For Immediate Release

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Designing and Building "Solar Ready"

Long Island professionals learn about design that maximizes the impact of solar installations

LONG ISLAND, N.Y., May 1, 2017 - On Friday, April 28, local policy makers, and members of the Long Island building and design community came together to discuss a growing trend in new construction: building "Solar Ready."

Given ever rising energy prices and environmental concerns, demand has grown for more sustainable and energy efficient construction. Solar Ready principles help guide architects, engineers, and builders on how to design a building's roof in a way that would allow for maximum energy production either from initial solar panel installation or future adoption. Some municipalities including the Town of Brookhaven have already adopted Solar Ready building requirements.

Hosted by SunPower by EmPower Solar, Sustainability Institute at Molloy College, Vision Long Island, SunPower by EmPower Solar, and the New York Building Technology Group, the Designing and Building "Solar Ready" conference was given in two sections: why build solar ready, and how to build solar ready. Builders, developers, municipal leaders, and policy makers got a chance to learn about the importance of building homes well equipped for solar to maximize energy efficiency, and production. Architects and engineers learned about the technical requirements to install solar in both a residential and commercial setting.

"Solar installed on Solar Ready homes and buildings maximizes financial returns and can cover 100 percent of energy needs including electric loads, vehicle charging, heating, and cooling of the entire home," said David Schieren, CEO of SunPower by EmPower Solar. "Solar is the fastest growing new energy source. Its impact is magnified when a building is designed properly from the beginning."

"All new homes should be built 'solar ready.' If you look at the dramatic growth in the installation of solar systems and the strong desire among homeowners to both save money on utility bills while also doing their part to help improve the environment, it is the worst kind of antiquated thinking in the twenty-first century—for any new homes to be constructed that are not solar ready," says Neal Lewis, Executive Director of the Sustainability Institute at Molloy College.

"Long Island is well on the path to transitioning from fossil fuels to renewable energy, and rooftop solar power is one key ingredient in this critical transition," said Adrienne Esposito, Executive Director of Citizens Campaign for the Environment. "The more accessible solar power is to property owners, the faster Long Island will move into the 21st century of clean energy. A key element to advancing solar is the establishment of Solar Ready design requirements for new construction. These changes in design to accommodate solar arrays are simple to include during the building process, but could be difficult and costly to change after construction."

The conference covered compliance with building codes and regulations, orientation, and design of roof structures, using roof anchors, laying electrical equipment, solar panel layout, and optimal roofing materials. Presenters also discussed how to build homes “Battery Ready,” and “EV Ready” which will play a large part in making solar accessible during times when the panels may not be producing energy; during night time and bad weather.

“Designing and constructing new buildings to be Solar Ready is a smart decision,” said Gordian Raacke, Executive Director of Renewable Energy Long Island, a not-for-profit organization. “Solar friendly buildings lower the cost of installing solar later on and will allow more of the region’s buildings to generate their own clean power on their roofs.”

These initiatives come as solar installations in New York are growing rapidly. A few reasons for growth include the affordability of installation, statewide financial incentives, and electric bill savings. There are also environmental initiatives to comply with in the coming years, including Governor Cuomo’s goal of powering New York on 50 percent renewable energy by 2030. According to the Solar Energy Industries Association, SEIA, “For the first time ever, solar ranked as the No. 1 source of new electric generating capacity additions brought on-line on an annual basis at 39%.”

Developing buildings with solar compatibility from the beginning saves money and time later on as renewable energy increases in popularity and decreases in cost. "With a range of transit oriented developments and multifamily housing projects underway over the last decade it is important to bring solar energy technology to these buildings,” says Eric Alexander from Vision Long Island.

About SunPower by EmPower Solar
SunPower by EmPower Solar provides customized residential and commercial solar energy solutions using the industry’s highest efficiency solar panels and the best combination of power and product warranty.

For over a decade, EmPower has been the preferred solar provider of over 1,500 New Yorkers and is a proud partner to one of the world’s most innovative and sustainable energy companies, SunPower Corporation, leveraging 30 years of industry experience and record-setting technology.

As the only Long Island-based SunPower Master Dealer, SunPower by EmPower Solar is dedicated to maintaining exceptional customer satisfaction ratings and is the proud recipient of the Building Inspectors Association of Nassau County Industry Leadership Award and the Angie’s List Super Service Award several years in a row.

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