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## CORNELL TECH'S GROUNDBREAKING PASSIVE HOUSE



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WinterGreen is a monthly publication from **Steven Winter Associates** designed to keep you updated on the latest news and information regarding energy efficiency, sustainability, and high performance buildings.

Construction has officially started on Cornell Tech's high-rise residential building on Roosevelt Island. Plans for the building were announced at a groundbreaking ceremony by NYC Mayor Bill de Blasio and former Mayor Michael Bloomberg, making a joint appearance in support of this exciting project. The 26-story, 352 unit residential high-rise will become the world's tallest project certified by the Passive House Institute (PHI), and will house students and faculty from the applied sciences graduate program. The development will be part of Cornell University's Tech Campus – all of the buildings on the new campus will be designed to meet New York City's goal of 80 percent GHG reduction by 2050.



Mayor de Blasio addresses the crowd at groundbreaking

Steven Winter Associates (SWA) is providing technical consulting services to guide the design and testing for Passive House certification, considered to be a highly rigorous building standard for energy efficiency. The project, which is being constructed in partnership with Cornell Tech (owner), The Hudson Companies and The Related Companies (developers), Handel Architects, and BuroHappold Engineering, is also being built to ENERGY STAR® and LEED® certification standards.

When complete, the high-rise is projected to have an overall energy consumption that is 70% less than that of a conventional new multifamily building. To reach that formidable level of efficiency, SWA has provided sustainability planning and energy modeling from the beginning of schematic design. Among the unique features of the approach, the custom designed curtain wall facade is being constructed off-site and delivered with the windows intact, allowing for the quality control necessary to create an extremely air-tight building envelope.



Artists rendering of Cornell Tech's campus on Roosevelt Island

"In the city's continuous race to the tallest, we are extremely proud to be incorporating Passive House into the conversation," said Ryan Merkin, SWA Senior Vice President. "SWA staff has worked tirelessly in coordination with the development and design teams for inclusion of Passive House strategies. Still, the hard work has only just begun. It is one thing to design the building, it is another to execute on that vision particularly on this scale."

Throughout construction, SWA will perform all inspections and testing to verify adherence to the Passive House standard. In addition, SWA's Accessibility Group, which consulted on the project during design, will conduct inspections during various stages of construction to ensure compliance with accessible design and construction requirements of applicable laws and codes. SWA is also serving as the LEED Commissioning Agent for the project. Post-construction, the firm will provide monthly tracking of the building energy consumption to ensure performance targets are being met.

For more information on the project, contact Lois Arena at [larena@swinter.com](mailto:larena@swinter.com).

**GREEN BUILDING  
DISPLAYS**

In response to the District of Columbia’s implementation of its innovative Green Construction Code (GCC) in 2013, code regulatory agencies have worked to provide accessible resources to ensure and increase code compliance. The District’s new construction code is the result of adoption of the International Green Construction Code (IGCC) and the International Code Council’s (ICC) model code, along with over 100 DC explicit amendments. These codes incorporate sustainable, energy and water efficient building best practices as fixed requirements, giving the District “one of the greenest codes in the country.”



DC’s code regulatory body, the Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs (DCRA) has developed several initiatives and outreach programs to help consumers, project managers, and developers in adopting and complying with the new code requirements. Working with DCRA, SWA has developed a series of large scale educational green building displays.

The purpose of the green building displays is to educate and train the public on green and energy efficient building techniques and strategies that can be used to meet the energy and green building requirements throughout Washington DC. The visually appealing and interactive displays provide examples of green building features and best practices, as well as provoke interest in green building and sustainability for District employees, building professionals, and the general public.

The project is being completed in two phases; the first phase was finished and implemented in September 2014 with displays covering green building materials, sustainable communities, and pressure difference within buildings. The second phase of the project is anticipated to be complete by September 2015, with displays covering stormwater management, insulation installation, air and duct sealing, water efficiency, and building commissioning.

Head to SWA’s [Party Walls blog](#) for more DC code compliance tools and resources.