

**R&R INDUSTRIES**



**R&R INDUSTRIES:**

**Three successful women**  
in roofing have diverse responsibilities  
with shared perspectives

# Editor's Viewpoint

By Mark Buckshon

Publisher, Chicago Construction News



You can certainly prepare for natural disasters, but you can't control their timing. Hurricane Matthew slammed into the Panhandle as we were in the final stages of producing this issue of Florida Construction News, with the cover image already selected, and key stories written. In fact, we were almost ready to hit "send" on the instructions to print/post the publication when Michael arrived.

The main characteristic of this storm is the combination of its sudden onset and rather painful and enduring death and destruction discoveries. Allowing for the story's evolving nature, I expect most of our coverage will be online, and there will be more extensive coverage of the rebuilding challenges in the next issue.

The cover story, about the top 10 women in the roofing industry, has only an indirect relationship to the storm. Clearly roofers get very busy during hurricane season. We've discovered that while the roofing business has a primarily male demographic, women are taking on increasingly challenging roles both in the field and in business leadership – and I think you'll enjoy their stories.

This issue also reports on a fraction of the projects and opportunities discussed online at [floridaconstructionnews.com](http://floridaconstructionnews.com) and explores the controversy about Florida Power and Light's entry into the home services market for air conditioning, heating, plumbing and electrical services.

I welcome your observations and suggestions for future issues. You can best reach me by email at [buckshon@floridaconstructionnews.com](mailto:buckshon@floridaconstructionnews.com).

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# Hurricane Michael slams panhandle: Rebuilding to cost billions

*Florida Construction News staff writer*

Hurricane Michael, the third strongest storm to ever hit the continental United States, has slammed into Florida's panhandle with surprising speed and intensity.

The storm's extreme 155 mile-per-hour winds at landfall, and the lack of time to prepare for the cataclysmic wind and rain, magnified the disaster's scale. Compared to last year's Hurricane Irma, the panhandle areas hit by the storm had relatively small populations (and the state capital Tallahassee was spared the storm's worst effects), but communities – especially on the coast – were completely decimated.

At press time, the death toll had reached 17, though rescuers were still combing through the rubble and destruction, and officials expect the overall numbers will increase.

The Insurance Journal reports that CoreLogic believes insured storm losses could range from \$2 to \$4.5 billion (not including National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) losses). Of that, residential losses could total \$1.5 to \$3 billion and commercial losses could be as much as \$500 million to \$1 billion.

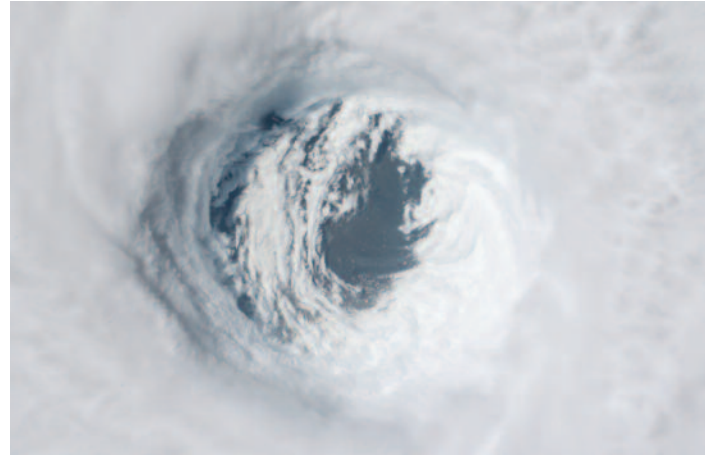
Coastal communities such as Mexico Beach, Apalachicola, Panama City Beach and Marianna were almost obliterated, and Tyndall Air Force Base was ruined (though the Air Force flew its extensive fleet of expensive military jets away from the base before the storm blew the base apart.)

"We're kind of getting crushed," Franklin County sheriff A.J. Smith said, describing the situation in Apalachicola. "It's horrific," he told the Washington Post.

