



RKT&B Architects completes 60,000 s/f construction of Salem House for \$9.5m

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Construction of Salem House, a \$9.5 million, 60,000 s/f mixed-use facility in central Harlem, is complete, according to Carmi Bee, FAIA, president of RKT&B Architects.

The seven-story structure, which combines affordable housing with commercial and community facilities and is located at 2183 Adam Clayton Powell Jr. Blvd., was commissioned by the Salem United Methodist City Society in partnership with the Phipps Houses Group, one of the nation's largest not-for-profit developers, owners and managers of affordable housing.

"We have worked with the United Methodist Church on many occasions, but this is the first time we have worked with Phipps," said Bee. "The opportunity was a great honor for us."

It also presented new challenges, he continues. "We had to create high design within the Phipps standards and traditional structural systems, and within a limited budget."

This objective was accomplished through several innovations, including a window wall system that mimics a curtain wall, and the division of the primary facade into red brick panels with punched window openings that alternate with the aluminum and glass window wall panels.

The segmented facade treatment also serves an additional purpose: It brings the scale of the 130 foot wide building down to that of the narrow adjacent structures along Adam Clayton Powell Jr. Blvd.

According to Bee, Salem House reflects a new trend in which religious institutions are developing their property to address community housing needs and to raise revenue.

Other firms involved in the Salem House project were HLS Builders Corporation, Selnick/Hawrood Consulting, and LNPC Consulting, who served as the general contractor, structural engineer and MEP (mechanical, electrical and plumbing) engineer, respectively.

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