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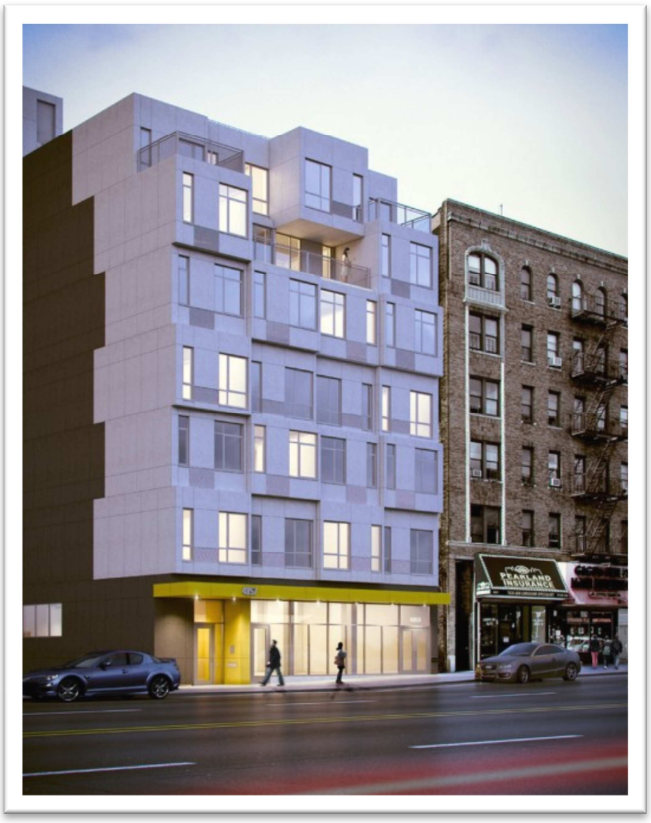
Prefabricated houses are special types of structures that are composed from multiple units that can easily be shipped over large distances and assembled in relatively short periods of time. Prefabricated homes may refer to different kinds of houses such as houses built in components, houses composed of different modules or sectional housing that can be transported easily. These houses and their modules are always constructed in accordance with the IBC. Due to these reasons, prefab homes can be very useful in the event of some kind of disaster (Hurricane Sandy) due to short set up time and having many units ready to go.

Prefab homes are typically assembled in units, these units can be placed alongside each other or stacked depending on the conditions that need to be met. After that utilities are ran through these units and typically connections are sealed at the joints of each unit. Once construction is complete and the house is set up on site, the home goes through a period called "settling in" where it sinks into the ground (much like regular homes). When this occurs, some cracking may occur in building components due to not being set up properly. Plumbing and electrical lines may also shift and should be repaired after the settling period has occurred.

Prefabrication has many advantages over traditional construction methods such as shorter construction time, healthier buildings (less molds, leaks, etc.), reduced energy consumption, cost effective solutions, safety in construction, reduction of construction waste and it is much more environmentally friendly. That being said however, it also has its drawbacks as well. Leaks can occur at prefabricated connection joints and transportation costs may be overwhelming depending on the size of the modules. Also, in the case of large scale prefab

structures, larger than usual cranes may be required to get each component where it needs to be. However, being in New York I don't think this is an actual concern due to the fact there are many high-rise projects that use enormous cranes that move upwards as the structure progresses.

A good example of a prefab structure going up is right in our own backyard; located in Inwood, Manhattan is the project that is being known as the 'Broadway Stack'. It is about 38,000 square feet and will contain 28 high quality, medium income apartments. On the ground floor will be about 4,000 square feet of commercial space. Construction is expected to take four weeks and then another three months for connecting various utilities, really showing us how fast prefab structures can come together.



http://gluckplus.com/project/the-stack

Another great example of prefab construction are Blu Homes. Meant for urban environments with narrow lots, Blu homes have a footprint of 65 feet by 35 feet and are elegantly designed with an open floor plan, three bedrooms and two bathrooms. The home is very spacious, with 16 feet ceilings, clerestory windows and sliding glass doors. It is also extremely ecofriendly, being a LEED silver certified home, it contains triple paned windows, motion-sensor faucets and the structural steel used is made of 90% recycled steel.

http://www.bluhomes.com/