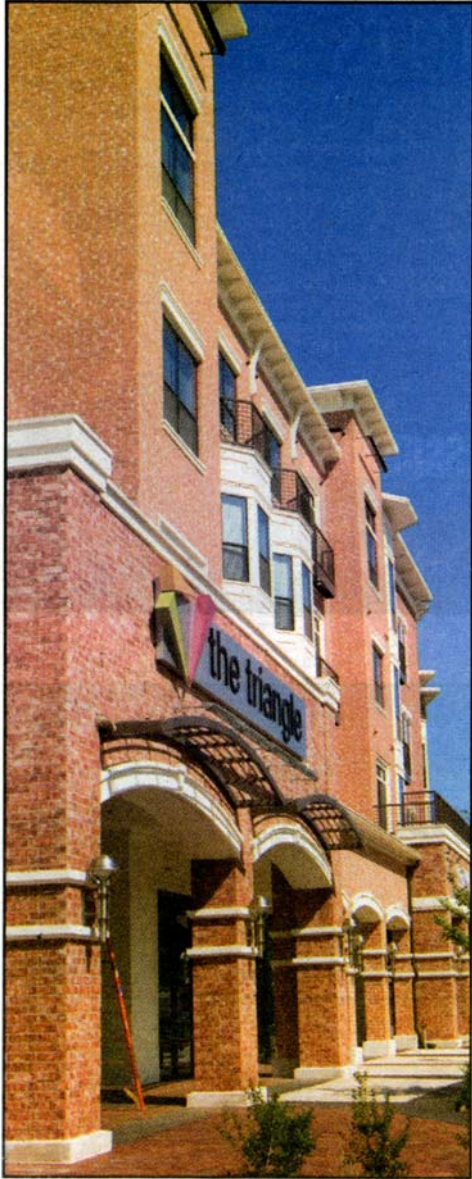


A lesson in collaboration



SARAH KERVER | ABJ

The Triangle project began in January 2004 and opened last July. The mixed-use community features residential and retail.

The Triangle comes to fruition, thanks to government, community input

KATHRYN LESKO | CONTRIBUTING WRITER
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It's what environmentalists and planners had been talking about for years: moving development back from the suburbs, away from the greenbelt, back into the urban core of Austin. Doing so would attract more retailers and more residential developments to contribute to the strength and tax base of the city.

It took Thomas Terkel, president of Cencor Urban, a division of Cencor Realty Services, Inc., nearly 10 years to accomplish this, but when The Triangle finally opened its first phase in July 2005, a 22-acre community emerged that continues to reshape Austin's urban landscape.

The Triangle offers a creative combination of restaurants, retail shops and high-end residential apartments and is located two miles north of the state capitol, at the confluence of three of Austin's "smart growth corridors."

For years, the site had been used for storm water detention in spite of its prominent location. It took Terkel's vision and his partnership with the residents of the neighboring communities to transform it into a 335-unit complex that includes 26,500 square feet of retail space, a city park, three new streets, a three-acre lake, bandstand, private courtyard and pools, bocce ball courts, and Capital Metropolitan Transportation Authority park-and-ride stops to complement Austin's north-south bus lines.

"We had initially proposed a 300,000 square foot shopping center for the site, but that was met with substantial opposition that ensued for several years," Terkel says. "We broke the logjam

