

Multi- family development overlooks QE Park



The exterior display model of Empire at QE Park demonstrates the incorporation of green space into the design.



PHOTOS: ARLEN REDEKOP/ PNG



Clockwise from top: The show suite kitchen has an expansive countertop and lots of storage. A Miele wall oven and microwave are ensconced within millwork on one side. A den in the show suite has been outfitted as a wine vault, but could also be used as an office or cosy reading room. The generous show suite deck demonstrates the projected views of Queen Elizabeth Park that will be on offer. Wrap-around decks are the natural place to entertain.



Left: The two bedrooms in the show suite are separated by the main living area, allowing for privacy. Shown here is the master. Right: The ensuite is outfitted with marble mosaic tiles above the tub, a frameless glass shower and a double vanity.

"The guidelines touched on what they wanted to see from us," explains Doug. He was the partner overseeing Empire, while brother Bruce was the project architect. "They expressed a desire for the building to be a backdrop to the park itself."

In order to do that, they incorporated significant amounts of green space into Empire at QE Park. In theory, the site could have accommodated four buildings,

but that would have reduced the greenways between the structures to narrow strips.

Instead, they opted for three buildings of six storeys each — the height limit set out by the OCP. The one in the centre has a bigger setback, as if to bring the landscape in; it allows for a large central lawn with evergreens, much like the park immediately opposite.

Cambie Street itself takes an interesting jog westward right at the site, creating a distinct curve for the property. The architects decided to incorporate that into the buildings themselves.

"The curves bring in a sense of motion," Doug says. "The two end buildings are curved and faced in brick, with more intense landscaping. They feel more townhouse-like with retaining walls, when compared to the lawn that you see in the centre. The building in the middle is the 'punctuation mark', because it's smaller than the other two."

They also felt it was important to create a sense of interaction between the buildings. The stairways at either end have open glazed areas to connect to the outdoor space, which includes gardens and an area in which children can ride their tricycles. The townhomes on the back side of the project create a transitional zone to the existing single-family homes in the neighbourhood.

Empire is seeing significant interest from downsizers who want to stay in the neighbourhood they love, Magnum's George Wong reports.

"Most of the people coming in already live within a two-mile radius — they know and have lived here for decades," he says. "They are willing to pay at the top level for a top product."

In fact, they have already seen nearly a dozen requests to combine two one-bedroom apartments into larger suites, demonstrating that buyers are willing to pay for extra space.

Wong says the homes at Empire definitely appeal to people coming from single-family homes. The kitchens

particularly illustrate this — they feel as spacious as a kitchen in a luxury west-side home.

The central portion of the island in the show suite dominates the area, with an expansive countertop and lots of storage space. A Miele wall oven and microwave are tidily ensconced within a wall of millwork on one side, with a gas range top and sleek hood fan in the back millwork area. A full pantry is a clever and useful addition on the far wall.

The living space shows off the projected views of Queen Elizabeth Park, leading the eye out to the generously sized deck space. It's a natural place to entertain, and with entrances and exits from three points — both bedrooms in the two bedroom show suite, and the living area — creates an automatic flow for indoor- outdoor living. The bedrooms are separated from each other by the living room, allowing for privacy.

A den in the suite has been turned into a stunning wine vault, but it could easily be retained as an office, or converted into a cosy reading room.

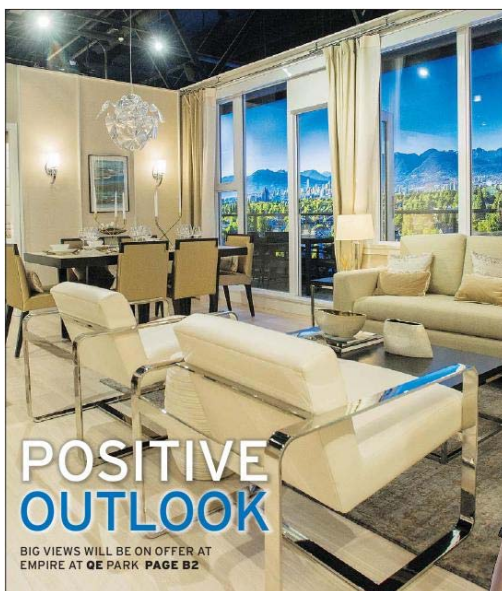
Luxury touches can be seen in the panel of marble mosaic tiles laid in a chevron pattern above the tub in the ensuite bathroom; the tub itself is surrounded by large format marble tiles. A frameless glass shower is a sleek bathroom addition, while residents will no doubt appreciate the horizontally hung double vanity.

Other elements within the building replicate part of the experience of living in a singlefamily home. A large bike room is directly accessible from W. 30th — a bikeway — so that residents won't have to go through an underground parkade to put their bikes away. A workshop in the development can be configured for people to putter on woodwork projects or other DIY tasks, depending on what the strata ultimately decides to do with the space.

All of this comes within a five- minute walk of significant community amenities, such as the swimming pool, ice rink, and gym at Hillcrest. Purchasers can take their pick between watching a baseball game at Nat Bailey Stadium or playing some pitch and putt at the park. They can shop at the local farmers market, head to the mall at Oakridge, or hop on the Canada Line to go downtown. Vancouver International Airport is 17 minutes away by the Canada Line.

All of the people involved in Empire at QE Park realize it is helping to shape the

neighbourhood. They say they are happy to lead the way — especially at such a spectacular location.



Empire at QE Park will comprise 166 homes in three six-storey buildings at Cambie and West 29th Avenue.

Empire at QE Park

Project size: 166 homes in three concrete buildings, each six storeys

Project location: 4500 Cambie St. (at W. 29th Ave.), Vancouver

Residence size: 1-bed 485 sq. ft - 675 sq. ft; 2-bed 715 sq. ft - 1,050 sq. ft; 3-bed 1,125 sq. ft - 1,250 sq. ft; 3-bed townhomes 1,600 sq. ft - 1,850 sq. ft

Prices: 1-bed from \$390,000; 2-bed from \$579,900; 3-bed from \$839,900; townhome pricing available by request

Developer: Intergulf Architect: Ramsay Worden Architects

Interior designer: BYU

Sales centre: 130 - 555 West 12th Ave. (City Square Mall)

Hours: noon - 5 p.m., Sat - Thurs.

Telephone: 604-687-8800

Website: www.empireQE.com

Sales began: November 2013

Occupancy: Winter 2016