



Magnusson Architecture and Planning (MAP) projects win NYSERDA's Buildings of Excellence competition

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Highbridge - Bronx, NY

Brooklyn, NY Two Magnusson Architecture and Planning (MAP) projects – Highbridge and Livonia C3 – are among the 14 winners in the third round of the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority's (NYSERDA's) Buildings of Excellence competition – a public incentive program to spur the design, construction, and operation of a low-carbon (or net-zero) emitting multifamily buildings. Both MAP-designed developments also received Blue Ribbon for Design Excellence Awards from a jury convened by the Architectural League of New York. The honor, given to only four projects, recognizes awardees for proving that carbon neutral designs can exhibit beauty, function and connection to their community. MAP now has a total of nine Buildings of Excellence winners, five of which are Blue Ribbon for Design Excellence recipients.

In addition to these project awards, round three of this competition included grants for Early Stage Design Support, and MAP has been approved for two such studies – one for Carmen Villegas Apartments (CVA) and another for Sol on Park. That work will help to explore and evaluate leading-edge technologies for those buildings, allowing the development teams to determine how best to achieve their respective sustainability goals.

The Buildings of Excellence Competition supports governor Kathy Hochul's nation-leading climate goals outlined in the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (Climate Act), which place New York state on a path to economy-wide carbon neutrality and mandates an 85% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. Both of the projects highlighted will also provide comprehensive data on design, construction and cost that can be analyzed and shared to increase the number of low- to zero-carbon buildings in New York State.

NYSERDA president and CEO Doreen Harris said, "With their history of multiple awards through the Buildings of Excellence Competition and Blue Ribbon for Design Excellence, Magnusson Architecture and Planning is a leader in sustainable design transforming the buildings sector. NYSERDA congratulates the project team and thanks them for their ongoing dedication to advancing clean affordable housing."

These honors are MAP's latest achievements in a decades-long commitment to exceptional design and performance in affordable housing.

The awards were announced at a March 21st ceremony at the AIANY Center for Architecture. MAP's director of sustainability & associate principal Sara Bayer, AIA CPHC LEED AP was among the event's featured speakers and pointed to the firm's efforts to move toward a carbon neutral ready portfolio. She also praised NYSERDA's work, noting how essential the agency has been in moving the industry forward on ambitious and critical climate targets. There is, as Bayer said, "...a seismic shift, accelerated by programs like this competition."

In her announcement of Highbridge as a Blue Ribbon winner, Rosalie Genevro of The Architectural League said, "Highbridge deeply impressed the jurors with its high ambition and integrated resolution of every aspect of the project, from its relationship to a topographically challenging site, to material selection, to a construction process designed to minimize waste, to the careful consideration of resident and visitor experience of building entries and circulation."

Regarding Livonia C3, the jury said, "The architects skillfully adapted this large building to its challenging site, adjacent to an elevated train line yet in a neighborhood of low-rise housing, by breaking up the building mass into distinct volumes and stepping down the building to acknowledge the scale of its low-rise neighbors."

Bayer said, "We are confident we can do this. We have matured technology and processes, won by years of persistence from dedicated stakeholders across the entire industry! As regulations, incentives and investments push us to new standards, our work towards efficiency, will become more efficient. And that is the value of this Buildings of Excellence program and the work NYSERDA has done."

MAP principal, Fernando Villa, FAIA, LEED AP BD+C said, "Highbridge is a perfect example of how integrating health and sustainability measures into building design can create better, safer, more dignified spaces, the kind of homes and communities that everyone deserves. This is design in support of mission, and we're so proud to work with such an amazing nonprofit client, Samaritan Daytop Village, on such a critically important project!"

MAP principal, Brian Loughlin, AIA, APA said, "We are thrilled with these honors for Livonia C3 which speak directly to the importance of a community-centered approach to design. From the beginning there has been a commitment to using sustainability and community resiliency to address long standing issues around social equity and environmental justice. As a result, we are creating an asset for the Brownsville Community and we are so grateful to have done so with a thoughtful, inclusive partner in Catholic Charities Progress of Peoples Development Corporation."

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