

IN THE REGION/New Jersey

A Condo Tower Aligned to Provide Calm

By ANTOINETTE MARTIN

EDGEWATER, a modest slip of a city beside the Hudson -- it's three miles long and just three-quarters of a mile wide -- has enjoyed a growth spurt over the last 15 years, gaining fine dining establishments and high-class shops, and doubling its population to nearly 10,000.

Now, a developer has decided that Edgewater is ready for a Manhattan-style condominium tower. The Tarragon Corporation is preparing to break ground this month for a 15-story glass-and-brick structure to be called One Hudson Park. The building on River Road will house 168 one- to three-bedroom units -- some

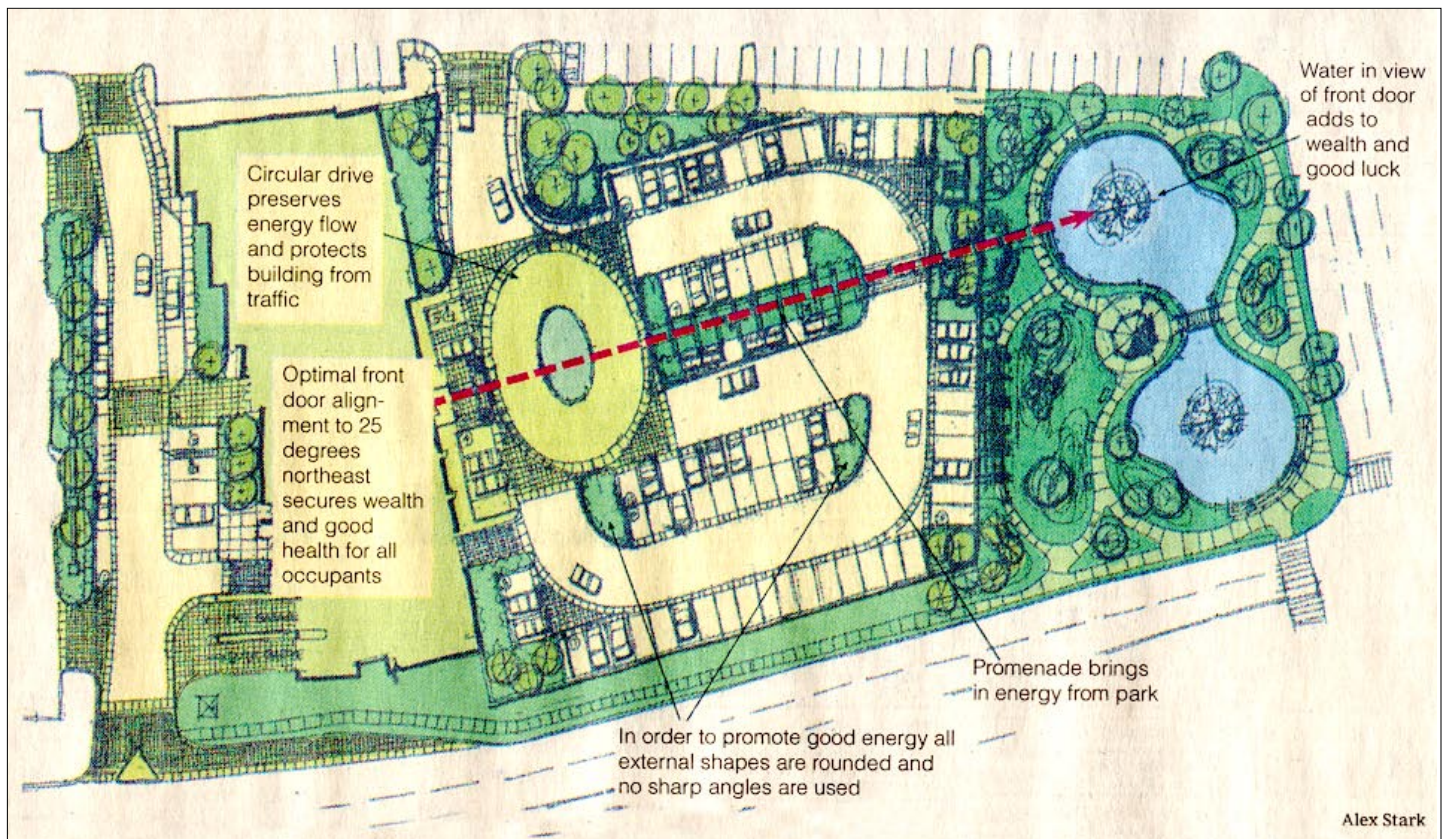


Tarragon Corporation members at land-clearing ceremony.

as large as 2,000 square feet. It will feature a two-story atrium entrance with a glass staircase, a full-service spa, a pool, a roof garden and a private park.

