

High on collaborative design

The Jervis represents an innovative project from Intracorp and Inform Interiors

CLAUDIA KWAN
SPECIAL TO THE SUN

The Jervis

Project size: 58 homes in a 19-storey concrete building; and 27 designated rental units

Project location: 1171 Jervis (at Davie), Vancouver

Residence size: 2-bed 989 sq. ft — 1,302 sq. ft

Prices: from \$1,000,000

Developer: Intracorp in partnership with Inform Interiors

Architect: Richard Henry Architects and NSDA Architects

Interior designer: Scott Trepp, Trepp Design Inc.

Sales centre: 1295 Davie St.

Hours: by appointment only

Telephone: 604-998-8989

Website: www.thejervis.com

Sales begin: Fall 2015

Occupancy: Spring 2018

Generally speaking, conversations at dinner parties or over coffee are often considered small talk. However, in the case of Don Forsgren and Niels and Nancy Bendtsen, their chats over the past several years have coalesced in the form of The Jervis, a 19-storey highrise being built in downtown Vancouver's West End.

While Forsgren and the Bendtsens — CEO of developer Intracorp and co-owners of furniture retailer Inform Interiors, respectively — worked together informally before, they decided it was a good time to partner on something from the ground up.

"We wanted this to happen in a cohesive way, where it wasn't just going to be a case of coming in at the end to stage a show suite," Intracorp's Forsgren explains. "We talked about involvement in



A model of The Jervis, which will comprise 58 homes in a 19-storey building, along with 27 rental units.

architecture, floor plans, the finishings, even the branding of the project."

The Inform team says it was a refreshing change to have the opportunity to give input right from the beginning. Niels and Nancy Bendtsen pointed out some of the finer details, like having individual rooms be big enough to house "real" furniture, as she puts it, and having all the doors inside suites at exactly the same height, rather than jarring the eye with height variations.

"In the past, we would be frustrated at some of the decisions that had been made, or some of the things that had been left out," Nancy says. "Here, we really got to help develop an esthetic from Day 1, closer to what we do at

Inform."

The most startling innovation came from Niels Bendtsen's suggestion to place the structural supports holding the building up on the outside of the tower, rather than running them internally. It's a fairly sophisticated idea, but can basically be summed up as the difference between having a human skeleton — where the bones are inside — and an exoskeleton, like certain types of insects or crustaceans.

"I can tell you, when the idea of putting the structure on the exterior was first brought forward, some people looked at me and said this is going to be a pain in the butt," Forsgren says with a smile. "But it forced us to say, well, do we do it the other way just because it's the way we've always done it? What would be involved with doing it this way?"

As the team began digging into the answers, he noticed a remarkable increase in engagement and enthusiasm for the concept. There were also notable benefits for the building itself.

"Because there are no internal corridors (within the homes), the architects got to make incredible use of the space inside," Nancy Bendtsen says. "Every single suite is a corner suite, which means great air flow, and lots of light." (There are only four suites per floor on the lower floors; on levels 16-19, the current design calls for two suites per floor.)

Placing the supports on the outside also allowed the creation of very large rectangular balconies, which are a focal point of the homes. Since the interior space essentially "pivots" around the deck, the deck reads as another room of the suite, and allows for truly indoor-outdoor living.

