

## **Honorary Membership Nomination Narrative**

Nominee: Susan Chin

Nominee's Address: 40 Worth Street, Suite 603

City/State/Zip: New York, NY 10013

Phone: 212-695 2432

Nominator: Nette Compton, ASLA-NY Past-President

I am honored to submit a nomination for Susan Chin to be granted honorary membership in ASLA. I have known Susan for a number of years in both her role with the City of New York and the Design Trust for Public Space. She has been a thoughtful and tireless advocate for innovative and collaborative work in the public realm.

Susan Chin is the Executive Director of the Design Trust for Public Space, a New York City nonprofit organization at the forefront of shaping the public realm since 1995. The Design Trust forges alliances between public agencies, community groups, and nonprofits to incubate and carry out projects such as the High Line, the Taxi of Tomorrow, a suite of high performance design manuals for buildings, infrastructure and landscape, and recently completed Making Midtown to transform the Garment District into a creative district. Implementation of "Five Borough Farm Phase II," a citywide urban agriculture policy, will make more land and resources available. Susan joined the organization in 2011, and has shepherded a number of projects during her tenure that are models for urban design. In many of these projects, landscape architects play a central role. All of these projects have a hallmark of cross-disciplinary pursuit of innovative solutions to important local and regional resources across New York City. While projects have a place in New York, their structure, findings and ideas are relevant nationally and internationally.

As the former Assistant Commissioner for Capital Projects for the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, Susan dedicated 23 years to commissioning numerous innovative and high performance architecture and public art, valued at over \$3B at cultural organizations citywide. In this role, she helped shape the city's urban landscape for years to come, ushering in projects like the New Museum on the Bowery, Lincoln Center's Alice Tully Hall and the Museum of the Moving Image in Queens. To accomplish this great number of projects within the complex inter-governmental structure of New York City is a testament to her enthusiasm, dedication and vision. Her body of work reflects a great ambition and high level of execution, impacting the New York skyline and cultural resources for years to come.

Chin has been consistently engaged within the AIA at a range of levels throughout her career. She was 2013/2014 Vice President on the AIA Board leading the Board Community Committee. As 2010-2012 New York regional director, she served on Strategic Directions Group and Communications, Gold Medal/Firm Award Advisory Committee and as chair (2011), and the EVP/CEO Search (2010). She has also participated in the Women in Architecture leadership summit. At the AIA New York Chapter, before her election as its president-elect (2004) and president (2005), she chaired the Design Awards and Finance committees. Susan served on the AIA New York State board (2007-2009), while also serving on national committees such as Component Partnerships (2008) and Long Range Planning (2008).

Her commitment to professional organizations extends well beyond her own, and her work reflects her passion for how design professionals, especially emerging professionals, can serve as leaders in a wider range of roles, increasing our shared knowledge through improved communication, and tackling complex problems and public policies surrounding the public realm.

Chin was awarded a Loeb fellowship at the Harvard University Graduate School of Design in 2000. She earned a master's degree in historic preservation from Columbia University's Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation, and a bachelor's of science degree in architecture from Ohio State University.

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To Whom It May Concern:

I am pleased to support the nomination of Susan Chin for an honorary membership in ASLA.

I have known Susan for a number of years first in her role with the City of New York and more recently as the Executive Director of the Design Trust for Public Space.

I founded the Design Trust in 1995 to improve the quality of New York's public built environment for the benefit of all New Yorkers. As its current President and Board Chair, I can vouch for Susan's outstanding tenure as Executive Director. Since joining us in 2011 Susan has turned the Design Trust into a much more mature and full-fledged organization and has sustained the highest respect among her peers for having initiated and shepherded projects throughout the city in impactful and significant ways. Susan's ability to forge alliances between public agencies, community groups, and nonprofits is unparalleled, and she is making an indelible mark on the City of New York, via improved parks, infrastructure, farms, gardens, and streetscapes that will have a lasting effect for years to come. Moreover, Susan is achieving national recognition for the Design Trust's work as a catalyst and incubator of innovative public space initiatives.