The entire project has been designed with the principles of feng shui in mind. A feng shui specialist from Brooklyn, Alex Stark, was brought in to consult with Tarragon's architect, Gruzen Samton of New York, concerning the Chinese art of the harmonious placement of objects and structures.

Natural elements like a pond and fountain have been worked into the landscape design to generate maximum "chi," or positive energy flow, and harmonious positioning of entrances, windows and even



SAY CHI

One Hudson Park's design reflects feng shui principles governing the placement of objects and structures.

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toilets was seriously scrutinized during the blueprint phase, Mr. Stark said.

Tarragon, based in Manhattan, originally looked into feng shui as a way to appeal to Edgewater's large Asian community, said Hilary Thomas, vice president for redevelopment. "It turned out to be such a wonderful reinforcement to the luxury positioning for the project," she said.

Tarragon's marketing director, Beth L. Fisher, added, "The feng shui-ed design promotes privacy and calm by limiting the number of apartments on any floor to no more than seven." The building design separates east and west wings, each with its own elevator and one corridor per floor. "The grand entry foyers in each residence, and floor-to-ceiling glass windows that give maximum sunlight and showcase the panoramic views of Manhattan, are in line with gracious living standards as well as feng shui," she said.

Mr. Stark noted that the pond, which is planned for the one-acre park, will be placed precisely in alignment with the front lobby doorway, to promote luck and prosperity -- and will also help to meet the city's requirement for a rainwater catchment area.

Every condo at One Hudson Park is to have a powder room or a second full bathroom, even the one-bedrooms with about 760 square feet of space, according to Michael Gelfand of Gruzen Samton. Mr. Stark said the bathrooms and bedrooms had to be placed so that the head of a bed will not rest against the wall shared with a bathroom, which would not foster good health in the feng shui way.

Inside the building, Mr. Stark made sure every wall in every room had walls at right angles. "People who live in nonrectangular spaces face unfortunate events," he said.

Mr. Stark also had a hand in numbering apartments, designating even numbers for the east wing and odd for the west. Numbers with negative connotations -- 4 and 13 -- were avoided and top-floor apartments will begin with the number 18, considered lucky in many cultures.



A sketch of a proposed water fountain in the form of a yin/yang symbol

Mr. Stark said that even when he is asked to consult on a project, it is highly unusual for him to be invited by developers to sit with the architects during planning meetings and inject his views. He said he was also encouraged to perform a "land clearing" ceremony to bless the project.

One Hudson Park is following on the heels of other notable developments in Edgewater. Earlier this year, a new 26-story rental apartment tower called the St. Moritz opened its doors. Diagonally across River Road from One Hudson Park, a new low rise development called City Place features 130 condos built over a waterfront mall. A major eight-story hotel will open at City Place next month. But Tarragon's tower is said to be the first high-rise condominium ever built in the onetime factory workers' community.

The company chose Edgewater in the first place with an eye to its yin-yang qualities, executives said.

"This is a suburban location with urban convenience," Ms. Fisher observed. "You don't have to get in your car every time you leave the building, which is highly unusual in a suburban market."

In fact, many Asian families who have moved to Edgewater in recent years already make a habit of strolling along the riverside to the Mitsui supermarket and mall, local real estate specialists said.

Tarragon's residential tower will also be only a short walk away from the Edgewater Commons Mall and the town golf range.

The site is close to light rail and bus stops, and only about a 30-minute drive into New York City. Direct commuter ferry service is expected to begin in the fall, from the intersection of Route 5 and River Road. One Hudson Park's residents will get free shuttle bus service to the ferry stop, Tarragon officials said.

A local real estate agent who was the founder of Edgewater's first homeowners' association, Grant Morgan, said that One Hudson Park will be situated in the "SoHo of Edgewater." A small retail area on Old River Road, which runs behind the site, offers art galleries and locally famous restaurants and is the site of an annual arts festival, he said.

Home values have been steadily rising in Edgewater, Mr. Morgan said, but most residences are nonetheless small and "basic."

Tarragon said the condos at One Hudson Park would be "Manhattan caliber," with prices below those in New York City. Condos will be marketed in a range starting in the low \$400,000's and rising to well over \$1 million, according to Ms. Thomas. The project is expected to be ready for occupancy next spring.