



17 CONDOS' PERCH GIVES GREAT VIEW OF SKYLINE

The new Hawthorne Lane bridge over Independence Boulevard helped trigger a 17-unit condominium project in an area that's experiencing an upsurge in residential development.

Tuscan Development will construct Hawthorne Court on 0.65 acres on the north side of Independence, diagonally across from the old Krispy Kreme doughnut shop site.

Principals Ray Farris III and James Cole say completion of the bridge last fall and the striking skyline view from the site persuaded them that the time was right to launch.

The neighborhood already is humming with construction.

Neighborhood Realty Inc. is creating Elizabeth Too - a block of remodeled single-family bungalows, condominiums and townhomes from what once was mainly rent-by-the-week housing along the same stretch of Hawthorne.

"What made the difference was opening the Hawthorne bridge over Independence," Neighborhood Realty President Paul McBroom told The Observer in July. "This originally was considered a part of Elizabeth, but it was cut off by Independence Boulevard and overrun by cut-through traffic."

A new wave of home renovation also is under way along nearby Sunnyside Avenue, Lamar Avenue and Oakland Avenue, which dead ends into Independence Boulevard.

Hawthorne Court condominiums will be four blocks north of Seventh Street, close to Presbyterian and Mercy hospitals, and two blocks south of Central Avenue and burgeoning Plaza-Midwood. Also, newly renovated Independence Park is within walking distance.

Farris said he expects the project to appeal mainly to young professionals ages 25 to 45, seeking to live near uptown or the nearby medical services hub.

Tuscan Development plans to begin pre-construction sales Saturday. Two home styles are available. Two-story villas, about 900 square feet, will sell for \$119,000, and three-level townhomes with garages will cost \$169,000.

The smaller units have a living room, kitchen, dining room and bathroom on the first floor and a bath plus two rooms on the second floor. That space can be used as bedrooms, divided into a bedroom and study or combined to form large, open loft space.

The larger units have covered terraces, garage, carport/patio and optional home office on the first level, a living room, bathroom, dining room, kitchen and pantry on the second, and a bedroom, master bedroom, two baths and walk-in closet on the third.

Construction is expected to start by December and be completed in fall 1999.

"We're using Italian urban features such as true stucco exterior walls, gabled roofs, window boxes, arches, specific window patterns, balconies and trellises to bring this theme to Charlotte," Farris said. "When you see Hawthorne Court, you'll think of Savannah, its pocket gardens and its Italianate influence."

The condominiums will form a U around a central plaza with a centerpiece fountain. Tuscan Development has commissioned artist Paul Sires of Center of the Earth Gallery to design the fountain.

Harry Schrader of Narmour-Wright Associates designed the condominiums. ColeJenest & Stone is doing the landscape and "nightscape" planning, which will feature Savannah-style street lanterns for the plaza.

Nancy Forbis-Homan at First Charlotte Properties is in charge of sales.

Farris said the developers have discussed their plans with the Elizabeth Community Association, and they're anticipating a letter of support for the project.

Tuscan Development was formed in 1995 by Farris and Cole, who met in graduate school in Boston. Their first project was 38-unit Cedar Mill Townhomes, developed in Third Ward with NationsBank Community Development Corp. and The Committee to Restore and Preserve Third Ward.