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magazine



Green Issue

# Richard Doria and his Phoenix

by Justin Lee



Photo by Barr Chase

As an architect, Richard Doria has always had his eye on the horizon. Now as a developer and builder, that zest for wanting to be apart of something larger than simply bricks and mortar, has only grown larger. Wanting to add on to the growing bastion of ideas and aspirations under the umbrella of Doria Architecture, he created his own methods to realizing his wants: Modern Block Development and Formworks Building Company.

With a dedicated focus to central city, commercial and residential infill development, creating structural environments that are environmentally responsible, Richard Doria has now set his sights on an urban playground of unlimited development possibilities—possibilities that will not only benefit his bottom line, but the city of Phoenix, as well. Call it taking destiny into your own hands, call it smart architecture—it's all a good thing.

"Other people talk about doing things, but, just do it yourself—why wait?" Doria asserts calmly, with an almost no-brainer sensibility that seems to come very natural to him. "We can now find the right property ourselves, develop it, design it and sell it. What makes everything work is that it's all in-house; we have more control and refinement of the design process. We don't have to constantly worry about bringing clients the next 'ultra cool' project—we're cutting the fat out of the process."

Skeptics (and cynics) be damned, Doria goes on to note the center city market's growing visibility. "Four years ago, downtown Phoenix was definitely a gamble—not today," he asserts with on-the-ground experience already under his belt. "There is a strong pent-up demand for office space downtown, in particular for smaller businesses looking for something around the 3,000 square-foot range—we need to provide for it."

"We also look for the right textures to a neighborhood, and it's raw, industrial qualities that show potential," Doria stresses, in regard

to creating structures that will work with (rather than against) their existing fabric and infrastructure. "Walk the street—how is that new project going to coexist with its surrounding infrastructure?" he begs.

There are several projects up his sleeve of honorable ideas. From a few proposed specifically along west Fillmore (including a possible three- to four-story high-end boutique hotel concept where guests can rent rooms daily, weekly or monthly), to of course, the relocation of his own office—or main operations center—from his quaint cube near 4th Street and Garfield, just south of Roosevelt Row, to a snug locale deep in the heart of the still gritty, but equally burgeoning Grand Avenue corridor.

Doria's commitment to fine tuning and 'patching up' the tattered urban fabric that currently exists throughout downtown Phoenix is more than just respectable, it's actually comforting.

"My mission statement is to build infill in the core, where people will congregate and hangout; [a place they will] want to be," Doria breathes in assured confirmation. "And, all with good environmental practices—everything built will have its own major share of green building components."

Thankfully, things are just beginning to swing into high gear. "If we do just half of what is on our drawing boards, we'll easily be busy for another five years," Doria closes with a look of accomplishment.

Richard Doria is not reactionary; he's humbly revolutionary, especially in comparison to most in this town. He is among that small—but thankfully growing—group of like-minded peers who employ new ways of thinking and new ways of existing in environments otherwise forgotten, but without a doubt, all highly full of positive possibilities.



4020 Building



Viridian



4020 Building



Patio71

fixtures. The exterior of the building will be wrapped in red brick and steel siding. Some lofts offer rooftop terraces with soaring views of the Old Town area and surrounding mountains. The 4020 Building lofts are priced from the mid \$400K range but hurry, over half the units are currently reserved. The lofts will vary from 800 to 1288 square feet and will rest atop three retail units.

### Patio 71

Patio 71 is first of many chic urban projects Chicago-based Matix Development hopes to bring to the Valley. Featuring 71 homes, Patio 71 offers affordable modern living in the heart of the Biltmore area. Located on 18th Street and Maryland, Patio 71 is adjacent to the beautiful Granada Park in the highly desirable Madison School District. Amenities include a 25-meter lap pool and fitness center, a clubhouse designed by acclaimed local architect, John Chonka, and landscaping designed by Ten Eyck Landscape Architects. All units are less than 300 feet from the pool and boast Pedini Italian kitchens and Bosch stainless steel appliances. Patio 71 pricing is from \$240K.

### Viridian

Viridian, to be located on 8th Avenue and Roosevelt in Phoenix, is scheduled to break ground late 2007. With 42 units slated for completion, this is the second project resulting from a partnership between Greenroof Development Company and StudioMa architects.

The project will be LEED-NC Certified and feature 10-kilowatt solar panels that collect solar energy to power common elements and help offset the cost of HOA dues. The solar-ready condominiums allow for a solar panel upgrade purchase or post-occupancy installation. Recycled building materials include Trex and metal siding. In addition, Low-e, dual-paned windows will aid the fight against radiant heat.

Other amenities at Viridian include private patios, common area swimming pool and barbecue, a pet walk area and a gated community that neighbors the new PRD845 development. Units range from 1,150 to 1,880 square feet and are priced from \$299,000.