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Growing appetite at Family Dollar

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Duke gains energy in new plant plans

Gas-fired operations are key to building capacity for Charlotte utility. **P5**



Bank towers key efficiency effort

How several commercial projects across the region are building for LEED certification. **P23**

Atlanta firm eyes Charlotte

WILL BOYE
STAFF WRITER

King & Spalding, Atlanta's oldest law firm, is expanding to Charlotte and is busy recruiting local lawyers to quickly ramp up the new office, which will

likely be in Bank of America Corporate Center.

Already, the firm has hired two partners from Kennedy Covington and is in talks with lawyers at other firms.

King & Spalding intends to build its Charlotte office to

about 50 lawyers within 18 months, according to people familiar with the plans.

Les Zuke, a spokesman for King & Spalding, says the firm does not discuss its strategic

LAWYERS, PAGE 17



photo DONNA RISE

One of the first steps in the retail makeover at Charlotte/Douglas was the opening of high-end retailers in Concourse D.

A step in green direction

Crescent readies Charlotte's first environmentally friendly condos

LAURA WILLIAMS-TRACY
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Crescent Communities is poised to offer Charlotte's first multifamily building that will be certified for its environmentally friendly construction.

BellaVita on Park, a 97-unit Tuscan-style condominium project, is sandwiched between the Myers Park and Sedgefield neighborhoods.

Crescent executives say they have no market

BELLAVITA, PAGE 29



photo DONNA RISE

The BellaVita design team included Jenkins-Peer partner Victor Jones, holding the more than 200 drawings of the project; Kim Reitterer (from left) and Lloyd Cobb, LEED certified engineers at Elm Engineering; and Desiree Bryan MacSorley, a principal at Design Resource Group.



PHOTO: JENKINS-PEER ARCHITECTS

Airport adds local flavor to mix of retail, restaurants

KATY STAFFORD
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STAFF WRITERS

Bojangles' will soon be serving fried chicken and biscuits alongside a slate of new shops and restaurants at Charlotte/Douglas International Airport.

Through renovations and expansions, the airport is trying to find the right balance between local flavor and national standbys — all aimed at boosting revenue.

As part of the new strategy, the airport is rolling out a branding campaign to make travelers more aware of shopping and dining options. Fourteen "Shop, Dine, Work, Relax!" signs were being installed this week, providing a directory of concessions.

"The key is providing what your customer wants," says

AIRPORT, PAGE 17

Banking giants push mortgage education

BofA joins effort to help consumers stay out of foreclosure

RICH THOMASELLI
STAFF WRITER

Hoping to stem the rising tide of problem loans, a group of mortgage lenders and banks — including Bank of America Corp. and SunTrust Banks Inc. — are backing a new advertising

campaign that looks to educate homeowners on the number of options they have before going into foreclosure.

Charlotte-based BofA, Atlanta-based SunTrust and 16 other companies have contributed a total of \$1.6 million toward a three-year, \$5 million

public-service campaign from The Ad Council and NeighborWorks America, a homeownership advocacy group.

The tagline for the campaign, which will run on TV, radio, print, Internet and billboards:

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BELLAVITA: Crescent makes leap to LEED for Park Road condo project

FROM PAGE 1

research into buyers' desire for an environmentally sensitive building.

Instead, the developer's past experience with other green projects, the building's location and timing, and a growing public interest in earth-friendly projects gave Crescent the confidence to pursue Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design certification for BellaVita.

"We are looking to do this because we can," says Jason McArthur, regional vice president for the multifamily development group at Crescent Resources. "This is not your typical urban high-rise condo building."

Crescent has already gained a foothold in green projects in the Charlotte region. It developed the LEED-certified clubhouse at The Sanctuary on Lake Wylie, the first privately developed building in the county to earn the designation.

"I hope this will be a great experiment," says Charlotte architect Joelle Mirco, who has extensive experience with buildings that qualify for LEED certification, the national stamp of approval for green construction. Her firm, Perkins & Will, isn't associated with BellaVita.

"Crescent has everything to win for doing this," Mirco says. "They can sell the units for a premium, the owner-occupants will have lower energy bills and they are simply doing the right thing."

Crescent asked Victor Jones of Jenkins-Peer Architects to develop a checklist of what it would take to earn certification. With that in hand, Crescent saw the project could be green — and still be profitable.

"Crescent is very committed to sustainability," Jones says. "There are a lot of direct benefits to the people who will buy units and occupy this building."

And, he says, the project will likely debunk other myths about sustainable design in private development — namely that costs are hard to recoup and that green design necessitates modern design.

BellaVita is four-story, wood-framed building over a concrete parking deck. It is Northern Italian in style with a courtyard, arches, colonnades and pergolas.

"We set out to do a building that people like," Jones says. "At the end of the day, you've got to sell these things. LEED did not drive what this building will look like. What drove the building aesthetic is what would resonate with the buyer."

He estimates LEED certification will add less than 2.5% to the overall construction cost. "I think with this scale of building, it gets easier to achieve LEED certification and still remain profitable," Jones says, adding that buildings larger than 30,000 square feet create an economy of scale.

Better yet, he says, the five-year life-cycle cost for the building will create enough savings to pay for the additional expense of LEED certification.

Crescent declines to disclose development costs.

Crescent has already demolished the Summit Apartment buildings at Park and Marsh roads and has a 2.7-acre site ready for construction to begin in late summer. Sales will start in early fall. The project should be complete by early 2009. Cox & Schepp Construction Inc. is the contractor.

The building offers four floor plans, says Brian Natwick, development manager for BellaVita. The studio condos, at 772 square feet, will sell in the mid-\$200,000s. And the largest, three-bedroom units will measure slightly less than 1,700 square feet and be priced in the mid-\$500,000s.

Amenities include a pool, outdoor entertaining areas, clubroom with wine cellar, billiards room and three outdoor terraces.

Buyers will be able to see, smell and feel the difference in how a green building functions. Air quality, energy efficiency and an emphasis on recycling — not just bottles and newspapers but on-site rainwater as well — are just some of the features expected to help the building earn LEED certification.

The U.S. Green Building Council began rewarding buildings for environmentally sensitive design seven years ago and has developed a sophisticated checklist of requirements for saving energy and resources.

Building owners can aim for a rating ranging from certified, silver, gold and platinum levels, depending on how many points the design attempts to earn. The certified level is sought for BellaVita.

Design team member Kim Reitterer, a partner and senior electrical engineer at Elm Engineering, says the initial cost premium of 1% to 3% on a certified building becomes smaller with a larger building because of the economy of scale.

"It's the triple-bottom-line approach," Reitterer says. "It impacts the financial bottom line with reduced energy costs, it has a social and environmental impact, and it has a people-factor impact since sustainable buildings are much healthier for the occupants."


The building will earn points with the Green Building Council for using local products, such as Southern yellow pine instead of wood from Canada. Local sourcing means less pollution from transporting the product to the site.

About 75% of construction waste will be diverted from a landfill, and 10% of the building will include recycled content.

Desiree MacSorley, a landscape architect at Design Resource Group, says the project takes a different approach to stormwater runoff, using it for landscape irrigation. Plants were chosen for limited need of water.

If BellaVita is successful with sales, it may prove to other developers that suppressing short-term cost savings to invest in better long-term performance makes good business sense.

"The reason there is not much developer activity with regard to LEED is that it is end-user driven," Mirco says. "Those who see the benefits are the occupants, and often the developer doesn't have the incentive to pay the premium for the mechanical, electrical, plumbing and HVAC costs. For the developer, the consumer needs to be driving it."




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