

REAL ESTATE AND CONSTRUCTION REVIEW – 2004**THE COURTYARD AT WINTHROP**

Rock Hill, South Carolina

Winthrop University's innovative new student housing facility anchors the school to downtown Rock Hill.

"The Courtyard at Winthrop is a conscious contribution to the City of Rock Hill's old-town Renaissance initiative," said L. Keith Williams, assistant vice president for the office of finance and business at Winthrop University Real Estate Foundation, Inc.

Designed to resemble an upscale townhouse, the four-story building contains 111 housing units with 406 beds in two- and four-bedroom suites. Set on a structural wood frame, the building's exterior features include metal siding, brick, cast stone and extensive landscaping. Roof dormers and an intricate system of high-end window units, metal panels and metal trim combine to create a bay window architectural effect. A clock tower at the main entrance lines up with existing plazas, providing a focal point for the campus.

Built to blend into the college vernacular, The Courtyard at Winthrop features a traditional Winthrop neoclassical style constructed around a center courtyard. The design reflects current trends away from the high-rise housing construction. "This award-winning project is unique; it has the look and feel of an upscale residential on-campus housing facility, yet the construction costs were very reasonable," said Dennis Jankiewicz, AIA, principal of Design Collective, Inc., the project's architect.

The building's mechanical system uses split-system heat pumps, allowing individual unit control with the cost of a traditional four-pipe mechanical system. Located in a concealed roof well, the heat pump condenser units are kept off the ground and tucked away from the exterior public spaces.

Design challenges included creating an efficient building footprint that allowed the use of quality building materials while staying within the limited construction budget. To that end, unit plans were carefully arranged to best utilize all areas, maximizing space for residences and minimizing space for circulation. Special two-bedroom units were situated in the inside corners, capitalizing on hard-to-use spaces, and four-bedroom units cap the ends of the facility, reducing building circulation area.

Construction challenges included removing industrial waste from the site, constructing an extraordinarily complex roof truss framing system to accommodate the roof dormers, and closely coordinating the elements of the bay window feature to maintain a watertight façade.

"There were many factors that contributed to the success and national recognition of The Courtyard at Winthrop project. I have no doubt that the most important factor was the



day- to-day cooperation of the team members,” said J Dykes, project manager for Capstone Development Corp., the project’s general contractor. “They were knowledgeable and decisive, which contributed greatly to maintaining the momentum necessary to finish the project on time.”

Williams described the project as an enduring modern reflection of Winthrop’s “Vision of Distinction.” He said, “It is an example of public/private partnership, creativity and community building at its best.”