There certainly was extensive damage in Tallahassee; however damage wasn't as great as feared. "Do we feel a little lucky about where we are now," Leon County administrator Vince Long told the Tallahassee Democrat. "I think given the magnitude of this storm, the answer is a resounding 'yes.'"

The storm had sustained winds of 155 mile per hour when it made landfall at Mexico Beach, making the storm more powerful than Hurricane Andrew, which devastated south Florida in 1992, and far more severe than last year's Hurricane Irma.

However, because Irma lashed highly populated Southern Florida communities, the costs will prove much higher than from Michael. Irma cost an estimated \$50 billion in damages in the US, with 92 fatalities.



**Video from a US Coast Guard flight assessing Hurricane Michael's damage**



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# Contractors form alliance to oppose what they say is Florida Power and Light's "predatory" expansion

*Florida Construction News staff writer*

A state-wide small business alliance called the MEP Coalition for Fair Competition has been launched to oppose what it says are Florida Power & Light's (FPL) predatory practices.

Specifically, the coalition asserts in a news release that the company is using its public resources for private gain in the home services market including air conditioning, heating, plumbing and electrical services.

Video: MEP Coalition's YouTube message

MEP is an acronym for mechanical, electrical and plumbing contractors. Coalition organizers include the South Florida Air Conditioning Contractors Association (SFACA), the Southwest Florida Air Conditioning Contractors Association (SWACCA), the Manasota Air Conditioning Contractors Association (MACCA) and the Florida Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Contractors Association (FRACCA).

The group says that FPL is leveraging assets from their regulated ratepayer funded utility monopoly to expand into new for-profit businesses.

The news release asserts that FPL entered the air conditioning, electrical and plumbing services and contracting business using a subsidiary called FPL Energy Services. Jupiter-Tequesta Air Conditioning, Plumbing & Heating is now promoting itself as an FPL Energy Services Company. In addition, their website features a photo of a Jupiter-Tequesta co-branded truck and FPL Energy Services Home Solutions branded truck. The company claims to now serve 30,000 customers from Lucie to Broward County.

The coalition says it has asked Florida Attorney General Pam Bondi to investigate the FPL's business practices in, it asserts, misappropriating regulated public assets to enter private for-profit markets.

"FPL is using utility ratepayer funds and assets to buy their way into HVAC, electrical, plumbing and other industries and their goal is to put small local companies out of business and control these markets," said Jaime DiDomenico, president of Cool Today, an HVAC, plumbing and electrical company based in Sarasota, and a member of the MEP coalition. "We hope the attorney general will intervene to protect local businesses, jobs and consumers."

FRACCA originally filed a complaint with the state's Public Service Commission (PSC) on April 18 to prevent FPL from subsidizing Jupiter-Tequesta A/C through FPL Energy Services.

NextEra Energy, FPL, FPL Energy Services and Jupiter-Tequesta A/C all share officers and directors. In



addition, FPL has admitted to collecting pricing data and customer information from independent contractors participating in rebate programs, the coalition asserts.

Tray Batcher, a Partner with Cotney Construction Law which represents FRACCA, said in a statement: "FPL is illegally subsidizing a for-profit affiliate using regulated ratepayer funds."

"It is outrageous, unfair and extraordinarily damaging to local small businesses and FPL ratepayers."

The coalition contends that FPL will continue its expansion into home services "improperly using extensive customer data, infrastructure and market power to decimate local businesses and dominate their markets."

The contractors' group says FPL is unfairly using ratepayer funded resources from their regulated utility to force their way into new revenue streams and higher profits. "They argue that the company's goal is to leverage its market power, aggressively recruit their employees, use predatory pricing to steal their customers and put them out of business," the news release says.

As evidence of this unfair competition, the coalition points to a precedent that recently occurred when Baltimore Gas & Electric (BGE) entered the HVAC market as BGE Home. In that case, about 30 percent of locally owned and operated heating, air conditioning, plumbing and electrical service companies were forced out of business due to BGE's unfair business practices.

