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Marguleas Markets Santa Monica's First LEED-Certified Townhouses

Driving through the Westside, where well-kept gardens, sumptuous shade trees, and expansive gardens invite wonder, it is fair to say green is in abundance. When it comes to green building, however, that's another story. At least not at the level required to achieve Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification from the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC), which represents the most significant energy-efficient building standards in existence.

After all, there is only one LEED-certified residence in Pacific Palisades — a recently sold traditional home on Hartzell Street — and almost none in the surrounding area. A recent study noted that there are only 2,500 LEED-certified projects in the entire United States.

That number is about to grow by eight, with the introduction of Nine Three Nine, a community of eight high-end townhouses just south of Montana Avenue that is poised to permanently alter the green landscape on the Westside. Nine Three Nine, the first and only LEED-certified townhouse project in Santa Monica, is set to have its grand opening in late January or early February.

"This project really has gone above and beyond the norm, even for a city with high expectations, like Santa Monica," said Brenden McEneaney, Green Building Program Advisor for Santa Monica's Office of Sustainability and the Environment. "This project is also a testament that green is not a difficult, austere building style for the eccentric few; green buildings are high-performance, healthier buildings that are completely consistent with the level of comfort, flexibility and quality that modern consumers have come to expect."

The sales and marketing for Nine Three Nine are being managed by Anthony Marguleas, a broker/owner of

Amalfi Estates in Pacific Palisades. He is pleased to be associated with a project that has the potential of changing minds about eco-friendly living.

"What I have heard time and again is that, while people like the idea of being eco-friendly, they are not necessarily ready to embrace it if it means forgoing their idea of luxury — especially here on the Westside, where the homes, by and large, cater to an extremely upscale lifestyle," Marguleas said. "What is unique about Nine Three Nine is that it is built to exacting standards in terms of its energy efficiency, but the space is so well planned, and the amenities so luxurious, that if you didn't know it was built green walking in, you probably wouldn't know walking out either. I am certain that the level of luxury that has been achieved at Nine Three Nine has greatly contributed to the enthusiasm about the project. I know it is one of the primary reasons I was so excited to be marketing these townhouses and working with EGC Luxury Homes."

Builder EGC Luxury Homes' approach for Nine Three Nine, so named for its location at 939 20th Street, was to create that perfect balance of energy-efficient building standards and high-end luxury features.

"When we set out to build Nine Three Nine, we envisioned a community that went beyond what traditional green buildings could accomplish in this city, both in terms of its overall energy efficiency, and its high-end feel," said Ron Gonen, president of EGC Luxury Homes. "We sourced materials and utilized building practices that far exceeded the established mandates for energy-efficient building to give owners the ability to live green without compromising their desire for livable floor plans or high-end amenities."

"The data shows that green buildings can command a premium in the market, and they



Ron Gonen, president of EGC Luxury Homes, at the company's LEED-certified Nine Three Nine townhouse project at 939 20th Street in Santa Monica.

Rich Schmitt/Staff Photographer

have lower turnover rates and higher employee productivity rates," McEneaney continued. "Students' test scores are higher in buildings that use natural day lighting. Patients recover more quickly in hospitals where they can view a natural landscape. Cities are adopting green building requirements. The early adopters in this field are reaping the benefits and this townhouse project serves as an example to other projects of what the leading developers are doing."

The walls at Nine Three Nine are (as expected for a LEED project) covered in low-VOC paint, the landscape design is drought-tolerant and environmentally preferred, and the insulation in the exterior walls is blown-in — all features that have contributed to the townhouses' energy

efficiency.

Adding to the luxury feel: spacious, open floor plans with two to four bedrooms; gourmet kitchens with custom cabinets, natural stone countertops and top-of-the-line, Energy-Star-rated Thermador appliances; bonus rooms; ocean-view decks; and such appointments as five-inch solid walnut flooring, Walker Zanger mosaic tile, security systems, whole-house vacuum systems, and private, direct access garages. Prices range from \$1,385,000 to \$2,229,000.

For more information on the floor plans at Nine Three Nine, visit www.NineThreeNine.com or contact Anthony Marguleas at am@LAestatehomes.com or (310) 573-4245, ext. 100