

New Hotel Indigo Beginning Construction in Downtown Athens, Ga.

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Project Pursuing LEED(R) Gold-Certification from U.S. Green Building Council

Atlanta based Rialto Property Partners, LLC and Savannah based Melaver, Inc. announce that the new Hotel Indigo has commenced construction in downtown Athens (U.S.). Located five blocks from the University of Georgia's campus, the boutique hotel will have 130 eco-luxury guestrooms and plans to be open by the fall of 2009. The building is anticipated to be among the first three hotels in the world to achieve LEED(R) Gold-Certification by the U.S. Green Building Council.

Hotel Indigo Athens will offer a complete boutique experience. Elegant features include residential-inspired guestrooms, hardwood floors and spa-like showers, which are all part of the Hotel Indigo design. In addition, the hotel will have an outdoor garden lounge and terrace, an art gallery, as well as a music venue adjacent to the hotel. A 3,000 square foot Presidential Suite located on a 'Concierge Level' featuring floor-to-ceiling windows will also be included in the boutique hotel.

Although construction of the hotel has begun, it will not be commemorated in traditional fashion. 'We have decided to forego a typical ground-breaking event and have a 'green-breaking' instead,' said Amy Hibler, Corporate Sustainability Officer for Rialto Property Partners. The company has diverted funds typically used for such an occasion to support sustainable development and community initiatives within Athens, with a contribution to both Nuçi's Space and Athens Land Trust. 'Our goals for sustainability extend beyond the environment and into the local community, which we believe further underscores our team's commitment to responsible development,' said Tommy Linstroth, Head of Sustainable Initiatives for Melaver.

"This hotel is going to make a significant contribution to the appeal of the downtown district. Hotel Indigo's environmental and community initiatives will further the reputation of the business community as forward thinking and committed to making Athens a better place to live, work and play," said Doc Eldridge, President of Athens Area Chamber of Commerce. "We are excited about having them become a valuable community partner."

Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) is the nationally accepted green building rating system, created to make a positive impact on public health and the environment. From recycling construction waste to using local building materials, Rialto Property Partners is committed to developing a sustainable building and site for Hotel Indigo Athens. Some of the property's green features include an outdoor cistern to collect rainwater for landscape irrigation, an energy-efficient heating and air-conditioning system, as well as regenerative elevators that self-power after use.

Sustainable site development is a key feature of the Hotel Indigo property. The building has a dedicated green roof, and the site will include 'green pavement' systems where possible. The property will have an on-site public transit stop, bicycle racks, and priority parking for hybrid vehicles to encourage alternate transportation to and from the hotel. The location also allows future hotel guests to walk to The Classic Center, The University of Georgia, downtown shopping, restaurants and nightlife.

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