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Prestigious Peachtree Tower

41-Story Office Tower in Midtown Atlanta Nearing Completion

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Being developed by one of the nation's largest real-estate firms and built by one of its largest contractors, 1180 Peachtree will be a prestigious business address in Atlanta.

Seemingly defying the odds, Hines, the Houston-based real estate firm, broke ground on a \$120 million, 41-story office tower at 1180 Peachtree – one of the most prestigious addresses in Midtown Atlanta – in October 2003, and

even though the building is not slated for completion until 2006, it's already 70 percent leased.

The 670,000-sq.-ft. office tower at Peachtree and 14th streets had its major tenant, law firm King & Spalding, in the fold early. The firm leased 416,000 sq. ft. on 17 floors of the building, including the top 14.

That's largely why Hines initiated a project of such magnitude while the demand for office space in the area was sputtering, said John Heagy, the firm's vice president of marketing.

"Honestly, we mitigated our long-term risk just based upon King & Spalding's occupancy," he said. "It's rare that a building of this quality gets built in any market primarily because of the incredible cost. It takes a unique tenant like King & Spalding to justify building a building like this."

While he expects the building to be nearly fully leased by the time it opens in the spring, Heagy added: "Even if we don't lease another square foot, the project would be considered an economic success."

Its partnership with general contractor Turner Construction Co. of Atlanta is another big reason failure wasn't part of Hines' thought process. "Turner has done a great job on the building," Heagy added. "There's a huge sense of com-



A computer-generated vision of Hines' 1180 Peachtree building in midtown Atlanta. Turner Construction Co. is currently constructing the 41-story office building. (Image courtesy of Hines.)

munity pride and a lot of excitement in Midtown as a result of this building being added to the streetscape.”

Designed by Pickard Chilton Architects of New Haven, Conn., the building will be financed and owned by National Office Partners Limited Partnership, a partnership of the California Public Employees' Retirement System and Hines.

Hines' Mary Hill and Grant Stevens are vice presidents of construction on the project, while Turner's Robert Baird is project manager and Dale Melton is general superintendent. Houston-based Kendall/Heaton Associates is the architect doing working drawings.

Dave Butler, Turner's vice president and operations manager, said the project has remained on track despite its aggressive schedule. The base building was expected to be finished in September.

“We had to turn a five-day cycle per floor to meet our schedule,” Butler said. He added that tenant work for King & Spalding's space is scheduled to begin in the first quarter of next year.

“It was a pretty complex structure, and there were some logistical challenges,” he said. “We looked at our shop drawings very early and walked through the whole process proactively as a team to try to head off issues that might come up.”

Construction Challenges The structure will include a 119-ft.-tall lighted veil at its top. There will be a 30-ft.-high lobby and two restaurants below. The construction team faced some of the biggest issues as the structure rose out of the ground, Butler said.

“Levels of parking on the lower levels of the building made the structure change several times as we went through,” he added. Butler said it wasn't easy keeping the schedule intact >>



The 1180 Peachtree project as it appeared earlier this year. (Photo courtesy of Aerial Innovations of Georgia/www.aerialinnovationsofga.com)



The structure will include a 119-ft.-tall lighted veil at its top. (Photo courtesy of Aerial Innovations of Georgia/www.aerialinnovationsofga.com)

through different changes in structural types and working with the vertical, concrete and shear walls – and the coordination between the walls and the slab intersections.

A staggered work schedule was helpful, he said. “We started pouring the slabs early in the morning, then came back and poured the vertical concrete,” Butler added. “So it came down to a proposition of shift types: an early shift for slab, and running through a late shift for the vertical components. That and maintaining the scheduling, including the critical paths, were vital.”

Location of the building, alongside the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra’s planned Symphony Hall, which will be connected to the tower by a 24-ft.-wide walkway, also has been a significant hurdle.

“We wanted to create the least impact

on the surrounding property, street and traffic,” Butler said. “The logistics were programmed in to create efficient flow of materials into the site and up and down. In a high-rise building, vertical transportation is important.”

Deliveries were made late at night and during times of the day when traffic was down. While there have been concrete shortages in some areas of the country, Butler said the material was “readily available” for this project.

The formwork contractor was Skyline Forming of Atlanta, while Rebar Erectors, also of Atlanta, performed placement of steel reinforcement.

Taking the LEED The office tower is the first high-rise building in the world to be precertified for Silver status in the Leadership in Energy and Environmental

Design Core and Shell Development program (LEED-CS pilot program), sponsored by the U.S. Green Building Council, the nation’s leading evaluator for green building.

The tower, one of four Hines developments in the LEED-CS pilot program, was precertified based on its submission of documented plans to satisfy more than 30 green and high-performance requirements.

The office tower’s green features include a water-management system that will decrease stormwater by covering half of the roof with absorbing vegetation. The remaining stormwater, along with condensation collected from the building’s mechanical systems, will be channeled to an underground storage vault and used for irrigation.

While Butler said Turner has been involved with LEED certifications on several jobs around Atlanta, the tower represented its first such office building.

“Its design was completely wrapped up before construction began, and design has met all LEED standards,” Butler said.

He added that activity in the office building market in Atlanta certainly has percolated, especially compared to its performance a couple of years ago.

“The level of activity around Buckhead and the Midtown market is pretty intense right now,” he said. “When this project with Hines started, it was one of the few and certainly nothing of this magnitude even being considered at that point.”

Impressive as the office tower is, Heagy said that if the market had been stronger with the office tower started, “we would have built a lot more additional space. Now that we have some market experience, we see we’re being pretty well embraced.” <<