



## **The Andrew named one of the top energy efficient buildings in New York State by SWA**

February 18, 2011 - Green Buildings

According to The Bluestone Org., a full-service real estate development company, its new rental development, The Andrew, was labeled by Steven Winter Associates, Inc. (SWA), an architectural and engineering research and consulting firm that specializes in making buildings more efficient, as being the "best performing building in a multifamily new construction four stories or greater" that SWA has ever worked on in that category.

Based on SWA's studies of a sampling of buildings constructed in the past 15 years, The Andrew performs over 50% better than conventional non-Energy Star construction. Tracking a heating index of 4.4 BTU per s/f per Heating Degree Day through mid-January, the apartments only cost \$200 per year to heat and the total annual utility costs for common area electricity were only 60 cents per s/f. SWA has studied hundreds of building across N.Y. and works to make buildings safer, more energy efficient, more affordable and overall, more sustainable.

Located at 65-54 Austin St. in Rego Park, The Andrew is a new 50-unit multifamily rental building. The lead developer, Steven Bluestone, principal of The Bluestone Org., said, "The Andrew sets a new benchmark in energy savings. The efficient and innovative construction of the building was achieved at the same cost of construction as that of a conventional building and is responsible for giving residents some of the lowest energy bills in a multifamily building in all of NYS."

Bluestone attributes the bulk of the cost savings to the building's unique "envelope" design which was created using an insulated concrete form (ICF) system. The ICF completely encloses the exterior of the building greatly reducing costs to heat and cools the apartments by providing exceptional insulation and air and water tight walls. An added benefit of the ICF system is that it provides an exceptionally quiet living environment for residents.

"While the ICF system has gained popularity across the country for its high performance attributes, namely superior air-tightness and insulation, it has only been used in a handful of New York City residential buildings with more than four units," said Ryan Merkin, senior project manager of SWA. "The cost of building the ICF system was the same as that of a conventional building that has fewer sustainability features, so we know this design will set the standard for efficiency in the future."

The Andrew was constructed with several other green benefits, including special windows (many of which were triple and quadruple glazed) for superior noise reduction, Energy Star window air conditioners with removable insulated covers to prevent heat loss in the winter, and motion sensor lighting in the common hallways to decrease electricity consumption rates.

Major elements of the building's mechanical systems were designed by Henry Gifford, a highly regarded leader in conservation and green building. Gifford's simple yet effective changes to the design of the building's pumps, boilers, and piping systems added to the overall effect of energy savings. Gifford designed smaller pipes and pumps that created fewer valves resulting in less

friction. The use of smaller individual fans for each apartment in lieu of large rooftop fans also helped increase energy savings.

The Andrew has made notable achievements incorporating several energy saving innovations. The development is Energy Star-certified, and participated in New York State Energy Research Development Agency's (NYSERDA) Multifamily Performance Program, a state program that works in conjunction with developers, building owners and representatives to improve the energy efficiency, health, safety, and security to the residential buildings with five or more residential units in a cost effective manner.

"Bluestone is at the forefront of green design by creating energy efficient buildings that help the environment and help our residents," said Bluestone. "We have received awards and certificates for The Andrew, but we adopted these practices primarily to save on energy costs for our residents and create a smaller carbon footprint. Since green design does not require significant cost increases, we know that these practices will become more widespread for all new construction."

The Andrew was developed by The Bluestone Organization. GF55 Partners served as the lead architect on the project, Henry Gifford worked on various mechanical design elements, and Lamar Lighting supplied the Occusmart light fixtures used throughout most of the public areas. Construction was completed in March of 2010.

New York Real Estate Journal - 17 Accord Park Drive #207, Norwell MA 02061 - (781) 878-4540