

Prellwitz Chilinski and Mount Vernon Company Complete The Edge, Newest Addition to Allston Green District

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The Edge, a new 79-unit residence developed by [The Mount Vernon Company](#) and designed by [Prellwitz Chilinski Associates](#) (PCA), opened as the latest addition to the six-building, 500-unit [Allston Green District](#) in Boston. The Edge is the second new residence within the Green District, the largest privately-funded, multifamily community in Allston's history.

The **Edge and the Allston Green District** are changing perceptions by capitalizing on the potential found in a previously under-appreciated Boston neighborhood. Located along the Green Line connecting to the Back Bay and downtown, Allston was historically known for its pre-1940's housing stock and low-cost student rentals. The Edge advances the growing appeal of Allston as a desirable address for the city's mobile young professionals. With its contemporary architecture, loft-style unit layouts, eco-friendly living and multiple amenities, The Edge is competing with prime rental properties in the Seaport, South End, Beacon Hill and Back Bay. Each unit was leased before construction was complete.

The design, materials and unit layouts of The Edge depart from the traditional four-story brick Boston apartment buildings. Each unit features floor-to-ceiling window systems, 10-foot ceilings and open floorplans. Every aspect of the experience – from the interplay of wood and metal exteriors to its community gathering spaces – is part of a distinct brand design crafted by the project team to meet the needs of urban professionals.

"We wanted to create a neighborhood with buildings each having its own character, each one distinctly individual with its own look, its own feel," said **Bruce A. Percelay**, Chairman and President of The Mount Vernon Company. "PCA was extraordinary in pushing the envelope, in coming up with innovative looks and features that were consistent with the forward thinking nature of this neighborhood."

The Edge design composes several exterior materials, varying the pattern and proportions to meet the scale of its neighboring buildings and add a new energy to the block. Metal panels, full-height windows, stone and angular rainscreens all combine to create a strong visual statement.

“The neighborhood design context adds to the residential appeal of The Edge,” states **David Chilinski**, Director of Prellwitz Chilinski and the project architect. “This is a city building that adds to the fabric of the neighborhood by keeping within the general height and scale of nearby buildings. Getting the design context right provides a strong sense of place for residents and neighbors, a contiguous village with buildings of different eras all working together.”

According to David Snell of PCA, the design team investigated several subtle details of how people in this target demographic use their space. “By doing the research, we learned a lot about their lifestyle patterns and preferences, such as how much time is typically spent in the living room, kitchen and dining areas” he said. “We focused on how to translate their desire for frequent social interaction into the new community gathering spaces inside and outside the building.”

As a result of this front-end analysis, The Edge design includes popular amenity and community spaces such as landscaped common areas with comfortable seating, an indoor-outdoor fitness center, high-tech lobby, theater room and a community grilling station on the terrace.

Adjacent to the MBTA Green Line, the LEED Gold-certified Edge features rooftop solar panels, electric-car charging station and ample bike storage. Meticulous attention was paid to building envelope design to integrate the four-story Edge into the Allston neighborhood and to reduce heating and cooling cost. These measures include a thermal barrier, high-performance glazing, soy-based insulation and an energy-efficient mechanical system with high-performance monitoring and control equipment. Residents are asked to sign a “Green Lease” and agree to follow sustainable lifestyle routines including recycling, composting and use of public transportation.

The Edge team - PCA, The Mount Vernon Company and Cranshaw Construction - is currently building a third new building in the Allston Green District, Eco. Scheduled for a 2014 opening, it will contain 108 units with a mix of studios and one bedrooms, a fitness center and a community roof deck. The project is pursuing LEED Platinum certification.

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