Landscape architecture is of course central to all of our concerns, and Susan deeply understands the power and responsibility of landscape design. I believe Susan to be completely deserving of the recognition for which she is nominated.

Sincerely



Andrea Woodner  
Founder and President  
Design Trust for Public Space



American Society of Landscape Architects  
636 Eye Street  
Washington, DC 20001-3736  
attn.: Carolyn Mitchell, Coordinator, Honors & Awards

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Re: Honorary Membership

To the ASLA Executive Committee:


As Executive Director of the AIA New York Chapter, it is my privilege to recommend Susan Chin, FAIA, a Past President of the American Institute of Architects New York Chapter, for Honorary Membership in the American Society of Landscape Architects. This recognition is given to those whose "achievements are of national or international significance" and have provided notable service to the profession of landscape architecture. Here at AIANY, we believe that Susan's leadership, focus on design, and ability to bring people together for common cause, has met the high standards of this most prestigious honor. We have appreciated her lifelong efforts and accomplishments of Susan Chin in creating places of quality and distinction by conferring the Chapter's Public Architects Award.

Susan's professional career has centered on her leadership role in the public sector, where she had long service as the Assistant Commissioner of the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs. With responsibility there for the City's cultural facilities capital program, she achieved significant results as the person leading the municipal effort to enhance the quality of the design of museums and the surrounding urban landscape in all five boroughs. She constantly strives to expand public appreciation of design and is known for the collaborative and interdisciplinary manner in which, as a public sector client, she empowers New York architects and landscape architects to achieve excellence.

While she was President of the AIA New York Chapter, Susan provided exemplary leadership at the pivotal time during which we significantly expanded the programming and diversity of offerings at our storefront Center for Architecture on LaGuardia Place in Greenwich Village, the home of both AIANY and the NYASLA. With Board service at both AIA New York State and AIA National, and her recent role as a Vice President on the AIA National Executive Committee, Susan continues to give her time, intellect and energy to the future of the Institute. Her innovation continues in her role at the Design Trust for Public Space. Inventing and expanding interdisciplinary programs and initiatives, including urban farming, has kept architects and landscape architects at the forefront of debates about sustainability.

Susan Chin has demonstrated a lifetime of notable professional success, sustaining innovation and unparalleled leadership. We strongly believe that her work and character have demonstrated the type of achievement acknowledged through conferral of Honorary Membership in the ASLA.

Sincerely,

  
Rick Bell, FAIA  
Executive Director

Honorary Membership Nomination  
ASLA  
636 Eye Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20001-3736

RE: Susan Chin, FAIA - Confidential Honorary ASLA Nomination

Dear Members of the Committee:

I have had the pleasure of knowing Susan Chin, FAIA, since my appointment as a Green Infrastructure Design Fellow with the Design Trust for Public Space in 2012. As the founder and director a budding and successful non-profit design organization in Europe, I have admired Susan's leadership and clear direction at the Design Trust since 2011.

As Green Infrastructure Fellow with the Design Trust, I was able to work with Susan and her talented team to research and write for Five Borough Farm, a project of the Design Trust Design, which offers a roadmap to farmers and gardeners, City officials, and other stakeholders to understand and weigh the benefits of urban agriculture. The series (3 phases and books) has had great impact on the way the public and how city officials are responding to urban agriculture proposals in New York City. I am delighted to be part of such a visionary project.

Susan's tireless work at the Design Trust and NYC's Department of Cultural Affairs has proven her commitment to the built environment. Her particular attention the urban landscape has served as a beacon for progressive landscape architecture in a field of urban public space organizations that often focus on building (or art) centric interventions in the urban environment. Her impact on sustainability and soft infrastructure extends across conventional disciplinary boundaries and has stretched beyond NYC. Susan is setting a positive example for how to work in cultural fields and in practice - nationally and internationally.

