

REAL ESTATE WEEKLY

Construction & Design

B8 WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 25, 2010

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Speakers at PWC's 'Meet the Architects & Engineers': (L to R) Greg Roberts, RCDD, AKF Group LLC; Julie D'Orazio, P.E., AECOM; Edward N. Rothe, FAIA, Fletcher-Thompson NYC; Carla Sciarra, Tishman Construction Corp.; Kevin Hom, AIA, LEED, Hom & Goldman Architects, PC; Jack Buchsbaum, P.E., PANYNJ; Lenore Janis, PWC.

Upbeat architects, engineers are forecasting growth

Professional Women in Construction (PWC) National's recent annual Meet the Architects & Engineers, drew a capacity crowd to the table-top exhibit and networking event at Club 101.

The mood was hugely upbeat and each of PWC's honored guest speakers en-

mand and no glut of product":

As healthcare changes, growing numbers move into retirement, K-12 schools and transportation systems require renovations to an aging infrastructure, and the need to better manage our environmental resources and energy increases "there

the Vehicular Security Center and Tour Bus Parking Facility; One World Trade Center; 150 Greenwich Street — WTC Tower 4; and the WTC Transportation Hub, a joint venture with Turner Construction for PANYNJ to build the new PATH Terminal designed by world-renowned architect Santiago Calatrava.

Edward N. Rothe, FAIA, principal and president of Fletcher-Thompson NYC, noted that the firm is 100 years old and is relatively new to NYC with a growing office established in 2007.

Fletcher-Thompson

counts among its current major projects a \$34 million school in the Bronx for the NYC School Construction Authority; a \$23 million expansion at Queens Hospital Center; and a study for FDNY of a \$300M vehicle maintenance facility.

Saying that "architects are the barometer of the construction industry," Rothe said that he was willing to refute any nay-sayers and made a "fearless forecast" for growth.

Julie D'Orazio, P.E., vice president, AECOM, said that though we're in a "challenging economic period,"

AECOM has "continued to grow and evolve as an industry leader" and is working to be "leaner and more efficient."

Looking to the future, D'Orazio noted that AECOM looks forward to several projects developing from Amtrak's comprehensive Northeast Corridor Infrastructure Master Plan and spoke of the firm's involvement in the MTA's Second Avenue Subway project with Phase 1 scheduled for completion in 2016.

Jack Buchsbaum, P.E., deputy director engineering & manager of E/A

Design with the Port Authority of NY & NJ, was similarly hopeful noting that PANYNJ budgets were still substantial — \$3.2 billion is the capital plan for 2011 with \$40 million budgeted for design consultants. Much of the existing work is with the WTC site, PATH stations, and (THE) Tunnel/Access to the Region's Core (ARC).

He pointed out that "The new efforts will be directed to maintaining the PA infrastructure in a 'state of good repair.' We need a lot of work on our aging facilities, and we need good people."

"There are unique challenges ahead that will demand all of our creativity."

— KEVIN HOM

couraged the participation of qualified small, disadvantaged and diverse companies.

Greg Roberts, RCDD, partner with the engineering company AKF Group LLC, said that the firm is weathering the economic storm with a 'positive attitude.'

He noted that following the market collapse in 2008, AKF continued on its path and morale improved. The firm even founded a subsidiary in Philadelphia, In Posse, focused on sustainability that is proving successful.

Seeing an upward trend for AKF and the industry, Roberts spoke of the need to seek and find opportunities. "We're coming back. Let's move forward," he said.

Kevin Hom, AIA, LEED, principal with Hom & Goldman Architects, PC, spoke frankly of the two-phased recession, but noted that following nearly a dozen years of growth we can view this "as an adjustment."

Hom emphasized that there is "a significant de-

is a great deal of work to be done."

Hom concluded that "there are unique challenges ahead that will demand all of our creativity" and that there is "tremendous reason to be optimistic."

Carla Sciarra, vice president of Tishman Construction Corporation who is currently serving as project director for the Carnegie Hall Studio Towers Renovation Project, told the group that Tishman Construction and AECOM had merged.

Tishman is now a public company with global operations yet the Tishman brand will basically stay the same and will pursue construction work and manage it as they always have.

She outlined a few of the notable ongoing projects in the NYC area where Tishman is serving as:

Trans-Hudson Express (THE) Tunnel; the renovation and expansion of the Jacob Javits Convention Center; Public Safety Answering Center II in the Bronx; and, at the WTC site,