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HOMES E

Homes priced to lure 'fence-sitters'

ANDERSON WALK: At \$559,000, they're 'virtually at break even,' says developer

The facts

What: Anderson Walk, 51 single-family homes with 12 available during the initial release.

Where: 14645 Winter Crescent, South Surrey

Developer: Epta Properties

Builder: Epta Construction

Sizes: Three bedrooms plus den, from 1,661 sq. ft. to 1,854 sq. ft. (excluding unfinished basement of about 800 sq. ft.).

Prices: Starting at \$559,000

Open: Presentation centre and two show homes open Saturday to Thursday, noon to 6 p.m. at 14645 Winter Crescent.

More info: www.andersonwalk.ca

BY LENA SIN
STAFF REPORTER



The craftsman-style homes range in size from 1,600 sq. ft. to 1,800 sq. ft., excluding the unfinished basement, which would provide an extra 800 sq. ft. if completed. PHOTOS BY RIC ERNST — THE PROVINCE

If today's real-estate game is "how low can you go?" then Epta Properties is playing to win.

"Frankly, at \$559,000, it's virtually at break-even. It's an attempt on our part to push those fence-sitters off the fence and on to our side," said Chris Tsakumis, vice-president of Epta Properties.

"Fence-sitters" is Tsakumis' term for those who have been waiting on the sidelines of the property market over the past few years as prices soared year after year. But with the market plunging in late 2008 and early 2009, Epta is now hoping to convince those side-

liners that it's time to buy.

To capture this market, Epta is offering the first 12 home-buyers at Anderson Walk the price of \$559,000. It's a strategy that's changed dramatically from two-and-a-half years ago, when Epta first purchased the site in South Surrey.

Epta initially envisioned Anderson Walk would be comprised of large estate homes priced between the high \$600,000 to low \$700,000 range. Instead, the developer has gone with smaller, single-family homes at

more affordable prices.

"People are looking for affordable product, whether it's in Vancouver or South Surrey. But the quality aspect still has to be there," says Tsakumis. "People want a good deal, but they don't want compromised quality. There's a fine line there as a developer where you have to provide a product that people can afford to get into, especially with interest rates coming down, but still feel good living in."

CONTINUES ON PAGE E2



Buyers can choose between cool and warm colour schemes.



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Family-friendly homes with amenities close by

From Page E1

Epta is hoping Anderson Walk fits the bill for young families and those downsizing.

Located west of Highway 99, and close to golf courses, beaches and a river, the homes are aimed at those looking for a family-friendly lifestyle. While most of the new home development in South Surrey has occurred at Morgan Heights, Tsakumis says the area west of Highway 99 is more established and one he believes will be valued more for its proximity to White Rock.

The location is also close to Crescent Beach and literally on the edge of the Nicomekl River where people frequently kayak.

The craftsman-style homes range in size from 1,600 sq. ft. to 1,800 sq. ft., excluding the unfinished basement, which would provide an extra 800 sq. ft. if completed.

Buyers can choose from six dif-



Granite kitchen counter-tops are standard. RIC ERNST — THE PROVINCE

ferent exterior styles and four colour schemes. Inside, buyers can choose between cool and warm colour schemes and the homes come standard with granite kitchen counter-tops, Kohler finishes in the washrooms and basements that boast nine-foot ceilings.

The homes also come with a small yard, gas hook-up for barbecues, detached garage and cedar-shake roofs. Anderson Walk is Epta's first foray into single-family homes.

While Epta has traditionally focused on commercial real estate,

they moved into the residential market a few years ago, starting with condos in Pitt Meadows.

Tsakumis said it was a natural evolution for a company built on family values.

"One of the things about being a family business is you understand a little bit more what families want," says Tsakumis.

Epta was founded 45 years ago by Tsakumis' father, Bill Tsakumis. Bill is still head of the company and works with his three sons, two daughters and wife.

To date, Anderson Walk has sold five of the 12 homes currently available. More than 200 groups showed up to the grand-opening weekend last week, which Tsakumis says was "very encouraging."

