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Going Green, With Help From Some Friends

By Emily Glazer

While the developers of Element Condominiums are touting its so-called green philosophy, they aren't boasting of insulated glass or a pesticide-free rooftop garden. The building has no environmental certifications, and so the developers are jumping on the green bandwagon by offering residents several environmentally friendly services.

The building, at 555 W. 59th St., is in a partnership with Whole Foods Market, John Masters Organics, and Green Apple Dry Cleaners to provide its residents with access to environmentally friendly products.

Element, which will open its doors in November, is already 85% sold. Prices range between \$900,000 for a one-bedroom apartment and about \$2 million for a three-bedroom apartment.

"The building is unique in that it is very practical but at the same time has all of these organic aspects," the exclusive sales and marketing agent for Element, Shlomi Reuveni, said.

The condominium's partnership with Whole Foods, the first of its kind, provides residents with special perks, including specialized menus and newsletters notifying them of upcoming products.

"Element is the first condominium to partner with them and we're very excited about that," Jane Gol, a managing partner at Continental Ventures Realty, one of the building's developers, said. The other developers are Brack Capital Real Estate and COALCO International Ltd.

Residents will also have a delivery service for organic wine through Morrell & Co. As with Whole Foods, the products will not be discounted. Rather, the developers are banking on residents' desire for easy access to healthy products. The building also boasts a spa that will include products from John Masters Organics. It is the first time the company has partnered with a residential building.

The founder of the product line, John Masters, said he works with an aromatherapist, a chemist, and organic farmers to acquire organic ingredients from all over the world.

Unlike first-time condominium partners Whole Foods and John Masters, Green Apple Dry Cleaners finds this old hat.

It has several relationships with green buildings, including the Riverhouse and the Solaire, both in Battery Park City.

The chief executive officer of Green Apple Dry Cleaners, David Kistner, said his company is the only dry cleaner in New York that uses carbon dioxide rather than hazardous chemicals.

Green Apple also uses diesel trucks and recyclable garment bags, Mr. Kistner said.

As with its other partnerships, Element residents will be charged the same as other customers at Green Apple Dry Cleaners.

Although Mr. Reuveni said he could not "scientifically break down" whether buyers purchased their apartments based on the organic amenities, he did say that the natural components of the building, including the large outdoor space and the organic services package, were a lure for buyers.

"The prices have been escalating since our opening," Mr. Reuveni said. "People in our building get more than just bricks and mortar — they get a concept, a lifestyle."