

Press Release

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Frankfurt housing firm builds new headquarters to Passive House Standard

Ground-breaking for ABG office building at the Frankfurt central station

Frankfurt/Darmstadt. No other company has built as many Passive Houses as the ABG Frankfurt Holding. Soon, the staff of this housing and real estate firm will also benefit from the advantages of the Standard: on Monday, ground was broken for the new company headquarters. The 12,400 square metres of office space will be located on prime property set between Frankfurt's financial district and conference centre, adjacent to an eight storey apartment building, also in Passive House Standard. The complex, being executed by owner and project developer Groß & Partner, is set to be completed by the end of 2014.



Rendering of the planned ABG headquarters, Groß & Partner

The cornerstone was laid by ABG CEO Frank Junker und building owner Jürgen Groß along with Frankfurt mayor, Peter Feldmann, who also serves as chair of the AGB Supervisory Council. During the ceremony, Feldmann emphasised not only the significance of this new build for the development of the surrounding neighbourhood, but also for its excellent level of energy efficiency. "The project is among the largest Passive House office buildings currently under construction

worldwide. As such, both the owner and renter serve as role models," observed Martin Such from Passivhausdienstleistung GmbH (Passive House Services), the Darmstadt firm responsible for the Passive House certification of the building.

Architect Jo Franzke's design incorporates a generously glazed foyer with a view of the courtyard garden. Spacious conference rooms line the ground floor of the new ABG headquarters; meeting rooms are planned on all other floors. The vast majority of the individual offices will be fitted with ceiling-high, triple-paned aluminium windows, in some areas also with acoustically insulated glazing. A two-storey underground parking garage will offer the possibility to charge electric cars and bicycles. The adjacent apartment building will contain 67, subsidised, one to four room flats while a small park will grace the property itself.

As a housing company, the ABG Frankfurt Holding GmbH already possesses years of experience in building to the Passive House Standard. At the 2013 International Passive House Conference held in April, CEO Junker reported on the firm's economic success with more than 1,600 flats realised in the energy efficient building standard. During the groundbreaking ceremony, it was declared that the new headquarters marked the beginning of a new era for the ABG. The traditional pillars of the company philosophy, however, will remain housing for all and energy efficiency. "When you consistently strive for energy efficiency in your buildings and claim to be the 'Passive House maker', nothing other than this proven standard could possibly come into question for your own building," remarked Junker.

More than one third of the energy demand in Germany is due to the operation of buildings. Passive House reduces the demand for heating and cooling energy by up to 90 percent. The principle works not only in new builds, but also in retrofits with the so-called EnerPHit Standard: the extra investment needed upfront is balanced out by the extremely low heating and cooling costs. Certification according to the criteria of the Passive House Institute ensures the necessary quality – from preliminary design drafts all the way through to the final implementation. Over 30 building certifiers worldwide have been accredited by the Passive House Institute to provide competent consultancy and carry out Passive House certification.

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