



It's Never Too Late to Go Green

Richard J. Lampman, Vice President of Tocci Building Companies

Lexington, MA - The hospitality industry spends \$3.7 billion a year on energy, and the average hotel purchases more products in one week than 100 families do in a year. Typical hotels use 218 gallons of water per day per occupied room and waste generation can be as high as 20 to 30 pounds per hotel room per day. Starwood Hotels & Resort's new Element extended stay hotel is well on its way to changing this scenario.

Starwood selected Tocci Building Companies, based in Woburn, to construct one of the country's first Elements on a six acre site in Lexington. The Lexington Element is a 78,000sf, wood-frame structure containing 123 guest suites and 800sf of meeting space. It is one of Starwood's new concepts designed to serve the next genera-



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low voc materials.

Due to LEED's tough standards, the accreditation process can be expensive and time-consuming under the best of conditions. When Starwood Hotels and Resorts decided to pursue certification, the hotel had been designed. Awarded to construction manager Tocci Building Companies, much of the project had been purchased per the original construction documents, and concrete was being poured. Thus the process of transforming a conventional building to LEED certified became all the more daunting. The availability of LEED accredited professionals on the Tocci team was a major asset in expediting the green program implementation.

In addition to Tocci's LEED staff, Starwood hired a LEED consultant to assist with the process and ensure that the necessary documentation was submitted to the U.S. Green Buildings Council. Tocci began working with the various trade contractors and suppliers to identify materials and com-

tion business and leisure traveler. Starwood's green initiatives include a broad range of water and energy conservation measures, maximum use of daylighting, indigenous plantings, construction waste recycling and



A recent photo of Element, slated to open to the public in early June; not only is this building going to be the first LEED certified hotel in New England, it is on time and under budget as well.

ponents that would have the highest LEED benefit and evaluate the impacts on cost and schedule. The fact that contracts were already in place made it necessary to work on a case by case basis with each of them. Tocci established weekly teleconferences to facilitate collaboration among the parties. A consistent agenda and tracking document was developed with hard commitments for deliverables and follow up responsibilities to ensure compliance with aggressive plan goals.

To expedite implementation of the LEED program, one of Tocci's most important tasks was to wrestle vital material and systems performance information from essential trade contractors. Another was to document changes and develop the effective reporting and certification of materials.

Some materials and components

turned out to be easily and economically changed or modified, while others were not. After an intensive effort by all members of the project team, the owner, architects and engineers, and the various specialty trade contractors and suppliers, the project is nearing successful completion with the facility now assured of achieving at minimum Silver LEED certification.

"The Element brand is a lead piece and learning opportunity for Starwood as a whole," states Nicholas Lakas, director of the Element Hotels. "(Lessons learned) will be transferred to all the Starwood brands." Future Tocci managed hotels will integrate green planning from design inception to insure attainment of higher medal status and a lighter environmental footprint throughout construction.



An example of the dumpster signage Tocci created to help subcontractors dispose of materials in compliance with LEED standards.

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