

Modular Disaster Relief Housing Ready to Rise in DoBro

Wednesday, May 22, 2013, by Jessica Dailey

It comes as no surprise to learn that **Garrison Architects**, a firm known for its sustainable modular buildings, has been selected to design the city's prefab disaster relief housing prototype. The Post reports that American Manufactured Structures and Services, in partnership with Garrison, was awarded a \$1,135,147 contract by the US Army Corps of Engineers to construct a three-story, **three-unit** test structure this summer. The project will be located next to the Office of Emergency



Management on Cadman Plaza in Downtown Brooklyn. The ground floor will have a handicap-accessible 480-square-foot one-bedroom, while the top two floors will have two 822-square-foot three-bedroom apartments.

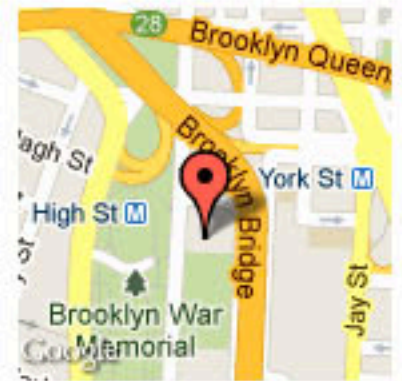
While the structure will be modular, it will not, as [previously reported](#), be made from 8-foot-wide shipping containers. The units are **12-foot wide and 40-foot long**, and they will be shipped completely assembled and furnished, so they just need to be clipped together and hooked up to utilities. Jim Garrison, principal of Garrison Architects, told the Post, "Even though this is a stand-alone, it is designed to operate as a row house and be deployed on a city block so it has a garden in back and parking in front and makes a secure perimeter to create an urban street."

The units are designed with balconies to help reduce solar heat gain, ~~and they will have "special rooftop photovoltaics" with "variant refrigerant flow heat pumps" to make the apartments run more efficiently.~~ Construction will start soon, and the human lab rats—likely OEM workers, students, architects, and engineers—will move in this fall. The tenants will provide feedback on how the apartments function, so the design can be tweaked, if necessary.

The prototype is many years in the making. Back in 2008, the city hosted a design competition called "What If NYC" to come up with ideas for disaster housing, but nothing was ever built as a result. Since then, OEM and the Department of Design and Construction had been working to create a prototype, and a more detailed RFP was released. Now, finally, we're seeing the result. Once building begins, we'll be on the lookout for construction photos, so please do hit up the [tipline](#).

3.23 UPDATE: A rep from AMSS reached out to clarify that the primary contract was award to [American Manufactured Structures and Services](#), and they are collaborating with Garrison Architects. Additionally, the units will not have rooftop photovoltaics. "While we certainly can accommodate PVs, the budget did not allow for this equipment."

- [Crisis housing advances](#) [NYP]
- [Post-Disaster Shipping Container Housing Coming to DoBro](#) [Curbed]
- [Garrison Architects](#) [official]
- [Garrison Architects coverage](#) [Curbed]



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