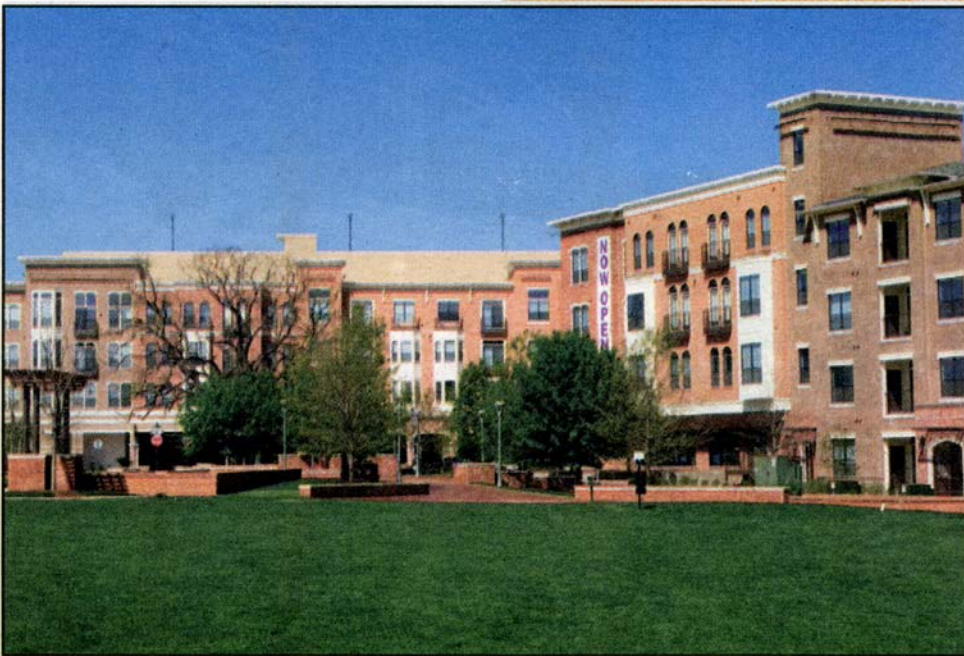
through a mediated design process that comprised a great deal of community and government involvement.”

A group made up almost entirely of community participants created the site plan and vision. The group embraced the designs of Houston-based Steinberg Design Collaborative LLP. The architect decided to bring a bit of Georgetown to Austin, according to Sanford Steinberg, principal of Steinberg Design Collaborative.

“Everybody was doing the Austin Hill Country look, so we decided to create a brick project that looked like row houses you’d find in Washington, D.C.,” Steinberg says.

This type of architectural style dictates that retailers be located on the ground floor. The mixed-use concept is a movement currently sweeping the country.

Rick Craig is vice president of multifamily development at Simmons Vedder & Co., the Houston developers responsible for The Triangle. Simmons Vedder incorporated brick pavers into the streets to give the development and urban feel. Three types of bricks were used in the



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Houston-based Steinberg Design Collaborative LLP served as the architect on The Triangle. The firm strived to bring a brick row-house look to the mixed-use development. Residences in The Triangle feature fitness rooms, common areas with televisions, gaming rooms, Wi-Fi-ready study areas and small group meeting rooms. Retailers, located on the ground floor, offer a convenient one-stop shop for residents.

building facades to create a distinctive row-house look, right down to the varying trims on the window finishes.

The two apartment complexes provide a choice of traditional or contemporary loft living. Interior halls with 10-foot ceilings were constructed, instead of the familiar outside apartment corridors, to create more of a high-rise atmosphere.

Simmons Vedder took into consideration the fact that almost half of the Triangle's residents would be students attending area colleges, so the project features fitness rooms, common areas with televisions, gaming rooms, Wi-Fi-ready study areas and small group meeting rooms.

Ground-floor retailers serve as a one-stop shop for products and services for residents living in The Triangle community. Damian Mandola recently celebrated the opening of his newest endeavor, Mandola's Italian Market, in one of the two anchor buildings in the complex.

"In mixed-use developments, there is a fine line between a community with a sense of home and a development that is more an attraction than a place to live," Steinberg says. "The Triangle successfully combined upscale urban design with a user-friendly environment."

In May, construction will begin on the next phase of The Triangle, a new building with 95,000 square feet of retail space, loft apartments and townhouses. Terkel expects completion in the summer of 2007.

IN DETAIL

ADDRESS: 4600 and 4700 W. Guadalupe St.

PROJECT START DATE: January 2004

GRAND OPENING DATE: July 2005

SIZE OF PROJECT: 343,375 square feet of residential,
26,500 square feet of retail

CONTRACTOR: Alliance Communities

OWNER: Texas General Land Office

DEVELOPERS: Simmons Vedder & Co., Cencor
Realty Services Inc.

ARCHITECT: Steinberg Design Collaborative LLP

LAW FIRM: Locke Liddell & Sapp LLP

ENGINEER: Bury + Partners Inc.

TITLE COMPANY: Heritage Title Co. of Austin Inc.

FINANCIERS: O'Connor Capital Partners, Guaranty
Federal Bank, JPMorgan Fleming