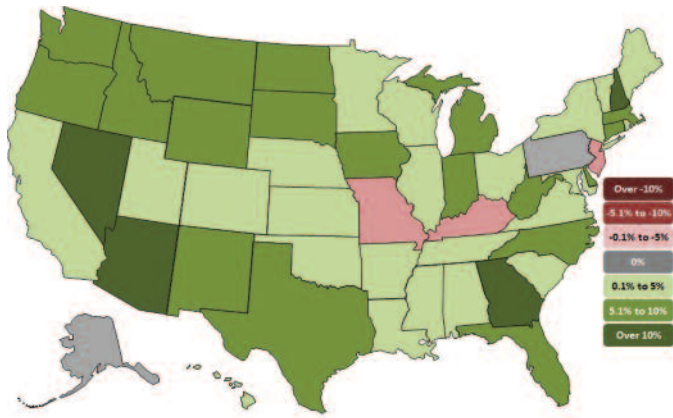
SFACA president Doug Lindstrom said in a statement: "The Public Service Commission and legislature need to intervene to protect local family owned businesses from unfair predatory practices. These small businesses and the jobs they provide are the backbone of our communities."

"They will not stop with HVAC," said Keith Martin, co-owner of Badger Bob's Services, a Sarasota-based HVAC company. "If they are allowed to get away with it, they will continue their expansion into electrical, plumbing and additional industries."

FPL has not yet responded to a request for comment from Florida Construction News.

# Florida construction employment growth continues, at slower pace

Florida Construction News staff writer



Florida's construction employment numbers continue to increase, but not quite at the levels seen earlier in the year, according to US Department of Labor data gathered by the Associated General Contractors of America (AGCA).

There were 548,600 people working in the construction industry in August, compared to 545,000 in July, an increase of 3,600 or .07%. This put the state in seventeenth place overall in the nation.

Over the 12 previous months, the state's construction grew by 7.7% or 39,300, ranking Florida tenth in the nation.

Nationally, 45 states and the District of Columbia added construction jobs between August 2017 and August 2018, while 33 states added construction jobs between July and August.



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# Diversity, innovation and leadership reflected in distinctive occupations and communities

*Florida Construction News staff writer*

Florida's roofing industry is massive, encompassing contractors and speciality supply and service businesses throughout the state. In this industry, women make up a small percentage of the overall working population, but their contributions and leadership should not be underestimated.

It is challenging to select the Top 10, so we've looked at leading companies and associations, as well as media reports and our own research to determine this list. We've also sought out women representing a diversity of occupations and communities within the state.

Note that the names here aren't ranked in order of achievement. We've listed them alphabetically.

## **Claudia Abbona, GAF**

Claudia Abbona, based in Fort Lauderdale, is GAF Materials Corp.'s territory manager, low slope. She is also a director of the Roofing Contractors Association of South Florida.

## **Vicky Byrne, BRI Roof Consultants**

Vicky Byrne represents the Palm Beach County Roofing & Sheet Metal Contractors Association (PBCRSM) as the local association's affiliate representative to the Florida Roofing and Sheet Metal Contractors Association, Inc., (FRSMCA), the state's major roofing association.

## **Tamara Chase – Chase Roofing**

Tamara Chase oversees this family owned business's operations, serving clients in the Greater Tampa Area, Orlando, and the South Florida Tri-County Area from its Fort Lauderdale corporate office. She took over the company's operations in 2010, focusing on its core values, unique brand and culture.

## **Wendy Harvest, Roofing Contractors Association of South Florida (RCASF)**

Wendy Harvest has been the RCASF's executive director since 2011. She oversees the association's administration and operations, and helps to coordinate its charitable and educational programs.

## **Loretta Hartley – Northeast Florida Roofing & Sheet Metal Contractors Association (NEFRSA)**

Based in the Jacksonville area, Loretta Hartley is the NEFRSA's affiliate director to the FRSMCA.

