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Cameron Sperance

First Tower Of \$950M EchelonSeaport Tops Off

The first tower at one of Boston's largest residential developments topped off Tuesday morning, and the developer hinted at how his design ethos differed from that of the real estate developer who currently occupies the White House.



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The final beam rising at the topping off ceremony of EchelonSeaport's first tower.

"EchelonSeaport is our flagship development since the founding of Cottonwood. I've done that without putting my name in big gold letters on the building," Cottonwood Group CEO and Chairman Alexander Shing said at the ceremony.

The final beam was put in place at 133 Seaport Blvd., a 14- to 21-story, tiered tower that will include 255 condominiums when complete in 2019. The entire \$950M EchelonSeaport project is planned to have 717 condos, apartments and micro-units spread across three towers on 3.5 acres. The condo portion of the development will be branded by Taiwan-based Regent Hotel Group. Construction of the project averaged 80 iron workers each day, and that number increased to 100 a month ago, Shing said. By the time the entire project finishes, 15,000 pieces of steel will have been used. Despite the size of the project, Shing said his team was mindful of its place in the neighborhood that has attracted companies like General Electric and Amazon in recent years. "It's not about a glass box on a postage stamp site," he said. "It's about being integrated with the community."



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Cottonwood Group CEO and Chairman Alexander Shing speaking at the EchelonSeaport topping off ceremony.

Boston Mayor Martin Walsh also spoke at the ceremony, noting the project's contribution to helping the city solve its affordable housing problem. EchelonSeaport will include 28 on-site affordable units, and Cottonwood Group will build 62 off-site affordable units. The developer also gave \$3.2M to Boston's Inclusionary Development Fund and \$1M to the city's Neighborhood Housing Trust for more affordable housing. While early Seaport developments were criticized for what some called unimaginative architecture, Walsh praised Cottonwood for its EchelonSeaport design.

"You're starting to see an amazing neighborhood begin to take shape here," Walsh said.