

THE NEW URBANISTS ARE COMING!

Fellow New Yorkers, beware: There are New Urbanists among us, and they have started to organize. Eavesdrop has learned that, in their crusade to spread their radical brand of Main Street nostalgia, followers of the cultish Congress for the New Urbanism are starting a local chapter. At present, however, we're still at Code Yellow; they're too busy fighting among themselves to do any harm. One of our undercover agents infiltrated last month's midtown meeting of the Chapter Organizing Committee of the Congress for the New Urbanism (of the Executive Bureau under the State Commissariat of the People's Directorate) and filed this report: "[Committee chair] **Ted Andrews** was running everything and, all of a sudden, a large, bearded, overbearing guy stands up and tries to commandeer the meeting with the aim of making himself leader." The agitator in question was New Urbanist blogger **John Massengale**, and "rarely have I seen such bluster," continues our spy, who adds that the gathering quickly degenerated into "a hollering match over who was closer to [CNU president] **John Norquist**—as if he were **Kim Jong Il** or something. It was so scary it was comical." The arguments, however, were largely over procedural matters. And with his putsch getting nowhere, we're told, Massengale (like so many comrades) simply disappeared. But we hear he hasn't given up; later, he sent us a cryptic message saying that "everyone's happy." We, however, are still terrified. "It felt like being in a roomful of Republicans," our informant says, "with their strange fanaticism and extremely bad haircuts."

S.I. ≠ SMITHSONIAN?

Cooper-Hewitt wants to open on Staten Island! Seriously. (Staten Island, we learned, is a landmass of approximately 59 square miles to the southwest of Manhattan.) Since at least last summer, the museum has been in discussions with the outer borough's Snug Harbor Cultural Center—which we hear is actually a pretty nifty place—to develop a publicly accessible open storage site on its property for the space-strapped (and cash-strapped) Smithsonian museum's collections. The Cooper-Hewitt had no comment for the *Staten Island Advance*, which first reported the story, and basically offered us the same. But a rep for Snug Harbor, which was made a Smithsonian Affiliate (whatever that means) in December, told us "the talks are still ongoing, active, and positive." As long as Cooper-Hewitt isn't in charge of raising the money.

FAULTY TOWER RE-RUN

Almost two years after a *Vanity Fair* article famously revealed that all was not well at **Richard Meier's** Perry Street twin towers—e.g., buckling balconies, heating malfunctions and leaks, many leaks—Eavesdrop has determined that problems continue to plague the buildings. Last month, we hear that work on the three-story penthouse of former fashion licensor and condo board president **Calvin Klein** (who is already in litigation with the building's original sponsors) caused still more leaks that trickled all the way down to **Jean-Georges**

> MICHEL CLUIZEL CHOCOLATES

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Designer: Turrett Collaborative Architects



For the large contingent of New Yorkers who are both chocolate-mad and apartment-obsessed, the Michel Cluizel Chocolates boutique is here to help. Located between the Pain Quotidien bakery and the Pippa and Lucy restaurants inside ABC Home and Carpet, the store and bar offers shoppers a spot to satisfy cravings while mulling over the purchase of that great overstuffed couch. The centerpiece, a large Macassar ebony refrigerated showcase, is modeled by architect Wayne Turett after the shape of the cocoa bean; it keeps the flown-in Parisian chocolate at the optimal 60-degree temperature. If the products are not kept cool, the chocolate will "lose its temper," according to sales associate Conrad Miller. It is the only Cluizel retail unit in the U.S., and the shop's décor echoes the dark brown and yellow tones of the company's signature packaging. Even the green and gold-flecked glass-tile mosaics by Ercole sit in brown mortar, which is matched to the hues of the chocolate. **TERESA HERRMANN**

