



EAST VILLAGE NYC CONSTRUCTION NEWS

Long-awaited Astor Place reconstruction is finally complete

Construction has wrapped up almost a decade after the project was first announced

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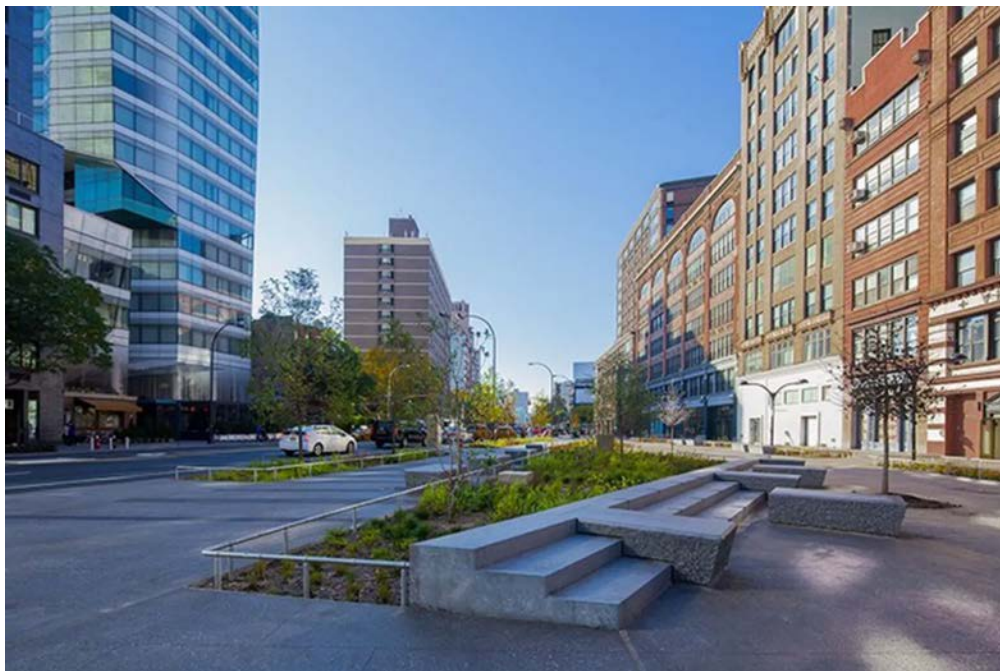


