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Svigals + Partners and RJ Development complete 203-unit apartment building

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New London, CT A new multifamily rental community built on the corner of Hamilton and Howard Sts. is bringing new life to the neighborhood with market-rate residences.

The Beam was designed in two phases by architecture, art and advisory firm Svigals + Partners with RJ Development, the new five-story, wood-framed residence orients northward to downtown and to the east facing Fort Trumbull Park and the Thames River, offering waterfront views and park access.

“As one of the first new projects to be built in New London for some time, The Beam is a welcomed stimulus for interest and activity in the region,” said Svigals + Partners’ architect Ron Cooper, AIA.

The building's focal point at its front corner overlooks Shaw Cove and establishes the main entrance of the 170,000 s/f residence. An additional entry off the parking area entry is marked by a mini rotary. The development's dual wing configuration aligns with the curved site, with the south wing's 130-ft-long expanse angled to the right and the north wing, at 215 feet long, situated in a straight line to the left.

Collaborators on The Beam included E2 Engineers for structural engineering, Collective Design & Associates for MEP, Langan for site/civil, and Laura Malloy of Malloy Interiors for interior design. In addition to The Beam, among Svigals + Partners' other leading architectural solutions for multifamily residences and mixed-use developments are The Atwood and Park View Apartments in West Haven and College & Crown Apartments in New Haven.

Svigals + Partners' architects varied the building's window sizes and created top-level setbacks, bringing balance to the residence's large scale. The upper apartments' cantilevered balconies add further dimension to the building exterior, and the variety of exterior finishes break up the towers' long expanses plus differentiate the building's entry points for easy identification. The development presents 203 market-rate apartments with modern finishes and conveniences, including studio, one- and two-bedroom units, some with balconies and expansive water views. The entire building meets FHA requirements regarding accessibility.

"RJ Development is thrilled to have had the opportunity to work with and within the city of New London to develop and deliver our newest multi-family project, the Beam," said Jason Rudnick, principal of RJ Development. "The Beam refers to a nautical term and is a nod to the region's rich maritime history. The project team that assisted us has been an excellent partner in creating a dynamic project that adds to New London's vitality in a meaningful way."

Early site improvements by the multidisciplinary design team transformed the site for development by addressing local flood plain elevations. The Beam consists entirely of wood frame construction which allows for an accelerated timeline and cost savings to the client. The project's team of experts also applied comprehensive protections to meet appropriate fire-ratings. As well, the prefabricated interior walls were fitted and sealed onsite, as required, including customized adjustments for interior air shafts, piping for gas lines, and utility meters in each apartment.

Beyond strengthening the community with needed housing, The Beam also offers a suite of amenities with a large parking lot, a fifth-floor outdoor terrace, fitness center, club room with kitchenette, business enclave for remote work, fire-pit lounge and outdoor grilling area, dog park and walking path.

In the indoor common areas, the design team created wayfinding signage and incorporated a variety of lighting fixtures, changing floor levels, and finish treatments. Each element generates interest through the long corridors and direct residents to apartment floors and amenity spaces, including observing elevator areas with blue-painted soffits.