Hartley, who started her roofing career in the early 1980s, after being one of the first women in the Army Signal Corps. She has participated in relevant roofing and community associations for decades.

## **Lisa Pate – FRSMCA**

Lisa Pate oversees, as executive director, this major association founded in 1922, which seeks to "foster and encourage a high standard of business ethics among its members and to inform the general public of the importance of doing business with competent and ethical firms." She works with the association's board of directors, administers its website, office personnel, and is editor of Florida Roofing Magazine.

## **Angie Masini, R&R Industries**

Compared to most individuals on this list, Angie Masini is relatively new to the industry, but in her time at R&R Industries she has reshaped the company's operations and enhanced its collegiality and spirit. (See story page 8.)

## **Meghan Roth – FRSMCA Educational Foundation director**

Meghan Roth oversees the FRSMCA's educational and research foundation, established in 1982 to serve the workforce, management and owners of construction businesses as well as other industry-related professionals.

The foundation provides more than \$232,000 in scholarships and adds new educational programming each year.

## **Rhonda Rzeczka, R&R Industries**

Rhonda Rzeczka dons her safety gear and works on roofs for this Daytona-Beach area company every day. She enjoys the work and working with her husband. (See story page 7.)

## **Sherri Wilkie, R&R Industries**

Sherri Wilkie oversees purchasing, permit management, and equipment and materials deliveries for this successful contractor, routinely handling 70 or more projects in normal times, and upwards of 200 to 300 jobs during hurricane and storm recoveries. She says she thrives on the occupation's diversity and challenges. (See story page 8)

## R&R INDUSTRIES:

# Three successful women in roofing have diverse responsibilities with shared perspectives

*Florida Construction News special feature*

Three of the Top 10 Women in Roofing in Florida share a key common quality: They all work at R&R Industries, a Daytona Beach-area industrial, commercial and institutional roofing contractor in business since 1948.

They also appreciate their differences in occupations and years of employment, while sharing their employer's and colleagues' common perspectives of achievement and mutual respect.

"The R&R family strives for excellence in everything we do in pursuit of their purpose to: protect our customers, protect their assets, and make a positive difference in our community," Guy Beasley, CEO said.

### **Rhonda Rzeczk** – roofer

Rhonda Rzeczk is exceptional in that she is the only female employee among R&R Industries' more than 70 office and field staff who is up on the roofs each day.

She says her husband Tom encouraged her to help him out on job sites, initially as a helper, before



they joined R&R. Now she can handle a diversity of roof-top tasks safely and effectively.

They've been a couple since 1992. He's been a roofer for 40 years; she's been on the job full-time for four.

"It's a good job to me," she says in an interview after a day's work. "I think I'm pretty good at what I'm supposed to be doing."

"Every now and then I get a bit

tired of it and want to take a little time off, but I see the money coming in and it's not a bad job."

"We're in Florida and it's good to work outside," she says. "What better job could you have, instead of sitting inside all day?"

She says she knows only a few women work in the trade, but she sees no reason why more can't handle the work even though she has the exceptional advantage of her

spouse as mentor and trainer. And she acknowledges not many women want to make roofing their career. "It all depends on what they are comfortable doing," she said.

For her, learning how to do roofing work has paid off well. She says her employer will be happy if other women want to join her atop buildings, properly secured for safety where required, and earning the same as the men on the crews.

"If you are going to learn how to fix a roof, you'll be making money as you enjoy the outdoors," she said.

## **Sherri Wilkie – purchasing manager**

Sherri Wilkie worked for decades in the construction industry before joining R&R Industries about two years ago. Both with her former employers and for a period of self-employment, she handled office/administrative responsibilities and helped out with field crews, measuring and estimating jobs and running projects.



While women are not uncommon in roofing industry office jobs, not many have senior responsibilities. "It's very unusual to have females in these lead roles," she said, describing herself and Angie Masini, the company's vice-president of operations.

