

BONSTRA | HARESIGN LEADING WITH EARTHCRAFT DESIGN

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Now that the DC Metro area real estate market is beginning to recover with some modest gains, developers are entering the market with some exciting new GREEN redevelopments. As GREEN, smart growth and sustainability become the *buzz* words for any new project out there, architects and builders are left with what *certification* do they look to achieve. The DC area is synonymous with USGBC's

LEED certification being that they are headquartered here although another organization has been gaining quite a bit of national attention as well, Earthcraft from Atlanta GA. With being in real estate and a great interest in seeing green buildings become a staple of our market place, I recently met with one of Washington's top design firms Bonstra Haresign Architects to find out more about their project, the Macedonia at 2229 Shirlington Road, Arlington that is seeking Earthcraft designation over LEED.

The Macedonia is part of growing number of nationwide projects as part of the LIHTC (*Low income housing tax credit*) an initiative that seeks to incorporate a cadre of GREEN features as part of an understanding that higher performing buildings are meant for all levels of income. This project is a joint venture of sorts between Macedonia Baptist Church and AHC, Inc., an organization that seeks to promote strategic partnerships for affordable housing opportunities.

Now the impressive part of the project is Bonstra Haresign Architects design and the approach that they are taking as part of achieving EarthCraft's green designation. The difference between achieving LEED and EarthCraft can be summed up in the following



manner, EarthCraft is directed more towards single-family/low-rise residential projects and accounts for the local climate conditions. Where as LEED for Homes is a part of a national standards program and sometimes doesn't reward you for specific climates and smaller residential projects. Both cover the same ground in the basic sustainable issues but, EarthCraft weighs energy efficiency a bit heavier .

Another bonus of EarthCraft is they have local technicians who are responsible for the review and documentation of the building during the construction process. I was told by Matthew Correll of Bonstra Haresign that they schedule site visits to review every step of the construction process to ensure that the standards are being met and will let you know if they foresee any problems before they arise.

The Macedonia will feature an extensive list of green building elements that you are just beginning to see more of as such projects come together.



Sprayed in foam insulation

*To review the list click **Macedonia Sustainable Features List.***

As we learn more about the importance of energy and building resources and the value they weigh in real estates actual net worth it is important that we high light the achievements of organizations such as AHC, Inc and Bonstra Haresign for taking the lead in developing a quality projects around the region.

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