In total, Anderson Walk will comprise 51 single-family homes, with construction occurring as the units are sold. Epta anticipates the entire development will be completed in about two years.

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It's not too late to plant vegetables



Helen Chesnut

GARDENING

Q Am I too late to plant vegetables? We have finally managed to prepare a plot in our new home, and we're keen to grow some of our own food.

A Given a place in the sun and a decently fertile soil, many vegetables can still be planted. This month, plant bush beans, kale, regular broccoli and cauliflower as well as purple sprouting (overwintering) broccoli, winter cauliflower, winter cabbage, carrots, green onions, cucumber transplants, and lettuce seeds or/and transplants.

Carrots and beets for autumn and winter eating are usually sown in early July. Later in July and in early August, cool season greens such as arugula, fall and winter lettuces, mustards, spinach, corn salad, miner's lettuce and cilantro can be seeded. Plant garlic around the third week in September or in early October.

Two excellent references on growing food for fresh harvesting year round are the catalogue from West Coast Seeds (3925 - 64th Street, RR #1, Delta, BC, V4K 3N2. www.westcoastseeds.com) and Linda Gilkeson's Year-Around Harvest: Winter Gardening on the Coast, available from West Coast Seeds and also from Salt Spring Seeds (Box 444, Ganges, Salt Spring Island, BC, V8K 2W1. www.saltspringseeds.com).

Q I planted broad beans for the first time early this spring. It looks as though I'll have a nice crop, and I want to enjoy them fully. What are your favourite ways of preparing them?

A Broad (fava) beans are delicious simply steamed tender, rolled in butter and dusted with freshly grated salt and pepper. Broad beans go beautifully with lemon and garlic. A traditional dish combines freshly steamed favas with olive oil, freshly squeezed lemon juice and two crushed cloves of garlic, served with parsley and hard boiled eggs. Cooked favas mashed together with chopped onion and tomato, feta cheese, oil, lemon juice and cumin makes a tasty dip, cracker spread or pita bread filling.

Hot tubs could land owners in hot water



Tony Gioventu

CONDO SMARTS

Dear Condo Smarts: We live in a townhouse complex of 48 units.

Each unit has its own private backyard and patio area, with fences dividing each unit from its neighbours. The fourth side of the yards are not fenced, so someone can walk into our backyard.

Two owners have decided to

install hot tubs in their backyards, without the permission of council and now we are being plagued with complaints from all the other owners. Council has sent these two owners a letter advising they needed permission to alter the common property and, as they did not receive permission in advance, they must remove them at once.

One of the owners went to a lawyer and we've received a letter advising that the bylaws don't prohibit hot tubs, therefore we have nothing to enforce.

What can we do?

— A Strata Council in Okanagan Valley

Dear Strata Council: Adding additional furniture or portable items to areas adjacent to a townhouse that may be for exclusive

use is not always a violation of the bylaws. Before you can enforce the bylaws, you need to know what is the property designation affected, what bylaw is being violated, and what are the remedies.

In your townhouse complex, like many, the building exterior is common property. The backyard is partially common property in the grass area, and the patio areas are limited common property.

While your bylaws do not prohibit the use of portable hot tubs, garden sheds, barbecues or patio furniture, they do expressly require that any alteration to common property must be first approved in writing by the strata corporation before the owner can proceed.

Both of the hot tubs installed required new 220V electrical ser-

vices, drains and a gas line. These items did require written permission from the strata council and some required building permits. In this area the strata corporation has the ability to enforce the bylaws, and may consider a number of remedies, including the removal of the hot tubs if the owners do not co-operate.

In addition, nuisance complaints such as noise can still be enforced against the owners if a neighbour is being disturbed by the noise of pumps to the extent that is set out in your bylaws. If you don't want hot tubs in your strata, adopt a bylaw that prohibits hot tubs.

Tony Gioventu is executive director of the Condominium Home Owners' Association. E-mail tony@choa.bc.ca

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