"It's refreshing," she said. "We do the work. We get the work done."

Wilkie's responsibilities include all purchasing, making sure all the

permits and inspections are in place, and coordinating logistics including ensuring materials and equipment are always in the right place at the right times.

The work can be quite a juggling act. In normal times, she says, there are 50 or more projects on the go. After severe storms and hurricanes, things are even more hectic. After a major hurricane, "we could be handling 200 to 300 active jobs."

She enjoys the intensity and challenge. "This is an ever-evolving industry," she says. "There's safety, and the diversity of project types – from a single story shopping plaza to a 30 story hotel.

"The work isn't rote. Everyday is different. Every project is different, every owner is different."

She says the roofing industry is growing rapidly, and she is happy that R&R's owners are doing "a great job in maintaining a high level of quality and professionalism and making sure the job is done right."

## **Angie Masini – Vice-president of operations**

Although Angie Masini is a relative newcomer to the roofing industry, she is no stranger to running large-scale operations. Her senior responsibilities demonstrate that R&R Industries is committed to encouraging women to handle business leadership roles.

"My career spans about 25 years in IT operations, process engineering, Finance, and HR" she says. "Primarily I've worked in the financial industry in both internal operational roles as well as external consulting, technology automation and streamlined processes transcend all industries."

Masini has set out to modernize the company. "In the past six months, we've digitized and automated most of our back office operations," she says.

The process of switching from paper-based and ad-hoc systems to integrated processes has been successful because Masini says em-



ployees at all levels were encouraged to outline their challenges and priorities of their jobs. "It was important to understand each job, its challenges, and what would make that job easier." Input from everyone enabled us to provide automation, systems and processes that make us more efficient, and profitable as a company."

The web-based systems also make the company much more disaster-resistant. If a major storm or other disaster destroyed our building, "we'll be fully operational, and ready to serve our customers almost immediately."

Beyond technology, Masini says she has worked hard to encourage goodwill and cooperation among R&R Industries' employees. These include programs that encourage workers to acknowledge colleagues who help them out beyond their regular duties, as well as a monthly Golden Hammer award to recognize employees who go beyond to help others.

"There's a great level of camaraderie here," she said, "People are really looking out for each other."

"This work is very rewarding for me personally – because every day I know I am making a difference." Effective technology and well thought out processes "can increase productivity and profitability and make a better work environment, Masini says. "Happy employees make for happy customers."

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## CENTRAL

### Construction underway for massive Ellenton industrial park



Benderson Development is building a massive industrial park in Manatee County.

Located on the northwest corner of the intersection of Interstate 75 and U.S. 301, the 2,000,000-sq.-ft. park, called Florida International Trade Port, will be completed in phases.

Construction is underway on the first two buildings. The developer plans to finish the 500,000-sq.-ft. first phase within 12 months.

The 132-acre industrial park will be one the biggest in the state. It will be bigger than the Mall at University Town Center, which is 880,000 sq. ft.

### Lane Construction wins \$253 million contract to build Seminole County parkway

Lane Construction Corp. says it has won a \$253 million design-build contract to construct the Wekiva Parkway (Section 8) in Seminole County.



The contract supports Lane's recently renewed strategy, which is focused on building large-scale, complex infrastructure, the company said in a news release. Lane has a long history in the state of Florida with other large infrastructure works including the I-4 Ultimate Improvement Project in Orlando;

Osceola County Line to the Beachline Expressway/S.R. 528; and the Suncoast Parkway 2 leading north of Tampa.

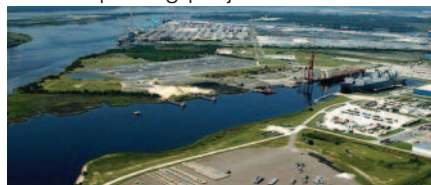
The Section 8 contract will design 2.63 miles of limited access toll road from Orange Blvd. to east of Rinehart Rd. The project will include the new Wekiva Pkwy interchange at I-4 that will connect with S.R. 417, completing the beltway around Central Florida. Construction is expected to begin in early 2019 and be completed in 2022.