It is with my utmost respect and unflinching support that I recommend Susan Chin, FAIA, to become an Honorary ASLA member.

Sincerely,



Martin Joseph Barry, RLA, Fulbright

Associate, W Architecture & Landscape Architecture, LLC  
Founder & Director, reSITE Prague

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**To the American Society of Landscape Architects**  
Letter in Support of Honorary Membership for Susan Chin

I am honored to write in support of Susan Chin to be granted honorary membership in American Society of Landscape Architects. I first met Susan in 2000, when she was a Loeb Fellow at Harvard University Graduate School of Design, where I taught from 1992 to 2004; she oversaw our firm's Design Excellence High Performance Pilot Project for the Staten Island Children's Museum in her role as Assistant Commissioner for Capital Projects at the NYC Department of Cultural Affairs; since she took on the role of Executive Director of the Design Trust for Public Space in 2011, I have had the opportunity to work with her, first as a member of the Board of Directors, and subsequently as a Professional Advisor to the Under the Elevated project.

Susan is a brilliant and tireless advocate for innovative collaborative work in support of improving social/environmental qualities of American cities through design, in support of triple bottom line sustainability. As Executive Director of the Design Trust, she has brought public agencies to the table and has forged alliances among them, as well as between them, community groups, and other nonprofits, to incubate, grow, and carry out projects. Since she joined the organization in 2011, Susan has shepherded existing projects to strong outcomes and initiated new ones, created new programs and publications, overhauled the organization's website, and improved capacity of already excellent staff. The organization is thriving under her leadership, as I knew it would.

Landscape architects play a central role in many of the projects Susan undertakes, in cross-disciplinary pursuit of innovative solutions New York City's challenges. While projects are located here, their frameworks, findings and ideas are relevant at a national and international scale.

As Assistant Commissioner of the Department of Cultural Affairs, Susan dedicated 23 years to commissioning and enabling innovative and high performance architecture, landscape, and art for NYC's public realm, valued at over \$3 billion; helping to strengthen and shape the city's cultural/physical landscape for years to come, in projects such as the New Museum on the Bowery, Lincoln Center's Alice Tully Hall and the Museum of the Moving Image in Queens.

Susan is a powerhouse! To accomplish this great number of projects within the complex inter-governmental structure of New York City is a testament to her dedication and vision, as well as the high level of execution of all that she takes on.

Susan's investment in sustainable, equitable civic space is evident across the remarkable range of her pursuits and accomplishments. She served in 2013-2014 as Vice President

## MARPILLERO POLLAK ARCHITECTS

,Sandro Marpillero  
FAIA, OdF

Linda Pollak  
AIA, ASLA Affiliate

for the National AIA, including leadership of the Board Community Committee. As 2010-2012 New York regional director, she served on Strategic Directions Group and Communications, Gold Medal/Firm Award Advisory Committee and as chair (2011), At the AIA New York Chapter, before her election as its president-elect (2004) and president (2005), she chaired the Design Awards and Finance committees. Susan served on the AIA New York State board (2007-2009), while also serving on national committees such as Component Partnerships (2008) and Long Range Planning (2008).

Susan is a true leader, with a commitment to leadership that extends well beyond her own sphere, reflecting her passion for how design professionals, including those who are emerging, can serve as leaders in a wider range of roles, increasing our shared knowledge through improved communication, helping non-designers understand how design can contribute to address complex problems and public policies surrounding the public realm.,

Susan's master's degree in historic preservation from Columbia University, and her bachelor's of science degree in architecture from Ohio State University, in combination with the range and quality of experience, and her calm yet passionate demeanor, together contribute to her outstanding strength and her capacity to bring about positive change.

Susan is an outstanding candidate for Honorary Membership. I know that she would bring to the ASLA the kind of passion, vision, and commitment that she brings to all her involvements, with benefit to all concerned.

Sincerely,



Linda Pollak