



Understanding the green movement

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Today more than ever, people have a better understanding that what they do, buy, and consume affects the planet. From electric/hybrid cars, to locally sourced foods and recycling programs consumers can easily find ways to better the planet by making changes to their everyday lives. What most home buyers and renters might not be aware of however is the work that goes into making a residential property LEED Certified, a designation given to properties by the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) after a stringent process. A LEED certification recognizes best-in-class building strategies and practices from the use of sustainable materials during construction to the installation of solar power and water recycling systems.

We represented the Visionaire, the first New York City condominium project to gain the coveted LEED Platinum Certification - the highest designation of its kind - and have been on the forefront of the "green" movement since the beginning. As a result we have seen the tremendous changes in the market first hand. The Visionaire included fresh air supply systems, filtered water, energy efficient heating and cooling systems, all of which were extremely well received by the condominium buyers.

Being on the forefront of the LEED movement, we have advised numerous developers on green practices and how they think about how buildings are designed, constructed, maintained, and operated. Today, the list of requirements to be "green" has grown and changed and includes trash management, water conservation, electrical modifications and heat conservation through the use of low E glass.

While at first it was seen as a luxury to build a LEED Certified property, current construction standards have allowed for many more newly developed projects and rental properties to qualify for even LEED Silver. For example, the use of long-life special bulbs are now pretty standard in most new buildings because they require less maintenance as is the installation of low-flow toilets and showers, which in turn helps qualify a property to gain LEED status.

As the green movement continues to be top of mind for many, both end users and developers are more aware of the difference these changes in buildings make in our world and are more sensitive that ever to the benefits of LEED certification.

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