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David Roth | Thursday, August 19, 2010 | no comments

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You know what is very different than long, super-fervent screeds about The Not-At-Ground-Zero Non-Mosque? Interesting green buildings that are not in New York City. So let's step out of the idiot whirlwind surrounding poor Park51 and get ourselves up the country, shall we? Wonderful. We're going to Montauk first, so you should probably pack some swim trunks.

Montauk, a place your writer has been happy — very happy here and here, but also happy elsewhere — and which has, in its low-key way, been a part of the little green revolution going on in the Hamptons and on Long Island's South Fork. The house you see above is called The Pryor Residence, and was designed by Long Island architectural superstars Bates Masi. There's a slideshow of the Pryor Residence's various uniquenesses at New York Magazine's site, but much of what's noteworthy about it is there to see in the picture, and confirmed by the fact that it was just awarded AIA's New York State Award of Merit for 2010. While I can't find any evidence that the building is pursuing any third-party certification, the structure is strikingly green in its design — the 36-foot windows that are the home's defining stylistic element can be adjusted for optimal daylighting, and geothermal heat, solar heating and organic finishes complete the picture. Is it the sort of LEED Brain trophy structure we goof on basically every day here at gbNYC? Well, yes. But 1) it's not pursuing LEED certification, which kind of takes the sting out of that comment and 2) look at it. There's also an appealingly unsexy sustainability to the fact that The Pryor Residence is fully pre-fab, and was assembled on-site. In short: a lovely building, and one that is far enough from the Hallowed Ground of lower Manhattan that even the most ardent bigot wouldn't have anything negative to say about it. Which, you know, I said I wasn't going to mention in this post but is still pretty obviously on my mind. Sorry.

That said, your more ardent right-wing trolls would probably have something to



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say about architect [Dennis Wedlick's](#) planned net-zero Hudson Passive House in Claverack, New York, a small town in Columbia County with what might be the most amazing "Official Town Web-site" (sic) that I've ever seen. Trolls are going to be trolls, but Wedlick's design — described by [Inhabitat](#), accurately, as "cave-style" — does invite some snickers from those inclined to snicker at green things. A nice feature in [The Architect's Newspaper](#) from late July puts Wedlick's project in its proper aesthetic and green-building context, though, and reveals it as one of the more intriguing green building projects in New York in a long time.

There are only a handful of passive homes in all of the United States, and none in New York State, but Wedlick's design manages to incorporate the cave-y elements that are vital to net zero design — the concrete slab floor, the super-dense insulation — and some rather striking aesthetic touches to go with those triple-paned windows and heat recovery system and so on. "Many of the more detailed design decisions make common sense—keeping wiring, plumbing, and duct runs short to prevent heat leaks," the Architect's Newspaper's Julia Iovine writes. "Other design elements contribute not only to better insulation but also to a rural aesthetic that makes the house tuck charmingly into its setting: local fieldstone veneer walls, deep overhangs, and a cathedral ceiling within to maximize solar gain in winter. Photovoltaics, wind turbines, and even thermal heating were not used since the house already employs so little electricity." For a design that makes a point of cribbing the energy-efficient aspects of a cave, the Hudson Passive House is actually pretty elegant. The spec house — which was funded in part by grants from NYSERDA, and built on land provided by Frank Sciamè Construction — is expected to be complete by Labor Day.

See? Good things. Tomorrow I go back to writing 1500-word defenses of an imaginary New York. Well, either that or something about submetering. Probably the submetering thing.

TAGS: AIA NEW YORK, ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER, CLAVERACK, COLUMBIA COUNTY, DENNIS WEDLICK, FRANK SCIAMÈ CONSTRUCTION, HAMPTONS, HUDSON PASSIVE HOUSE, INHABITAT, LONG ISLAND, MONTAUK, MOST RECENT, NYSERDA, THE PRYOR RESIDENCE

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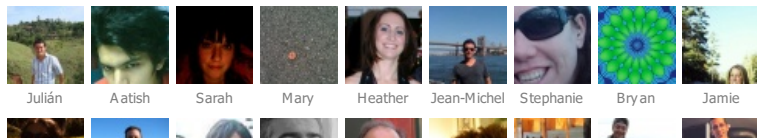
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