

One Brooklyn developer is forgoing getting LEED certified, despite the fact that his new building meet all of the green standards. NY1's Shazia Khan filed the following report.

At 100 Gold Street, all that glitters is green. The recently-constructed building in the Vinegar Hill section of Brooklyn offers a number of eco-friendly features inside its 10 units and common areas.

“Each apartment has its own wall-hung boiler, which acts as a power plant for each apartment, which is very efficient,” says Anthony Morena, founder of real estate design and development team The REDD Group. “They also have dual-flush toilets in the bathroom try to minimize on the water use.”

Morena also outfitted the condos with Energy Star appliances, radiant floor heating, zero VOC paints, kitchen backsplashes made from recycled glass, and roof pavers made from recycled tires. Many of the materials, including the hand-blown lighting pendants in the lobby, were locally produced.

While the condominium's green elements meet LEED standards, a nationally-recognized rating system created by the advocacy group U.S. Green Building Council, Morena decided against LEED certification.

“We designed the building with LEED Silver specifications in mind, but we felt that the money would be put to better use spending on the finishes and the materials that people would feel and touch, instead of paying for the certification,” Morena explains.

Moreana says it would have cost him \$50,000 to apply for certification for a building of this size.

Susan Singer, the city's first certified eco-broker says as green building becomes more commonplace, more developers do not necessarily feel the need to be LEED certified.

“It’s really an expensive and time-consuming process, which then also eats up cost,” says Singer. “While some of the larger buildings are still going for it because they are under the umbrella of larger companies who feel that they need to maintain that level of standard per se, the smaller ones are much more aware of the fact that the key to it is just using the right materials and delivering green.”

Silver says in her experience, consumers aren’t that concerned with a LEED label of approval.

“It might draw them in, ‘oh it’s LEED Gold’ or whatever, but there are LEED Gold buildings that have a sheet of window facing south and their energy efficiencies are terrible and their cost of cooling the place is higher than a building that isn’t LEED Gold,” she says. “So the savvy buyer is going to know what exactly they are buying.”

Morena is one developer who is ready to back up his green claims.

“Worst case, we can show them the receipts,” he says.