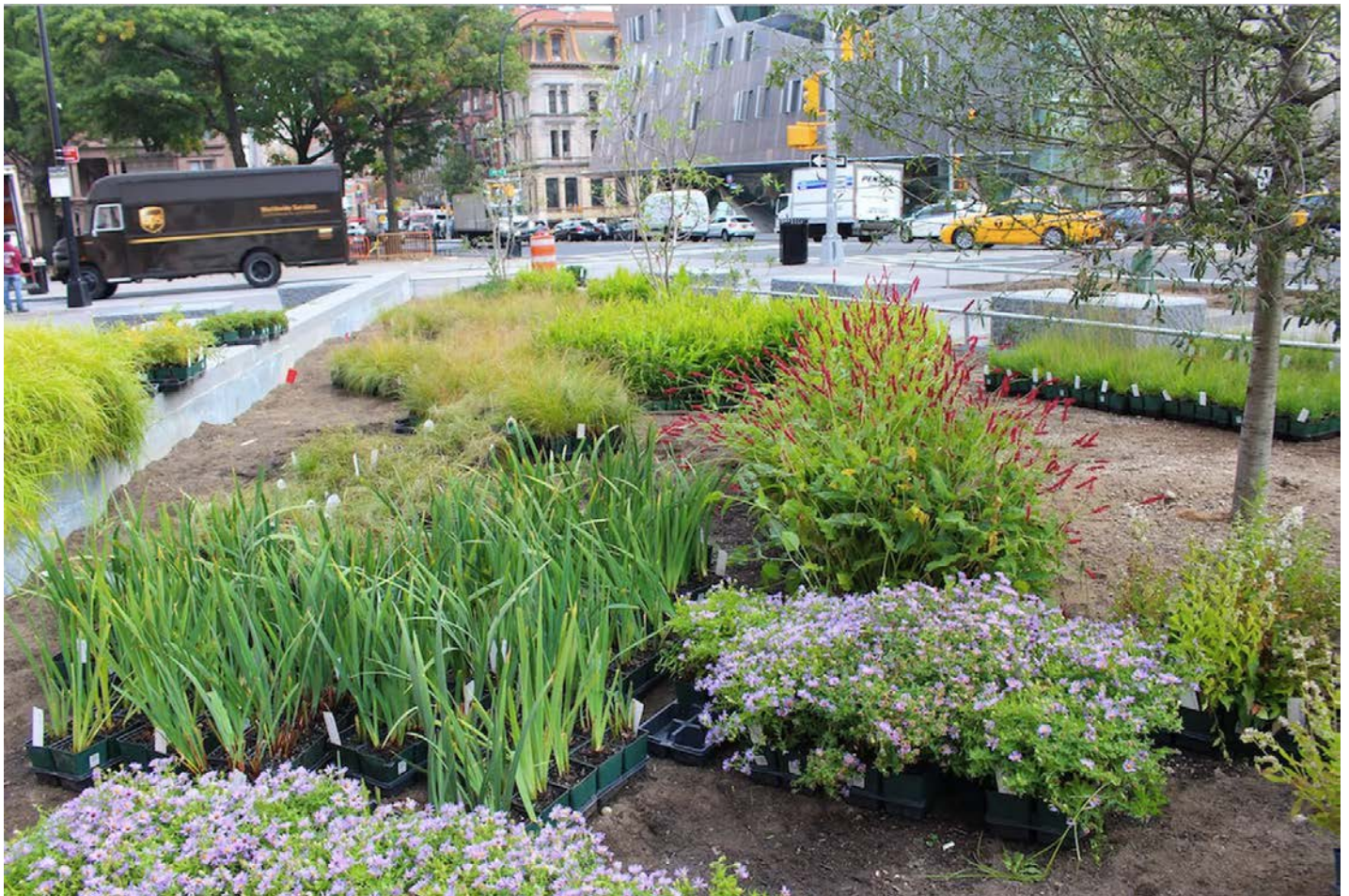
Photo by Wade Zimmerman for WXY

Following close on the heels of the news that the Astor Place had made its triumphant return to the East Village, city officials unveiled the long-awaited, redesigned Astor Place and Cooper Square Wednesday morning.

The revamp has been close to a decade in the making—it was first brought up in 2008, but the financial crisis put a halt to that. There was a renewed effort in 2011 to kickstart the project, with WXY architecture + urban design brought on to design the plazas and walkways at the crowded intersection. Construction finally got underway two years after that, and some delays later the project has finally wrapped up.

So what did all of that effort produce? Collaborating with three other firms, namely Piet Oudolf, Quennell Rothschild & Partners, and Tillett Lighting Design Associates, WXY has expanded pedestrian space along the busy intersections from East 4th to East 9th Streets around Astor Place by 50,000 square feet.

In addition, they've added new plazas, and seating like the curvy seating area by the Astor Place subway station that WXY calls the Zipper Bench. There's also a ton of new greenery. The design team added 9,900 perennial plants and shrubs, and 60 trees. For cyclists, there are a 100 new bike racks. And to handle the rains, the design team built in 6,600 square feet of absorbent permeable paving and bioswales (These are basically curbside rain gardens).





Courtesy of WXY architecture + urban design

Rendering of the reconstruction project.

The project was managed from start to finish by the city's Department of Design and Construction, which undertook this \$21 million effort on part of the Department of Transportation and the Parks Department. Apart from renovating The Alamo at a cost of \$180,000, restoration work was also undertaken on the statue of Peter Cooper, and the mosaic installations on the light poles.

"I am thrilled the Cube is back at Alamo Square and that we are celebrating upgrades to another pedestrian plaza in our city," Mayor Bill de Blasio said in a statement. "Marking the heart of the East Village, Astor Place and this iconic artwork stand as a crossroads for thousands of New Yorkers."