



Park Slope gets Passive

The eco-friendly overhaul of a 120-year old brownstone in Park Slope, Brooklyn, is on track to become the first Passive House Certified townhouse retrofit project in the nation.

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Images: [Adam B. Bell/Prospect Architecture](#)

Well folks, thanks to [Snowpocalypse '10](#), the New York City edition, I won't be making it home to my apartment in Brooklyn anytime soon. An extended holiday visit with my parents wasn't exactly on my Christmas wish list but I'm thankful not to be stranded at an airport (or stuck overnight on a crowded subway train returning from an airport). That said, I figured the next best thing to being at home in Brooklyn was to blog about a home in Brooklyn while watching reruns of the excellent filmed-in-Brooklyn series, "Bored to Death," on HBO.

The home in question, the [Passive House BKLYN Residence](#), is the second [Passive House project](#) to emerge from the borough over the past couple of months, the first being a mixed-use building in Williamsburg that I [blogged about](#) back in October. While both projects adhere to the stringent, super-efficient German building standard that's recently made headway in the U.S., they really couldn't be more different.

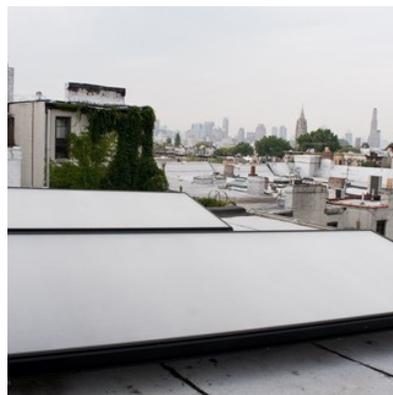
Firstly, [LoadingDock5](#)'s Williamsburg [Passive House project](#) is a new build and ripe with what [Curbed NY](#) calls "architectural funkiness." This makes total sense given Williamsburg's predilection for architectural funkiness. And funkiness in general. The Passive House BKLYN Residence, a retrofit project and not a new build, is located in the [Park Slope](#) section of Brooklyn, an entirely different creature than artsy, hipper-than-thou Williamsburg.

Park Slope, if you're not familiar with it, is the heart of "Brownstone Brooklyn," an area with little room for architectural funkiness of any sort (people freaked out when a longtime Park Slope [resident painted his brownstone pink](#)). It's a staid, leafy 'nabe where you'll find a food co-op, a smattering of bougie boutiques, and families in great abundance (the term "stroller congestion" originated here) but you have to venture to the fringes of the neighborhood to find much else.



But I digress ... the Passive House BKLYN Residence — expected to be the first townhouse retrofit in the nation to achieve Passive House certification when it's put to the test in January — is being overseen by Jeremy Shannon, principal at [Prospect Architecture](#), [Certified Passive House Consultant](#), and organizer of the [NY Passive House meet-up group](#), working for anonymous clients.

The home itself is a 120-year old, four-story landmark brownstone that like many Brooklyn brownstones is configured to include an owner's triplex along with a rental apartment on the building's garden level. In total, the triplex measures 2,500 square feet while the garden level rental measures 900 square feet.



In order for the building to achieve Passive House-dom, the building was completely re-insulated and triple-glazed windows were installed to achieve [optimum air tightness](#) all the while conforming to local landmark requirements. Additionally, two new kitchens were put in, bathrooms were remodeled, EcoSmart fireplaces and a [solar](#) hot water system were installed, and the building's stunning original woodwork including casement trim

and staircase mouldings were carefully restored as part of the massive renovation.

For those of you interested in the nitty-gritty specifics, head on over to the informative [Passive House BKLYN blog](#) where there's plenty to read up on — air barriers and thermal bridges, anyone? — along with additional photos of the renovation-in-progress and architectural renderings. The [Brooklyn Ink](#) also provides some decent Passive House background info along with an accompanying video as it pertains to Brooklyn brownstone retrofit projects. And for you insulation buffs out there, the home was the subject of a feature in [Spray Foam magazine](#).

Via [[GreenBuildingAdvisor](#)], [[The Brooklyn Ink](#)]

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