



Russell Katz, MOMI

2005 Catalyst Award

**Elevation 314
Washington, DC**

Hickok Warner Cole Architects w/Russell Katz, Design Architect

Owner: Montgomery Oaks Management, Inc.
Contractor: The Korth Companies



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Once a vacant, uninviting lot in DC's Takoma neighborhood, the site of Elevation 314 now bustles with an economically energizing green building that revitalizes the neighborhood with 52 rental dwelling units and street-level retail space directly across the street from a busy Metro station. It acquired its name from the elevation of the site above sea level, a subtle reference to the elevated vantage point that provides a dramatic "heights" view of the U.S. Capitol. The name is somehow fitting for Takoma, which is a Native American word for "closer to heaven."

"This project is transforming," one juror remarked. "It reestablishes a street wall and redefines the urban space. The big moves are really strong, and the whole green thing is really huge. It's really designed with the future in mind. It shows that you can design in quasi-suburban conditions and still make a difference." Another juror noted that by being the first in the neighborhood, it sends the right message. "It's very modest, but reasserts the shape and character of the neighborhood. It's in the right context; it took the risk." As third juror put it simply, "In terms of impact for the public, it's just an excellent design."