

Published Nov 6, 2009

Published Friday November 6, 2009

Roof will be 'work of art'

By Jeffrey Robb

WORLD-HERALD STAFF WRITER



KENT SIEVERS/THE WORLD-HERALD

The Dunsany Flats condominium project at 10th and Pierce Streets is building a green roof on its parking garage. The roof has sections of recycled blue glass, recycled brick, brown gravel and drought-resistant sedum plants. The green roof will reduce heat absorption and stormwater runoff.

With the back of the Dunsany Flats building looking onto the Omaha riverfront, the new pedestrian bridge and the Heartland of America Park fountain, it would have been a letdown to glance at the tar roof of a garage.

So the developer decided to go green, with a splash of blue, maroon and earth tones.

Dunsany Flats will feature one of the metro area's first green roofs, bringing a touch of environmental friendliness to a place that tar and shingles usually cover.

"When the color comes in, it will be all that more beautiful," said Syl Orsi, developer of Dunsany Flats. "It's a very important feature."

The Dunsany Flats condominiums are taking shape in the four-story, 109-year-old Dunsany building, located at 10th and Pierce Streets just south of the Old Market.

The project involves refurbishing the Dunsany and converting it from apartments to 16 condos varying in size from 1,053 square feet to 2,106 square feet and ranging in price from \$199,000 to \$480,000. Six condos have been sold, and three of the owners have moved in.

In the back of the building, balconies attached to each condo are meant to extend the living space. But just off those decks sits the top of the development's parking garage.

By going with a green roof, Orsi said, a potential downside to the project has turned into an asset.

Laid out in a cubist design, the roof has sections of recycled blue glass, recycled brick, brown gravel and drought-resistant sedum plants.

The roof will benefit the environment by capturing stormwater and staying cooler.

Orsi didn't say what the feature cost but said the topping materials alone cost \$60,000. He said the roof is a wise use of the project's capital because it will give the roof 25 to 40 years of use.

The roof also adds an element of style and helps create a sense that the building is a peaceful place, Orsi said.

"What we've tried to do is not just a green roof. It's a work of art."

Contact the writer: