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Building Green

Zócalo multifamily projects offer green option

RiverClay Condominiums, which is being developed by Zócalo Community Development in downtown Denver at 2195 Decatur St., will be completed in June. In May, ground will be broken for the developer's 20|20 project at 2020 Lawrence St. in the Ballpark neighborhood.

Both projects are pioneers in the nation's green building movement. They are the first multifamily housing projects in Colorado to earn the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design certification.

That benchmark, offered by the U.S. Green Building Council, documents environmentally friendly construction techniques that result in quantifiable energy efficiency and water savings as well as healthier interiors.

Forty-two of RiverClay's 60 units are under contract, as are 30 of 60 at 20|20, and a growing number of those buyers say they are strongly motivated by the projects' green values.

According to Zócalo Development Partner Sarah Harman, about 20 percent of RiverClay's buyers said they were strongly motivated by green values. Twelve months later, when 20|20 was launched, that number had grown to 80 percent.

"There has been a rapid rate of education around these issues," said Harman. The company will power common areas of both buildings with solar energy, has committed to recycling up to 80 percent of its construction waste, installs energy-efficient appliances and uses nontoxic interior finishes, paints and carpeting.

And while the solar panels on RiverClay's roof were hidden from sight, those at 20|20 will be visible. Photovoltaic panels large enough to supply 50 kilowatts of power have been incorporated into an awning that is visible from the street.

The architect is for both projects John Gagnon.

Also, Zócalo is installing a switch in each condo that can shut off the energy drain caused by idle cell phone chargers, toasters, LED displays, computers and other nonessential appliances that use energy even when they are at rest.

Since its inception in 1998, LEED certification has been given to more than 14,000 industrial and commercial projects. Under a pilot program that was made available to residential projects in 2005, only 336 U.S. homes have earned LEED certification, including only one in Colorado, a custom home in Fort Collins.

RiverClay is expected to earn a LEED Silver rating when it is completed, while 20|20 will earn a Gold rating.▲

S.A. Miro staff earns LEED accreditation

Four staff members of S.A. Miro Inc. recently received LEED AP accreditation from the U.S. Green Building Council: Steve Mystkowski, PE, associate principal/civil department manager, Denver; Greg Weeks, PE, associate/civil project manager, Denver; Jessica Marshall, PE, project engineer/structural project engineer, based in the Summit County office; and Kyle Williams, intern with the firm's retail architecture group.▲



Zócalo's 20|20



Zócalo's RiverClay