



## **Moving forward for our climate in New York City - by David Piscuskas**

July 04, 2017 - Owners Developers & Managers

David Piscuskas,  
AIA New York and 1100 Architect

Last month, many members of AIA New York, myself included, were dismayed by the federal administration's decision to withdraw the United States from the Paris Climate Agreement. Our organization has long been committed to fostering a more sustainable and resilient built environment, and believe the withdrawal reflects poorly on America's international standing as a leader in sustainable economic development. Regardless of the actions of this administration, we know New York architects will not withdraw from their commitment to design and advocate for sustainable, equitable, and healthy communities for all.

In stark contrast, we note our respect and admiration for state and local leaders who reiterated their commitment to ensuring that New York State and New York City would uphold the principles of the Paris Climate Agreement. Governor Cuomo, along with California governor Jerry Brown and Washington governor Jay Inslee, swiftly announced the formation of the U.S. Climate Alliance, a fast-growing group of states committed to upholding the goals of the agreement. Mayor de Blasio joined over 180 cities that have made commitments to maintain our involvement in climate responsibility amidst the abdication of part of our federal government. We can all assist in ensuring New York City will continue to be a leader of urban sustainability, green building design, energy efficiency, and resiliency policies due, in large part, to the dedicated efforts of our members, many of our whom are innovators in and contributors to the design of high-performing buildings and resilient communities around the globe.

The commitment from our locally-elected leaders should be a further reminder to all professionals engaged in the built environment of their roles in the quest to dramatically cut greenhouse gas emissions and lessen our dependence on fossil fuels. We've often said buildings are the biggest source of emissions and energy consumption, especially in New York City, but it bears repeating: the energy used in buildings accounts for 73% of citywide emissions, well above the national average of 40%. As architects, we must be environmental stewards of our cities, not only to enhance design quality but to increase the environmental performance of our built environment.

Mindful of the objective to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in New York City by 80% from 2005

levels by 2050, architects are well-situated to lead with innovative designs and solutions for the city's sustainability goals. AIANY continues to advance and collaborate with the building community to provide the necessary mechanisms and info to create a useable framework for sustainable design and development.

To assist the professional community in preparing to meet this challenge, AIANY is offering in-depth training throughout the year in the design of hyper-efficient buildings and compliance with Local Laws 31 and 32. The two-day, hands-on workshops are limited to a small group of architects, designers, engineers, and construction trade professionals. The training sessions are led by the pioneering architecture firm A2M, who has designed dozens of exemplary buildings that meet Passive House standards around the world and specializes in hyper-efficient building design. The programs also feature modules delivered by Dan Nall of Syska Hennessy, Maria Karpman of Karpman Consulting, and other New York City experts.

Everyone engaged in the real estate community – architects, builders, developers – shares a responsibility to create a new generation of hyper-efficient buildings that will advance building practice not only in its public realm, but in the city's private sector. Together, we in New York have the world's greatest concentration of design talent, professional drive, and building acumen. It is time we accelerate our efforts and attention on the advanced energy and resource conservation practices of the 21st century in New York City.

David Piscuskas, FAIA, LEED AP is the 2017 president of AIA New York and the founding partner at 1100 Architect, New York, N.Y.

New York Real Estate Journal - 17 Accord Park Drive #207, Norwell MA 02061 - (781) 878-4540