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Homes filled with divine inspiration

By Suzanne Monson
Special to New Homes

Amid a litany of praise for its reverence to architectural preservation and divine detailing, The Sanctuary on Seattle's Capitol Hill offers homebuyers just what its name implies.

Resurrecting a landmark once home to the city's century-old First Church of Christ, Scientist, The Sanctuary is open this weekend to show off the first of its 12 soon-to-be-completed townhomes, each designed to capture the soul of urban living amid the grace and grandeur of its historic foundation and details.

Original stained-glass windows and flooring, recycled pews and terrazzo detailing for cast plaster pay homage to the church, which welcomed its first congregants in 1911.

Also original, and now central to each of the new townhomes granted historic status within The Sanctuary: the stained-glass dome — a feature that crowns the building's atrium, illuminating and diffusing natural light throughout this central space.

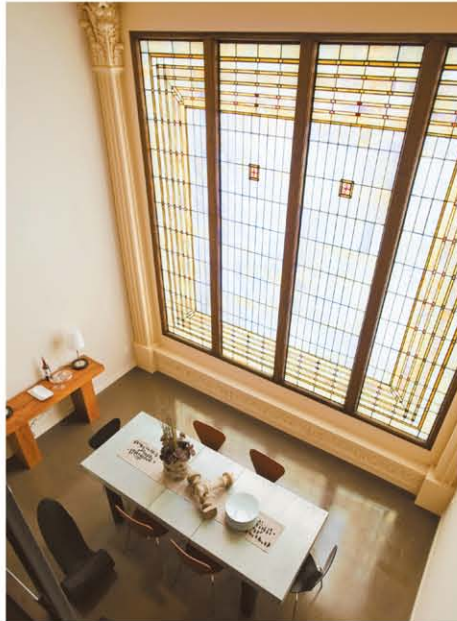
"It was a special and important part of the former sanctuary," Windermere Real Estate associate Scott Wasner says. "And now, in this common space, it's a place where everyone can share in its beauty and magnificence."

Inspired by this beauty and environmental responsibility, developers Joel Lavin and Joe Sacotte have spent nearly two years nurturing such details at The Sanctuary. Now, even before next month's official completion, two homes have been pre-sold.

At The Sanctuary, no two townhomes are identical. Plans that include two to three bedrooms, three to four bathrooms, lofts, media rooms, dens and music rooms vary from 1,543 to 2,594 square feet.

Living spaces include ceilings that rise almost 35 feet in most homes and intimate rooms with skylights beneath unobstructed views of the stained-glass dome.

Lavin credits Sechrist Design Associates, which specializes in interior design, space planning and landscape architecture, and Brian Runberg, an architectural leader in historic



This former church has been converted into 12 townhomes, each retaining many of the original features from the early 1900s.

renovation, with many of the results that tie the old with the new.

The Sanctuary welcomes guests into the atrium through the church's original oversized wooden doors, which lead to a staircase with backlit steps made from recycled white oak pews. Modern elevators link many of the three-, four- and five-level units. Even insulation labeled "New York Seagrass # 2 1906" was removed from the original structure and replaced between restored or replaced brick and plaster walls.

During this weekend's tours, some homes at The Sanctuary remain in the "warm shell" stage, ready with completed wiring and plumbing for homebuyers who prefer to use their own interior designer. Others offer light-colored finishes — replete with stainless steel countertops and white epoxy-finished concrete flooring — or dark detailing, with marble countertops and dark-stained concrete floors.

Each climate-controlled home features air

View these homes

Open 1-4 p.m. Saturdays-Sundays and by appointment at 1841 16th Ave., Seattle

Prices

\$925,000 to \$1.686 million

Information

206-910-1410 or
sanctuaryseattle.com

conditioning and heat exchangers in the quiet attic area. Tankless water heaters produce on-demand hot water.

Within the solace of select "residential retreats," Wasner enjoys watching buyers discover stand-alone soaking tubs fill with soothing water drawn from the ceiling.

Each home at The Sanctuary has its own street-level entrance and a shared elevator connection to underground secured parking, where most homes include two spaces wired for electric cars. Select homes enjoy rooftop terraces, some with "commanding views of downtown, facing west toward the stadiums, Elliott Bay, Queen Anne and beyond," says Wasner.

To further connect with the community, The Sanctuary is contributing bricks preserved during its renovation to the planned neighborhood park, which broke ground last weekend at 15th Avenue and East Howell Street. Designed by environmental experts at Mithun Architects, the park will offer a collective garden, a plaza with benches and tree shading, a trellis-sheltered picnic area and an art feature.

Wasner believes many buyers will consider purchasing a historic townhome at The Sanctuary a calling. "While you may find other builders cutting corners to try to save costs, The Sanctuary has maintained its integrity," he says. "Where else are you going to find a home with so much history and so much soul?"