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## New Design Guide for Climate Friendly Rowhomes

**Philadelphia, PA, June 21, 2021** – For those looking to renovate a rowhouse as sustainably as possible, the just-released [Passive Rowhouse Manual](#) is the only existing resource that applies Passive House design principles to a traditional Philadelphia rowhouse.

With over 70% of Philadelphia’s carbon emissions coming from the building sector, over 333,000 rowhouses in the city, and a significant percentage of rowhouses in need of repair, the [Green Building United Passive House Community](#) identified rowhouse renovation as a unique avenue to mitigate climate change while improving quality of life for Philadelphia residents.

"Like many cities across the U.S., rowhomes dominate the Philadelphia landscape. To improve buildings and reduce carbon emissions, the Passive Rowhouse Manual was developed to provide guidance on how to retrofit rowhomes to the high performance, energy efficient Passive House building standard," stated Leah Wirgau, Education and Engagement Director with Green Building United.

The Passive Rowhouse Manual is geared toward developers, contractors, and other professionals who have general familiarity or technical expertise in the Passive House standard. Each chapter is focused on a topic specific to Passive House design and construction, from determining whether Passive House is feasible for a project, all the way through testing and verifying for Passive House certification.

Two authors of the Passive Rowhouse Manual, Paul Thompson and Laura Blau of Blupath Design, GreenSteps, spoke to their experience. "We wish we had a resource like the Passive Rowhouse Manual before we started renovating our historic rowhouse. Any construction project, especially a Passive House renovation like ours, has so many things to consider, starting with design principles and related building science issues, through practical construction concerns. The manual breaks the process into digestible chunks."

This first-of-its-kind document is designed to complement the many existing Passive House resources currently available, and should be used in tandem with the facilitation of a Passive House Consultant.

Construction and renovation guidance within the Manual was informed and supported by data garnered from a series of charrettes, known as the Passive Rowhouse Demonstration Project, which were conducted by Green Building United volunteers throughout 2018 and 2019 to explore the feasibility of renovating existing Philadelphia rowhouses to achieve the Passive House standard. Recommendations are also backed by years of authors’ experience working on personal and professional Passive House projects, as well as general design and construction projects.

The Manual was made possible through support from Sustainable Energy Fund, 475 High Performance Building Supply, INTUS Windows, Kitchen & Associates, MaGrann Associates, McDonald Group, SIGA, and STEGO Industries.

### About Green Building United

Green Building United, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, is committed to promoting sustainable building in Greater Philadelphia, the Lehigh Valley and Delaware. Through education and advocacy,

Green Building United aims to create a sustainable, healthy, and resilient built environment for all. Green Building United offers its members and partners a wide variety of resources, tools, and events to help them stay informed of the latest green building news and trends. For more information, visit [www.greenbuildingunited.org](http://www.greenbuildingunited.org) and connect with us on Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn.

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