# Green Growth & Sustainable Cities event held in Brooklyn

June 23, 2015 - Green Buildings

The Green Growth & Sustainable Cities Roundtable was hosted by the Danish Cleantech Hub, Urban Future Lab, and NYC Economic Development Corp. at the Urban Future Lab. The event provided a platform in which the cities of Copenhagen and New York can work toward the common goals of developing green growth and sustainable cities. The theme of the discussion focused on the importance of public-private dialogue and collaboration in achieving these goals.

The invitation-only event was attended by the political leadership of Copenhagen headed by lord mayor of Copenhagen Frank Jensen; commissioner of NYC department of environmental protection Emily Lloyd and other high-level officials from NYC; and representatives of companies from both Copenhagen and NYC.

Louis Becker, design director and principal partner at Henning Larsen Architects, spoke on the Danish approach to sustainability and green design. He focused specifically on environmental, social, and financial forms of sustainability as an integral part of each building's design, how these forms are vital to the success of each individual project, and how they can ensure a high-quality, long-lasting product.

Danish firms are leaders in sustainable energy solutions, approach is inherently "green."

Invoking sustainable design strategies has become the norm for many global architecture firms, but Becker says the difference between Danish-designed sustainable architecture and that of architects from other nations is that sustainability is inherent in the Danish approach. "The Danish model has always been sustainable because of the way we live," said Becker. "We think about sustainability in a passive way - such as site orientation and a sensibility to light and space - at the start of the design process."

And when it comes to exporting sustainable design and green energy solutions, Denmark is leading the the way for the rest of the world. According to a report by the Danish Energy Association, Danish businesses are market leaders in green energy technology, and the demand for green Danish solutions has increased every year since 2008 with an 2014 increase of 10.7% from the year before. Last year alone, exports of energy technology constituted 12% of Denmark's total export of goods at DKK 43.6 billion ($6.5 USD), a record for the nation. Germany is the largest buyer of Danish energy technology, followed by Great Britain, Sweden, and the United States.

According to Becker, microclimate variables such as daylight, wind, and temperature have a significant impact on how buildings perform in relation to energy use and comfort. "At Henning Larsen Architects, we have conducted extensive research on the subject and, subsequently, we have developed new scientific design methods," explains Becker. "Through analysis, the building site's microclimate parameters are mapped and then used in the design phases of the project, ensuring that the building and related urban spaces are sustainable by design, reducing the overall energy consumption of the project."

"We have found that a building's design has a significant influence on its energy consumption and further affects the energy consumption of neighboring buildings. So, when you are talking about sustainable design in an urban setting, you are not isolating one building but you must look at the collection of buildings and how their designs relate to another in these terms."