

Construction at The Ambassador Gardens Continues

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Kevin Smith



Insignia City Ventures is moving forward with its buildout of The Ambassador Gardens, an upscale residential community situated on the grounds of the former Ambassador College in Pasadena.

The Newport Beach-based developer plans to build a total of 148 condos that will be completed in six phases. The first 10 units, known as The Bungalows, were completed along Del Mar Avenue and sold about a year ago.

The company is currently working on the next 39 units permitted for construction. The first 19 units of that phase, Jamieson Place, are due to be completed this year, with the remaining 20 units being finished in

2016.

“Of the 19 units under construction at Jamieson Place, 5 had sold at prices from \$1.7 to \$2.5 million,” said Ben Besley, Insignia City Ventures’ vice president of development. “We expect to sell another 12 of the homes this quarter, with construction completing in November. The units that are still for sale run from 2,000 to 3,100 square feet.”

Jeff Botsford, a founding partner with Partners Trust realty firm in Pasadena, has worked closely with a couple who just closed escrow on a 2,600-square-foot unit at The Ambassador Gardens.

“They came from a 4,000-square-foot home that they designed and had built in the Linda Vista area of Pasadena,” said Botsford, whose wife, Vicky, also works at Partners Trust. “They recognized the great location here and the quality of the project.”

A celebration was held over the weekend to mark the opening of Jamieson Place and the unveiling of a designer showcase home at The Grove, another enclave on the property.

The 39 homes permitted for construction will be followed by two additional phases with larger homes. Construction on those units is expected to begin later this year.

“Ambassador Gardens truly is unique and irreplaceable,” said Ben Besley, Insignia City Ventures’ vice president of development. “We have 110-year-old fig trees and a high level of craftsmanship with historical fountains, fences and sculptures ... you just couldn’t replicate this.”

Surrounded by estate gardens dating back to the early 1900s, The Ambassador Gardens features a classic pool and outdoor lounges, historic mansions, walking paths and benches bordered by jacaranda trees, roses and Mediterranean cypress trees that line the community entry.

More than 60 percent of the Ambassador Gardens site has been preserved as open space, including the 2.1-acre Great Lawn, public park, walking areas and pool situated between The Grove and Jamieson Place.

Strong interest in the project has boosted sales, with values and prices increasing in each phase, according to Besley.

“We attribute this to the unique location, the historic gardens and mansions throughout the campus and the impressive response to our Insignia program at Ambassador Gardens,” he said. “Insignia is a complete design service that allows each buyer to create their own semi-custom home.”

Those options are available when buyers visit The Studio, a design gallery located on the Ambassador Gardens property.

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