



EEA Press Release

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Variety Boys and Girls Club Among Winners of State's Buildings of Excellence Competition and Awarded \$1M

Ettinger Engineering Associates is pleased to announce that **The Variety Boys & Girls Club of Queens Redevelopment Project** has been selected a winner of the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority's (NYSERDA) Round Three Buildings of Excellence Competition award. The project has been awarded \$1M in incentives.

The project will be Carbon Neutral-Ready and will fully electrify all building systems while simultaneously certifying to USGBC's LEED Gold rating. The apartments will be designed utilizing Passive House principles that vastly improve building envelope performance and drastically reduce heating and cooling energy use. The project will utilize ground-source heat pumps for heating/cooling in the club space and generating project domestic hot water.





The Buildings of Excellence Competition, initiated in March 2019, is a \$48 million initiative that recognizes and rewards the design, construction, and operation carbon neutral-ready multifamily buildings. The Competition aims to accelerate the design, development, construction, and operation of carbon neutral multifamily buildings that are resilient while integrating co-benefits for occupants such as controlled and healthy indoor air quality, as well as exceptional comfort. NYSERDA had recently awarded the third round of successful demonstration projects that will achieve carbon neutral performance while being beautiful, functional and can cost-effectively decarbonize.

NYSERDA President and CEO Doreen M. Harris said, “NYSERDA is pleased to support the Variety Boys and Girls Club project with a Buildings of Excellence award and congratulates the Ettinger Engineering Associates team on their winning proposal. Through the implementation of Passive House principles and the electrification of building systems, the completed building will provide an energy-efficient living experience for its occupants while demonstrating climate-friendly building design and construction.”

“Our project will advance the paradigm for the built environment in a transformational way while continually cultivating, teaching and promoting sustainable building and life practices to today’s youth,” said **Edward Ettinger of Ettinger Engineering Associates**, the design team lead.

“To meet the challenges of the 21st century requires a great team of professionals ready to push the envelope to combat climate change. Our team at Variety Boys and Girls Club of Queens are grateful to receive NYSERDA’s innovative Building Excellence Award and NYSERDA’s efforts to drive sustainability in the State of New York. Thank you to our elected partners, our architects, consultants, board of directors and team for your steadfast commitment to construct not just a visionary future for Variety that will serve 16,000 young people but one that will be completely carbon neutral. This award will enable us to turn our club into a renewable energy learning lab training our kids about the future of energy right here in Astoria. We are grateful for this honor and look forward to delivering a project collaboratively that will be like no other,” said **Costa Constantinides, CEO** Variety Boys and Girls Club of Queens.

“The NYSERDA Buildings of Excellence award is reflective of the truly innovative planners, architects, engineers and development partners that made up the team for this exciting project,” said **Hercules Argyriou, Vice President of Mega Contracting Group**, a co-developer and general contractor for the project. *“But perhaps even more exciting for Mega is the chance to create meaningful affordable housing that we know is so desperately needed right now while at the same time demonstrating you can have new construction in New York that is not only environmentally conscious but takes measure to make our community greener for the future.”*

“The Buildings of Excellence award allows us to create a healthy living environment for both residents and the neighborhood,” said **Tony Shitemi, Principal of Urban Architectural Initiatives**, one of the firms leading the architectural design for the project.

This project 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. For a complete list of the winning projects statewide, please visit NYSERDA’s Buildings of Excellence website at <https://www.nysERDA.ny.gov/all-programs/programs/multifamily-buildings-of-excellence>.