

Western Developers are Turning to Feng Shui

By Staff Reporter | July 23, 2012 5:55 PM EDT



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"Feng Shui", a traditional Chinese discipline--and superstition--of aligning buildings and interiors in a way that welcomes good fortune and produce harmony is starting to catch on among western developers, architects and designers.

In places such as New Jersey's "gold coast", developers are factoring in the ancient Chinese belief into their development plans.

Not only does feng shui help in smart designs and eco-friendly living, professionals say, it also helps as a viable marketing tool to the Asian American population.

"Even if you're not familiar with the history of feng shui, or don't care about the energy and spirituality of feng shui, we've learned

that it's a very thoughtful approach to great design," said Lisa DeLove, the interior design director for the Roseland Property Company. "There's a subconscious rhyme and reason of why a space works, whether you feel good in this space or not."

Roseland, the developer of the Port Imperial project spanning three towns on the Hudson waterfront, as well as 99 Hudson, a 1,000-apartment complex in Jersey City being built in partnership with Hartz Mountain Industries, has become a practitioner of feng shui.

Feng shui expert Alex Stark, a native of Peru and graduate of the Yale School of Architecture who in the last 20 years has focused on feng shui exclusively, said Rose-

land--the firm to which he is employed--was initially skeptical of the practice, seeing it as only a marketing tool to the Korean American community.

But they soon realized that the traits that make for good feng shui, such as facing all the buildings toward the water--a placement considered most auspicious for those seeking to make money for the Chinese--is actually a desirable trait for all.

Roseland is not the only developer on the bandwagon. In June, the firm Feng Shui Manhattan was hired by Kushner Real Estate Group to plan a 18 park, 11-story rental building in Jersey City.

"This is a trend that will continue to rise," said Stark.