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Cathartes Private Investments pursues silver LEED certification for Portwalk - \$125m mixed-use center

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The city of Portsmouth has another reason to embrace the much-anticipated \$125 million Portwalk mixed-use development, which will replace the antiquated Parade Mall downtown. Cathartes Private Investments (Cathartes), the Boston-based real estate development company behind the project known for their urban planning and development, has said that Portwalk will become the city's first LEED-certified mixed-use development.

Principal-in-charge, David Manfredi, of Elkus Manfredi Architects Ltd, said, "Portwalk is truly an urban mixed-use environment with office, retail, hotel, restaurant and residences. This will be the kind of animated place that is active seven days a week and is very attractive to first class office tenants who seek to attract and retain the very best talent available."

Portwalk will include four buildings of mixed-uses over an underground parking garage. Each building will offer retail on the ground floor, for a total of 15-20 shops, cafes and restaurants. An extended stay hotel offering 128 rooms will be developed over retail shops and along Deer St. A total of 28 residences, offering a mix of one, two, and three-bedroom units, will be situated on floors 2 through 5 on Hanover St. Approximately 170,000 s/f of office space will also be available on floors 2 through 4 of the two office buildings, abutting Hanover, Maplewood and Deer Sts. An example of sound urban planning, Portwalk will extend the downtown area by three city blocks, adding to Portsmouth's already active and exciting city center.

Cathartes received approvals on the architectural design and site plan for Portwalk, and expects to begin construction in the summer. The heart of the development will be the main pedestrian "broadwalk," a one-way vehicular thoroughfare which will serve as the "gathering place" that connects each of the development's buildings. The broadwalk will have wide brick sidewalks with trees, flowers, outdoor café seating and storefront access to each shop and restaurant. Cathartes also developed Portsmouth's Hilton Garden Inn and the Harbour Hill Condos as the first phase of the overall Portwalk project.

The LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Green Building Rating System is a nationally accepted benchmark developed by the non-profit U.S. Green Building Council for the design, construction and operation of high-performance "green" buildings. With the help of Elkus Manfredi Architects, DeStefano Architects and Conn.-based LEED consultant, Viridian Energy and Environmental LLC, Cathartes expects to break ground in June on Portwalk. Portwalk will be a pedestrian-friendly, integrated, urban center featuring first-class office space, boutique shops, cafes and restaurants, residences, an extended-stay hotel, and underground parking.

"Today more than ever, companies are seeking buildings that are operationally efficient as well as environmentally conscious," said Jeff Johnston, principal at Cathartes. "Our focus on sustainable development is good for the community as well as our business because it lowers operating costs

for our tenants and they value an optimal environment for their employees and customers."

A prominent example of Portwalk's environmentally sustainable design is the development's underground parking garage. Portwalk will also incorporate environmentally beneficial strategies such as using white roofing to reduce "heat island effect," deploying water efficient landscaping, and promoting alternative transportation. Portwalk is close to bus lines; bike storage will be provided; and preferred parking will be offered for low-emitting and fuel-efficient vehicles.

Adrian Taluca, principal with Viridian Energy and Environmental, LLC, LEED consultant for Cathartes, said, "Going underground rather than using additional land for parking will reduce the amount of impervious surface, thereby allowing better storm water drainage."

"I'm thrilled with this announcement - it's a wonderful proposition for everyone in Portsmouth, not just those here now but future generations as well," said Portsmouth city councilor Ned Reynolds. I promise to do everything I can to ensure that the city and local utilities work closely with the developers to make it a model for others to follow."

Cushman & Wakefield is marketing and leasing the office space.

Strategic Retail Advisors is managing the retail leasing.

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