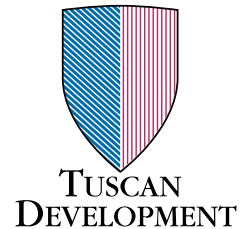


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TOWNHOUSES PART OF THE RENEWAL OF PECAN AVENUE

Developers have cleared an acre on Pecan Avenue at the edge of the Plaza-Midwood historic district for 20 townhouses priced from \$130,000 to \$150,000.

The estimated \$2.85 million project, called Kensington Court, is on the west side of Pecan at Kensington Avenue. It will be the first new, for-sale attached housing on Pecan, which parallels Thomas Avenue and The Plaza.

The 1,040- to 1,090-square-foot, two-bedroom townhouses were designed to blend with Plaza-Midwood's older houses. Exterior design features include porches and clapboard siding and shakes.

Tuscan Development is developing the project with Landcraft Properties. The first units are expected to be ready in the fall.

The price range "is just below what we see as the \$165,000 average price in the Pecan-Thomas part of Plaza-Midwood," said James Cole, who owns Tuscan with Ray "Rip" Farris III. "That has priced a lot of people out of a neighborhood that feeds uptown."

The site, across from the Midwood Meadows' renovated bungalows, was part of Barnhardt Manufacturing Co.'s acreage.

"We try to find unused remnant land pieces that fit within a larger fabric of an area," Farris said. "We like to call it urban infill. It adds density for a community, and that adds character and flavor."

Neighborhood leaders support the new development in Plaza-Midwood, which is seeing an influx of residents and businesses, especially near the Central Avenue/The Plaza commercial hub.

Keren Boyan, who has twice served as president of the Plaza-Midwood Neighborhood Association, called Kensington Court "one more feather in the cap" of a section of Pecan that continues to improve.

John Nichols, a past president of the Plaza Central Development Group, said Tuscan impressed people with its success at Hawthorne Court, a 17-unit condo project overlooking Independence Expressway in nearby Elizabeth.

Two of the four buildings in Kensington Court will face Pecan. The other two will face a wooded area west of Pecan.

The first floor of each townhouse will have a great room and laundry center. Upstairs will include two-bedroom/full-bath suites. Floor plans include an optional balcony.

Each unit will have network wiring to accommodate advanced telecommunications.

"For instance," Farris said, "you could set up a computer in one room and connect to a printer somewhere else, operate a VCR over here and have it networked to screens in other rooms, or use a Palm Pilot on the way home to connect your computer and turn on the heat or air conditioning."

Kensington Court was designed by Brian Wilson and Travis Pence of The Wilson Group. A division of The Crosland Group will construct the buildings. Jason Foley of Helen Adams Realty is handling sales and marketing. Floor plans can be viewed online at www.tuscandev.com/kensington.

Tuscan, founded in 1995, developed Cedar Mill, a 38-unit townhouse project in Third Ward, with NationsBank Community Development Corp. and the Committee to Restore and Preserve Third Ward. It's also doing Scots Hill, a 95-condo project, in Ballantyne with Landcraft Properties.

Landcraft, headed by Frank Martin, has built homes in the Southeast for 20 years. Its Charlotte projects include Queens Station, Oakmore, Park Plaza and Park Place.