"The project has been recognized for its environmentally friendly features that will help foster the sensitive wildlife it will encroach upon: 3,400 acres of conservation land, numerous wildlife bridges, and largely elevated roadways to reduce accidents between vehicles and wildlife," the news release asserted.

## NORTHEAST

### GLDD wins \$113 million contract for Jacksonville's harbor deepening project

Great Lakes Dredge & Dock Corp. (GLDD) has received a \$113-million contract from the Jacksonville District Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) for the Jacksonville's harbor deepening project.



GLDD expects the USACE to award additional option work items on the contract by mid-2019 with a value of \$97 million, resulting in a total contract value of \$210 million.

According to the USACE, this second contract calls for deepening approximately five miles of the St. Johns River in addition to the ongoing deepening of the first contract, which covers approximately three miles from the entranceway inland.

The contract is the second of mul-

tiple construction contracts designed to deepen the existing Federal navigation channel from its current authorized depth of 40 ft. to 47 ft.

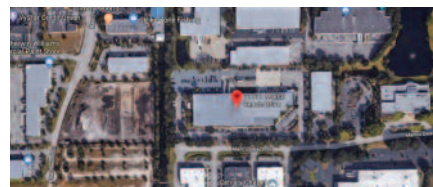
Contract work will also widen specific areas for two-way traffic and turning, and also provide some advance channel maintenance.

The second contract includes dredging roughly 5.7 million cubic yards of material from River Mile 3 near the Naval Station Mayport runway, westerly to Mile 8 at the east tip of La Baron Island. The work does not involve blasting. The contractor will transport excavated material and place it in the Jacksonville Ocean Dredged Material Disposal Site located about six miles southeast of the entrance channel jetties. The contract includes the base, Mayport runway to Buck Island, and Option A from Buck Island to La Baron Island, according to the Corps of Engineers.

GLDD says the work is expected to commence in the fourth quarter of 2018, with completion of both base contract and expected options in the second quarter of 2021.

### Venus Fashion to begin \$9 million Jacksonville HQ renovation

Venus Fashion plans to invest \$9 million to renovate its headquarters at 11711 Marco Beach Dr. in Jacksonville.



The renovation work will be completed in four phases. The city approved a permit for a \$1.14-million renovation of 18,342-sq.-ft. of space on the second floor of the two-story building. It will include interior walls, paint, flooring, ceramic tile, plumbing, HVAC, doors and hardware, JAX Daily Record reported.

The permit covers the first phase of converting distribution space into a call center. The exterior work will include landscaping.

The contractor is Haskew Company & Associates. Work is expected to be completed by the end of 2019.

### **SOUTH** **PREMIER leading 467,832 sq. ft. distribution and manufacturing project in Pompano Beach**

PREMIER Design + Build Group, LLC has been selected by Bridge Development Partners to build a nearly half-million sq. ft. industrial facility on Powerline Rd. in Pompano Beach. Composed of three buildings on 40.41 acres, the project will serve as a coastal hub for South Florida distributors and manufacturers.



"The city of Pompano Beach has been great to work with," says PREMIER senior project manager Ytiel Lopez. "We're always glad when we're given the opportunity to work on projects that will bring more jobs to the local community."

All three buildings will be constructed of tilt-up concrete slab, with 32 ft. clear heights, and will include exposed steel beam and storefront-glazed entrances with aluminum canopies and integrated gutters. The open-web steel girder and joist roof structure will feature a TPO roofing system with R-11 insulation and an ESFR fire suppression system. Sixteen hundred amp main electrical service will ensure ample power for industrial operations.

