKIA has recently set up the WeChat Group, managed by our Secretariat Beijing Office. We hope that the added channel not only help facilitate Members to discuss on architectural-related issues, but also enable us to update Members with the latest architectural news and activities.

HKIA New Payment Methods

To facilitate Members payments for different purposes, HKIA has lately introduced the additional online methods of PayMe for Faster Payment System (FPS 轉數快). You can use these convenient ways to pay for membership fee, CPD event registration, purchase of HKIA publication or souvenir, donation and sponsorship for HKIA, etc.

HKIA Membership Benefit Programme

A number of services/products suppliers and vendors have committed to provide HKIA Members with benefits and discount. You can enjoy many special offers relating to catering, travel, entertainment, office needs, information technology, shopping for books, consumables and many others. The updates are regularly displayed in the HKIA website and HKIA Daily.

Communication with Professional Communities and Policy-makers

Discussion regarding the New Central Harbourfront

Six representatives of HKIA, including Vice-President Corrin Chan and I, attended a briefing by Development Bureau on 18 May 2020 on the proposed Two-envelope Tendering Arrangement for Disposal of Site 3 of the New Central Harbourfront. We have also submitted the Institute's views and comments on the issue on 15 April and 26 May 2020. While our support and appreciation for the Government's initiatives to embrace design merits into the tendering arrangement of Site 3.

Communication with Mainland

DEVB online Meeting on Qianhai Construction Market

BMA Board Member Rover CHEUNG and I attended an online meeting on 21 May 2020 with Development Bureau representatives to discuss on possible opening up of the construction market in Qianhai, Shenzhen to construction professionals in Hong Kong. Also presented were representatives of consulting engineers.

Shenzhen Registered Architects Association (SZRAA) CPD Courses

HKIA continued to collaborate with our Mainland counterparts to provide online CPD courses for our Members. The courses ran from 25 March to 7 April 2020 were attended by 16 HKIA members.

Connection with Overseas

The global outbreak of COVID-19 has led to postponement of activities of the international organisations that HKIA involved. In most cases, the terms of office of our representatives in the organisations have also extended for a year.

Architects Regional Council of Asia (ARCASIA)

The ACA19 Congress, 41st ARCASIA Annual Council Meeting and all related events are postponed to 2021.

Union of International Architects (UIA)

The UIA 27th World Congress of Architects and UIA General Assembly are postponed to July 2021, with venue remained unchanged at Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. The operation of UIA Gold Medal and Prizes and UIA Golden Cubes Awards of this year have also been deferred to early 2021

Canberra Accord

The 2020 Interim Meeting of Canberra Accord, which was originally scheduled in May, is now re-scheduled to September and will be staged via online only, again due to the COVID-19 outbreak.

I am glad to inform Members that next year, HKIA will fulfill our duty as being a full signatory of the Canberra Accord to host its 2021 General Meeting in Hong Kong. We will let you know the details probably by end of this year, or early next year.

Vote of Thanks

As of today, I have served three quarters of my current term of presidency. Time flies, and I am particularly reminded so by the Institute's recent announcement of the launch of the HKIA Council Election (2021-2022). Members are invited to make nominations, from now up to 10 August 2020, to fill up the 15 posts of Council Members — including me — whose term will expire on 31 December 2020. By the next QGM on 24 September 2020, the results will be announced, and you will know by then who will serve you in the coming two years. I call on all Members to make good use of your votes for the benefit of not only yourselves, but also the profession and even the Hong Kong society at large.

Before closing my President's report, I would like to reiterate the pledge of my Council peers to serve our Members, to promote architectural excellence, and to fulfil our social responsibility by applying the collective expertise of our members. We honour our pledge by words and deeds, in ups and downs. And I thank you all for the staunch support to HKIA at all times.

Yours sincerely,

Felix Li, *CHKIA, Registered Architect*
President
18 June 2020