



# RIISING ABOVE THE REST



## Renowned Feng Shui expert Alex Stark advises Roseland Property Company on everything from architecture to layout and to the aesthetics of its residences.

**SHORT HILLS, NJ** – Five years ago, Roseland Property Company made a decision to take its commitment to the happiness and well-being of its residents to the next level. The company hired internationally-recognized Feng Shui expert Alex Stark, a consultant who ensures all new Roseland developments provide residents with a harmonious, stress-free living environment.

Mr. Stark, a graduate of Yale University School of Architecture, advises Roseland during a building's design phase, analyzing its orientation, layout and architectural style. He considers how proposed architectural elements will impact everything from residents' self-esteem and personal relationships to their finances. He works closely with

Roseland architects to enhance a building's positive Feng Shui qualities and neutralize or eliminate its negative qualities.

"My ultimate goal is to enhance the well-being of the future owner," Mr. Stark said. "I'm looking at things like layout and orientation, both of the building as a whole and of the individual residences. So clearly this is different than architecture. An architect is interested in delivering a building that is built well and works correctly. The Feng Shui expert is interested in how well the tenant or owner will do inside that building."

A large part of Mr. Stark's job is deciding how to orient new buildings in relation to natural features and man-made features such as streets. The wrong layout can create a

discordance in the overall living environment that can make residents feel uncomfortable, typically on a subconscious level.

Roseland's extensive development work at Port Imperial, a 200-acre, \$2 billion master-planned development spanning three municipalities on the Hudson River waterfront, provides an interesting challenge. Most buildings are situated between the Hudson River and the cliffs of Weehawken, West New York and Guttenberg. These natural features provide both positive and negative subconscious emotional cues that can be managed by correctly planning the orientation of the building and the individual apartments. Mr. Stark oversees those Feng Shui planning efforts at new buildings such



as RiverTrace, in West New York, and The Estuary, in Weehawken, where correct planning can unlock the positive psychological benefits of the area's natural beauty.

"Working with Alex allows us to take that extra step to ensure our residents are relaxed and happy, and that the homes we create are thoughtfully designed with respect to the natural world around them," said Carl Goldberg, Partner of Roseland Property Company. "Our goal is to create a haven from the stresses of the outside world and this is one method we take very seriously when pursuing that goal."

Feng Shui is a complicated discipline that can incorporate literally hundreds of different principles. Many basic ones are well-known and embraced by modern architects: toilets should not be visible from the front entrance or from dining areas, beds should not face protruding corners, entrances should be inset from the hallway. Mr. Stark looks for all of these things. He also suggests integrating elements of earth, water and sky into new buildings to promote tranquility.

When making changes to architectural plans isn't possible, Mr. Stark develops solutions for minimizing the impact of potential negatives. At Roseland's RiversEdge rental building in Weehawken, for example, he oversaw the strategic placement of mirrors and crystals on the building's exterior to soften its appearance and that the impact of a nearby exit ramp.

Mr. Stark also blesses the site of each building prior to construction, and the building itself when it is complete. Each blessing is a simple, non-religious ceremony meant to promote good fortune and safety of the building and its residents.

"Clients like Roseland have learned a great deal from this process, and they've been very progressive in incorporating what they've learned," Mr. Stark said. "Many of their potential renters and buyers are Asian and appreciate the attention to Feng Shui, but Roseland has found that it is something that is useful to all of their

residents. It has been an important part of marketing their properties on the Gold Coast in the last five years."

Designing buildings with the principles of Feng Shui in mind is as much a good business decision as it is a promotion of resident health and well-being, according to Mr. Stark. Most adjustments Roseland makes to its designs are inexpensive, and they make that up in improved sales and leasing numbers because buyers/renters are intuitively drawn to the properties.

"The buildings feel better to people. They feel more like home," Mr. Stark said. "That energy fuels residents' success, their self-esteem, their relationships and generally makes for a happy environment. When you combine that with the beautiful apartments, the amenities and the views across the river to the Manhattan skyline, it's no wonder Roseland's buildings have been so successful."

Scheduled for a fall 2013 grand opening, RiverTrace is a \$120 million luxury rental building that will include 316 studio, one-, two- and three-bedroom apartments, in a location near the light rail and the Port Imperial ferry terminal, with service to Manhattan. The residences will include oversized windows, wood floors, individual climate control, granite countertops and stainless steel appliances. Amenities will include a concierge, club room, billiard room, package room, cold storage, fitness center, yoga room, theater, children's play room, golf simulator and pool.

The Estuary, located in Weehawken's Lincoln Harbor waterfront neighborhood, just outside of Port Imperial, is a 589-unit residential complex consisting of three buildings. The first building, a 181-unit, eight-story building, broke ground in February. One six story building will break ground this spring and another six-story building will break ground next year. Amenities in the \$200-million complex will include concierge service, a pool deck with barbecue grill and hot tub, a fitness center, billiards lounge, theater, kids game room and a private party room. The first two buildings are expected to open in late 2013.