

# Essex Crossing design competition proves wood is the future of sustainable architecture

*More than 850 students submitted proposals for a site in the sustainable material*

BY [ZOE ROSENBERG](#) [@ZOE\\_ROSENBERG](#) AUG 9, 2016, 5:30P

[TWEET](#) [SHARE](#) [PIN](#) [REC](#)



The second place winner, Hybrid Domains, is inspired by old 19th century steel and iron loft buildings. *Greg Stacy, Benjamin Wright, Alex Kendle, and Michael Meer*

The designs for the first four of Essex Crossing's sites were [revealed in January 2015](#), and progress has been moving steadily ahead on the redevelopment of the Seward Park Urban Renewal Area (SPURA) that's [blighted the Lower East Side for decades](#). Although there's already a solid plan for the area, architectural students nationwide were asked to envision a different kind of future for one of the sites. Design competition Timber In the City solicited plans for wood-forward structures that would be similar in amenities to SHoP's forthcoming condo building, once set to be home to

an outpost of Pittsburgh's Andy Warhol Museum (That plan crumbled some time ago.)

Students submitting to the competition were asked to design a mid-rise multi-use building with market-rate and below market-rate housing that, according to a press release, "draw[s] optimally on the performance characteristics of not one but a variety of wood technologies." These days wood is being looked towards in a big way as a more environmentally friendly building material that casts a smaller carbon footprint and is more economically viable.

Three winning proposals were chosen from over 850 student applicants. The proposal that took the highest honors came from the University of Washington, where Buddy Burkhalter, Mingjun Yin, and Connor Irick rendered up an "outstanding inventive formal strategy and expressive use of timber" where the building's housing component was stacked in a way to allow light, ventilation, and private outdoor spaces into the development. The development's designed as a modular that would be delivered via flat pack from the Brooklyn Navy Yard. darr;

The second place proposal came from University of Oregon students Greg Stacy, Benjamin Wright, Alex Kendle, and Michael Meer. darr;

And third place was taken by University of Washington students Everardo Lopez, Lauren McWhorter, and Jesce Walz. darr;

The competition was judged by Dana Getman of SHoP Architects and Jennifer Cover of WoodWorks, among others.