Ellen Larson Vaughan Biography

Ellen Larson Vaughan is Policy Director for the nonprofit Environmental and Energy Study Institute (EESI) in Washington, DC, and leads its Sustainable Building Initiative to provide bipartisan information on the multiple benefits of “green and high performance” buildings for policymakers and stakeholders. To develop innovative policy solutions, Ms. Vaughan works with building science experts, policy advocates and others to examine the interrelationships and synergies among energy efficiency, renewable energy use, resiliency, health and safety, comfort and security, affordability and profitability, accessibility, historic preservation, and other building performance goals.

Ms. Vaughan has spent more than 20 years working on building-related policy issues for national organizations, including the National Society of Professional Engineers (NSPE), Air Conditioning Contractors of America (ACCA), and Steven Winter Associates, Inc. (SWA), one of the nation’s leading firms in building technology/energy research, design and consulting. At SWA, Ms. Vaughan was part of the management team and a moving force behind the Passive Solar Industries Council (PSIC) and its successor, the Sustainable Buildings Industry Council (SBIC). She helped develop and conduct the first workshops on high performance K-12 school buildings and organized a two-day peer review that resulted in the first LEED Platinum building.

Ms. Vaughan was a key figure in the early development of the web-based Whole Building Design Guide (which now resides with the National Institute of Building Sciences); federal statutory language on high performance buildings; and many of the coalitions formed since then. She has participated on National Academy panels, testified before the U.S. Congress, and authored or coauthored a number of articles on buildings and energy including “Beyond Green: High Performance Buildings”, published in the fall 2009 issue of the MIT Press journal, Innovations, and “Advancing a Blueprint for High-Performance Homes”, published in Issues in Science and Technology (Winter 2012).