

THE SOLAIRE



Environmentalism is running like a blue streak through lower Manhattan—and it all started with an azure band of photovoltaic panels on the facade of The Solaire. The first green residential high-rise in the nation, this 27-story building sits on the bank of the Hudson River, with clear views of the Statue of Liberty and passing ships.

The Albanese Organization won the parcel of land, the first up for bid after Battery Park City Authority created environmental guidelines for its 92-acre planned community. The developers dived in—until the tragic collapse of the World

interest in sustainable buildings by community groups and public authorities.”

Local codes, plus labor and design traditions, don't often allow for experimentation. But the team was determined. “We immersed ourselves in making environmental consequences an integral part of everything,” says Rafael Pelli, partner at Clarke Pelli Architects.

Their work paid off when the structure received Green Building Council's Gold rating under LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) standards. The Solaire uses 35 percent less energy than a similar building designed to code. Two-thirds of materials were manufactured within 500 miles. Internal water systems cut potable water consumption in half. Paints have few, if any, volatile compounds, air is filtered, and floor-to-ceiling casement windows in all 293 units maximize sunlight. And those blue solar electric panels? Recycled computer chips.

The Albanese Organization is now applying the lessons learned here to two adjacent green developments. “Once you go through this process,” says Russell, “you realize that you want to become more a part of the solution.”

For more, visit thesolaire.com.

This New York building gives environmentally friendly design a downtown edge.

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Trade Center, five blocks away, halted construction for 10 months. “One impact in redeveloping the area,” says organization president Russell C. Albanese, “was a strong

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