



Ruby Group to build new EcoGreen community housing - \$1.5m project

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The Ruby Group, a development, construction management and consulting company based in Goshen, N.Y., will build townhouse-style student residences in a public-private venture at Sullivan County Community College.

The EcoGreen Community Housing will meet or exceed Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED), Energy Star and National Green Building Standards for energy efficiency and environmental sensitivity. The residences will house up to 48 students and will be ready for occupancy during August - in time for the 2010-2011 academic year.

"Student housing is tremendously underserved across the nation in terms of quality and quantity," said Ruby Group CEO Pete Berman. "The need for student housing presents a great opportunity for The Ruby Group to form partnerships with public and private colleges and universities wishing to expand and improve their student housing. We've been residential and commercial builders for decades and have the skills needed to design, finance and build new residences for students."

The building is expected to cost about \$1.5 million to design and build.

The new townhouses will resemble traditional New England homes, with porches, pitched roofs and exterior walls with clapboard siding and shingles. Storage space is available in the basement. The Ruby Group is responsible for arranging financing and will lease the land required from the college. The housing will be managed by Longley Jones, the Syracuse, N.Y. company that manages SCCC Dormitory Corp.'s existing dorms.

Sullivan County Community College Dormitory Corp.'s new housing is not your father's dormitory with little more than Spartan bedrooms. Instead, the new residences will be located in three side-by-side townhouses with living rooms, kitchens, dining rooms and a total of 24 bedrooms, three of which will be handicapped accessible. The new building will help address fast-growing demand for on-campus housing at the 1,600-student college where attendance has been soaring in recent years and the existing dormitory is fully occupied.

The municipal planning and approval process only took 90 days - an extremely quick approval for a project in New York State. Berman credited the fast approvals to outreach and research that was done before starting to draft plans or approach local officials.

"We met with many of the stakeholders - local officials, planning officials, college administrators and others - early on to learn what their desires and concerns are," Berman said. "This let us immediately answer their questions and address their concerns, which made the proposal quickly move through the approval process. We're on a tight schedule and the public officials did everything they could to keep the project on track and on time."

The residences will be constructed using modular-building techniques where most of the fabrication is done in a factory and the modules are assembled at the site. Modular construction usually is

much faster than doing the work on site. A total of 18 modules will be positioned atop a Superior Walls pre-cast, insulated concrete foundation system.

The Ruby Group has been a pioneer in building environmentally friendly housing and is one of the few construction companies in the nation that has built a home that received the top-level, Platinum LEED rating for energy efficiency and environmental sensitivity.

"Sullivan Community College is known for its green-building and renewable-energy courses, so we felt it was fitting to have the new housing meet environmental-efficiency standards," Berman said.

"The new residences have been designed to show that almost any type of building can be built "Green" if you make a commitment and put your mind to it. It isn't limited to high-end homes and shouldn't be a budget buster. You can make almost any building more energy efficient and sustainable - even a college residence."

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