

## EXCLUSIVE: New Seattle high-rise flexes its unique structural profile (Photos)

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Step aside, Safeco Plaza. You're about to be replaced as the fifth-tallest building in Seattle by the Mark, the 48-story hotel/office project rising at Fifth Avenue and Columbia Street.

The Mark's development team earlier this month gave the Puget Sound Business Journal an exclusive tour of the tower as it neared its 660-foot height.



The Mark high-rise towers over the former First United Methodist Church, which is the... [more](#)

The tour of the \$450 million tower showed how the unusual zig-zag bracing system gives the high-rise a unique profile.

Designed by ZGF Architects, the building angles in and out and is intended to resemble the silhouette of Audrey Hepburn. The Mark tower has 16 angled facets, with the steepest one leaning nearly 6.7 degrees over the historic Rainier Club.

"One of the items that keeps me awake at night is making sure the slab edges align with the curtain wall," said project executive Ben Coffman of general contractor JTM Construction. "We haven't had any problems so far."

The tower will have a 189-room SLS LUX hotel on the lower floors and 528,000 square feet of office space above. Noted French designer Philippe Starck, who is designing the hotel interiors, last year told the Business Journal he's trying to create spaces where people will be "uplifted (and) more sexy, more intelligent."

So far, none of the office space has been leased, said Kevin Daniels, president of Seattle-based Daniels Real Estate, which is developing the Mark with Stockbridge Capital Group of San Francisco. Daniels said the project leasing team from commercial real estate company JLL (NYSE: JLL) has letters-of-intent out to prospects for around half the office space. Possible tenants are either high-tech companies or professional services firms.

Daniels is touting the column-free interior spaces of the tower. He said this creates an open floor plan with more flexibility for interior design. Another plus are the 9-foot 6-inch windows, which allow more natural light into the interiors.

Incorporated into the Mark is the former sanctuary building of the First United Methodist Church, which sold the property to Daniels eight years ago for \$32 million. Daniels, a board member of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, agreed to preserve the sanctuary as an extension of the hotel that will host private events and executive meetings.

There are 7,480 tons of steel in the Mark and nearly a four-and-a-half acres of glass.

All these and other materials arrived at a busy intersection just down the street where another high-rise, Madison Centre is under construction. This required coordination between the two projects and just-in-time deliveries, Coffman said.

*Photo Gallery:*



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The zig-zag bracing of the Mark tower creates four facets on each side of the building, with the glass angling in and out wall jutting in and out over surrounding buildings. The steepest face is on the west elevation, leaning away from the building at nearly 6.7 degrees over the Rainier Club, pictured here.



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A large photo of Audrey Hepburn is displayed at the Mark's marketing center in the Rainier Club. The design of the tower is modeled after Hepburn's silhouette in "Breakfast at Tiffany's" and intended to reflect the sexy sophistication for which Hepburn was known.



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Kevin Daniels (left) and Ben Coffman are photographed on the seventh floor. The Mark's 13-foot, 6-inch floor height exceeds the normal 12-foot heights in a typical office building.



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Developer Kevin Daniels (right) and Ben Coffman are shown on the west side of the 38th floor of the Mark tower.



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The zig-zag bracing system of the Mark eliminates the need for the typical X-bracing system and allows for column-free interior spaces.



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The view from the northwest corner of the Mark's roof.