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Boston mayor Menino names E+ Green Building Program Challenge winners: 3 teams chosen to develop ultra-efficient buildings

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Mayor Menino named the winners of the Mayor's E+ Green Building Program Challenge, a pilot program that invites leading architects, builders, and developers to work together to design and construct high performance, green, urban homes. Three development teams have been chosen to construct Boston's next generation of ultra-efficient, energy positive, deep green buildings on three city owned parcels in Roxbury and Jamaica Plain.

"We are taking our green building and renewable energy efforts to the next frontier by creating ultra-efficient housing that generates surplus clean energy," said Menino. "We will demonstrate that energy positive green housing can be constructed sustainably and cost-effectively, while enhancing the livability and vitality of Boston's neighborhoods now and into the future."

Boston was the first large US city to require private developers to construct green buildings using the US Green Building Council's LEED Rating System. Today, Boston boasts the second greatest number of green buildings per capita in the country and is once again leading the transformation of how city neighborhoods are built, incorporating sustainable design and green building solutions in the urban environment. This program will spur the creation of three highly energy efficient prototypes that will change 1 to 4 unit residential construction practices across the city, the Commonwealth, and the nation. In total, ten new homes, including two affordable to lower income households, will be built.

The teams and their development parcels include:

* 156 Highland St., Highland Park, Roxbury neighborhood

Developer/builder: Transformations Zero Energy Homes & Sage Builders

Architect: Nickerson Design Services

* 64 Catherine St., Woodbourne, Jamaica Plain neighborhood

Developer/contractor: GFC Development

Architect: Utile, Inc.

* 61 Marcella Ave., Highland Park, Roxbury neighborhood

Developer/builder: Urbanica Design + Development

Architect: Interface Studio Architects

In March the Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA) issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) for E+ (energy positive) green residential buildings on three City of Boston parcels. Eleven teams

submitted fourteen proposals in response. To fulfill the goals for the program, design proposals needed to go beyond the highest standards for sustainable development, green buildings, and healthy homes, the USGBC's LEED for Homes Platinum requirements. Proposals also need to demonstrate the ability to annually generate onsite more energy they need by combining energy efficiency strategies with renewable solar Photovoltaic and solar hot water systems.

Sustainability and green building experts Nadav Malin, the President of BuildingGreen, and Stefan Behnisch of Behnisch Architekten assisted the BRA in reviewing the designs and selecting the teams based on their green building, performance, urban design, and feasibility.

In a true demonstration of Boston's leadership in green buildings, responding teams submitted proposals for deep green buildings significantly exceeding the 82 points required for LEED for Homes Platinum and in one case proposing to achieve 128 points for what could be the highest LEED for Homes score. Equally impressive, most proposes exceeded the goal for energy positive performance with one proposal generating enough surplus energy to meet 25% of the energy needed for a comparable home. Energy performance is modeled using Home Energy Rating System (HERS).

The winning teams will advance project design and engineering with construction at the parcels slated to begin in spring 2012 and be completed by fall 2012.

The Mayor's E+ Green Building Program is challenging leading architects, builders, and developers to work together to design and construct high performance, green, urban homes and to demonstrate the feasibility of regenerative buildings in Boston. The program seeks to advance industry practice and public awareness of energy efficient green buildings and to construct high performance 1 to 4 unit residential green building prototypes that can serve as models for future practice.

This program is a pilot initiative of the City of Boston's Department of Neighborhood Development, Office of Environment & Energy Services, and the Boston Redevelopment Authority with support and sponsorship of National Grid, NSTAR, US Green Building Council, USGBC Massachusetts Chapter, Boston Society of Architects, and Boston Architectural College.