Outside, the combination asphalt and concrete parking lot will offer 431 total parking spaces, as well as

multiple dock positions at each building. Of the 138 total dock doors, 12 will be motorized (four per building). Buildings 1 and 2 will each comprise of 172,927 sq. ft. and 52 dock doors; Building 3 will comprise of 121,978 sq. ft. and 34 dock doors.

PREMIER has also been selected to manage the interior buildout for Building 1 for the project's first tenant. The approximately 17,200 sq. ft. buildout includes ten mechanical dock levelers and provisions for 14 forklift battery charging stations and a conveyor system. Buildings 2 and 3 are designed to accommodate six and four tenants, respectively.

Lopez is overseeing the project for PREMIER along with project superintendent Dominic DiGrado. Bridge Development Partners is the developer. The Corrales Group Architects is providing architectural services. Engineering services are being provided by Nutting Engineers (geotechnical engineering), DDA Engineers (structural engineering), KAMM Consulting (mechanical, plumbing and electrical engineering) and Sun-Tech Engineering (civil engineering).

Craven Thompson & Associates are providing landscaping and irrigation services, including the development of two dry retention areas totaling two acres and one large 6.5 acre wet retention/lake/wetland area.

The project is expected to be completed by July 2019.

### **ZOM Senior Living selects Balfour Beatty to build \$180-million Wellington senior housing community**

ZOM Senior Living says it has contracted Balfour Beatty as construction manager for the first phase of Wellington Green Senior Living, a \$180-million mixed-use senior housing community in Palm Beach County.

The 46-acre lakefront project is a venture between ZOM and Liberty Senior Living.



Construction is scheduled to commence in the first quarter of 2019. LS3P Architects and MSA Architects are providing design and architectural services.

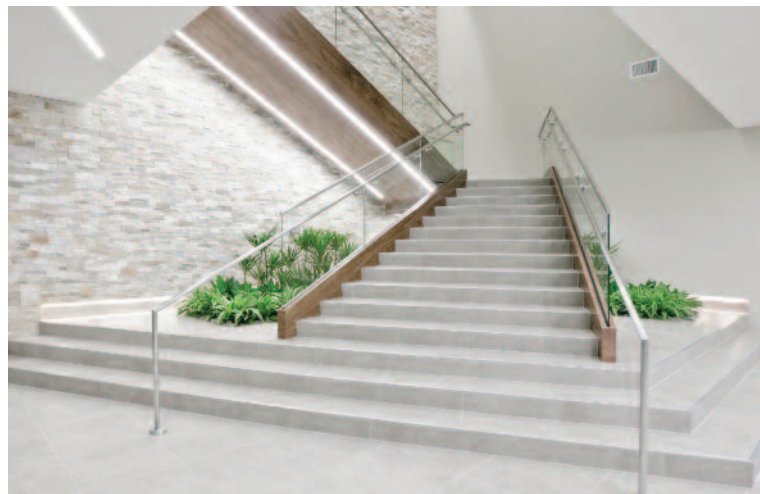
There will be a variety of rental housing formats, including single-story villas with attached garages, three-story garden flats, and residences within a six-story building, attached directly to the main amenity building. The project also includes a 65,000 sq. ft. clubhouse and amenity structure including multiple dining venues, indoor and outdoor swimming pools, spa, salon and wellness center, billiards and cards room, and a theater.

Designed to include 424 units at full build-out, the first phase will include 267 independent living, assisted living and memory care residential units.

"ZOM Senior Living and Liberty Senior Living are redefining the senior housing experience with this luxury rental community at Wellington Green, and Balfour Beatty is thrilled to be their partner in bringing this vision to reality," Scott Skidelsky, president of Balfour Beatty's buildings operations in Florida, said in a statement.

"We thrive on building unique, market-leading assets for our clients and Wellington Green will be a 'crown jewel' of senior living in Palm Beach County. ZOM continues to be a great partner to Balfour Beatty, this being our second project with ZOM in South Florida and our third project nationally. We look forward to pushing the boundaries of senior living in Florida."

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