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## **Thomas Douglas Architects and River Valley Co-op honored with design awards from Western Massachusetts Chapter of the AIA**

March 24, 2023 - Construction Design & Engineering



East Hampton, MA Thomas Douglas Architects designed a building for the River Valley Co-op's new location that celebrates the store's values and commitment to strengthening the connections between consumers and the rich network of local and organic products in the Pioneer Valley. That design recently received a Merit Award and the People's Choice Award from the Western Massachusetts Chapter of the AIA.

The design optimizes energy efficiency and locally sourced materials. Indoor and outdoor dining spaces, including a space for food trucks, emphasize community. "The River Valley Co-op is an important contributor to the well-being of our community. We wanted to give them a building that balances the operational needs of a grocery store with the warmer and human-scaled elements that create a place where people want to spend time," said project architect and principal Thomas Douglas. "We're honored our colleagues have recognized the design excellence of this project."

Working collaboratively with the co-op, Tighe & Bond Engineers, Wright Builders, and the rest of the expansive project team, they were able to achieve the client's energy goals, design goals, and a path to North America's first net-zero-electric grocery store. The design team implemented energy modeling early in the design to evaluate alternatives, including HVAC systems, building envelope, and lighting systems for the proposed facility. Further enhancements to the HVAC systems include indoor air quality features, such as improved filtration, increased fresh air, and bipolar ionization air cleaning technology to address concerns relative to the COVID-19 pandemic. Current energy data indicates the facility's energy consumption is very near what was projected.

