

New York Construction

December 2006

BEST OF

2006

Mill River House

AWARD OF MERIT Residential

The 92-unit Mill River House condominium complex has provided an auspicious start to the economic makeover that civic leaders in Stamford, Conn., have planned for the downtown Mill River Corridor.

Located across from Mill River Park, the centerpiece of area redevelopment efforts, the new \$25.5 million, 140,000-sq.-ft. housing complex has transformed a neglected 1.5-acre site that had once housed an automobile dealership.

The new 5.5-story brick and shingle-clad residential building offers a mix of market-rate and affordable housing, as well as a distinctive gateway to Stamford's western neighborhoods, all within walking distance of the central business district and urban transit options.

The Best of 2006 jury lauded the project's blend of higher-end and affordable housing, which includes 11 units in the \$80,000 to \$188,000 price range, well below the average home price in the city of nearly \$750,000. Sale prices of other units in the complex, which has one-, two-, and three-bedroom units, ranged from \$325,000 to \$635,000. The complex was fully sold out prior to opening in January.

One juror called it "an affordable housing project that's probably going to revitalize that area," and added that it may set a standard for similar privately funded developments in the future.

Before the structure went up, however, the project team had to remove contaminated soil, underground storage tanks, and other toxic reminders of the corner parcel's three decades of use as an automobile sales and repair facility.

The team also had to address the site's



100-year floodplain. Instead of placing the one-story concrete parking structure below grade, the team built it over fill, leaving the garage above the floodplain elevation. The garage also supports the 4.5 wood-framed residential floors above.

With concrete street-level entrance stoops, a prominent corner brick tower, wide sidewalks, and a streetscape with landscaped edging and period lighting, Mill River House evokes a classic style matching the city's recently adopted Mill River Corridor Plan and Design District.

Inside, the market-rate and affordable housing units are virtually identical. All feature kitchens with upscale finishes and appliances, walk-in closets, and large windows and balconies. Top-floor units also have 18-ft. cathedral ceilings and lofts from the building's extra half-floor. <<

Key Players

Developer-Owner: River House Associates (Hannah Real Estate Investors; Paxton and Ray Kinol)

Architect: Beinfield Architecture

General Contractor: Thomason Stevens

Environmental Engineer: Triton Environmental

Geotechnical Engineer: Heller & Johnson

Structural Engineer: Hallama Pelliccione & Vander Poll

Mechanical Engineer: Collective Design Associates

Planner-Civil Engineer-Surveyor: Redniss & Mead

Concrete: Tri-Star Building

Electrical: Aerial Lighting & Electric

Plumbing: Hart Plumbing