

Plaza Lofts 22

Hyattsville, MD

PRACTICE AREA

Multifamily

CLIENT

University Town Center

STATUS

Completed 2008

SERVICES

Architecture, Interiors

AWARDS

AIA Maryland Merit Award for Design



PROGRAM

5-story building with ground floor retail and 22 loft apartments encompassing 38,700-sf.

DESCRIPTION

An anchor and icon, Plaza Lofts 22 is the heart of a major new mixed-use development in Hyattsville, MD. The new residential building takes full advantage of its existing site constraints while fulfilling the owner's vision for a distinctive focal point for the new town center development. This unique, unabashedly modern building is distinguished by its two sail-like facades which give the structure a sculptural quality. The zinc cladding chosen for the exterior is rarely used in the United States, which made it an obvious choice for creating a distinctive design. Weighing less than comparable alternatives, the zinc serves a dual purpose by lightening the structure's load.

Much of the building's form was a response to a structural challenge: it sits on top of an existing underground garage with 60-foot column spans. To bridge the distance, a floor-to-floor truss was incorporated into the structure. This also minimized typical floor assembly depth and provided column-free retail space. The fact that the building's East/West facades essentially "hang" from the truss makes the delicate curves possible.

The strong verticality of the East/West windows contrasts against with curves of the zinc façade, while the playful configuration of windows on the North/South elevations was determined by the structural system and the configuration of the interior units. Second floor units open to large terraces leading to guest casitas separate from the main structure. Inside, clean modern lines and upscale, contemporary finishes complement the two-level loft spaces. Large asymmetrical windows frame interesting views while massive diagonal structural members reveal the solidity of the construction.