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NEW IN HOMIES & CONDOS

SATURDAY, AUGUST 5, 2017 SECTION H

> HOW WE LIVE

Getting in on the ground floor

Affordable, family-sized condos and green features in the works for Westwood Gardens, Richmond Hill

JONATHAN FORANI
SPECIAL TO THE STAR

Yun Zhu has had it with rush-hour traffic.

The 29-year-old HVAC designer has wanted a place of her own for years while commuting to work in Richmond Hill from her rented home in East York — and occasionally from her parents' place in Innisfil after a weekend visit.

And while the perks of living in the city served her well in her 20s, Zhu is eager to say goodbye to one aggravating factor: the commute.

"Traffic is really bad," she says. It takes her about an hour on average to get from her place near The Danforth to her offices at Hwy. 404 and 16th Ave. It's a similar commute from her family's home, just south of Barrie.

But, for Zhu, it's the beginning of an end to commuting, and also the start of her new venture as homeowner.

She will move into the Westwood Gardens development in Richmond Hill, set for occupancy in 2020. The new project, by builder Collecdev, will feature two towers of 15 storeys near Hwy. 407 and Yonge St. As well, it's close to the Richmond Hill GO train and bus station.

It's not just the short commute that attracted Zhu; her career and professional interests were also drawn to the development's geothermal heating and cooling system, by Diverso Energy.

"It's very sustainable," says Zhu. Her work designing HVAC systems is for large-scale commercial projects, which can't efficiently use geothermal systems meant for smaller residential developments — such as Westwood Gardens — and individual homes.

The underground system uses polyethylene pipes to harness energy from below ground to heat in winter, and return heat to the ground for cooling in summer. Geothermal systems, while not new, are part of Collecdev's mission to create a sustainable community.

"We thought, really, it's our responsibility as city builders," says the company's president, Maurice Wager. "The geothermal system reduces the carbon footprint of the building by over 70 per cent than if the same building were to be designed with a conventional heating and cooling system."

The system will have great benefit to residents like Zhu as well, he says.

CONDO continued on H5



VINCE TALOTTA/TORONTO STAR

Homebuyer Yun Zhu meets with Collecdev president Maurice Wager at the site where Westwood Gardens will be built.



COURTESY COLLECDEV

Designed by Kirkor Architects, Westwood Gardens will include 370 condo units in two, 15-storey towers.



COLLECDEV

A rooftop lounge is designed with focused conversation and dining areas.



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Dual towers share eco-friendly amenities

CONDO from H1

The heating and cooling system is not the only eco-friendly project at Westwood Gardens, which will also include a rainwater car wash station. Slightly larger than a traditional parking spot, the station will use water collected from roofs, terraces and any areas on the ground floor where there is no vehicular traffic.

The car wash is one of the many features that will be shared between the two Westwood Gardens towers and is among the amenities designed by Tomas Pearce Interior Design.

"The first thing that came to mind in conversation with Collecdev was they very much want to build a community," says Brian Woodrow, of Tomas Pearce design.

In the east tower, interior design at the entrance will see wood-timber features, steel accents at the concierge desk and an artwork gallery. A fitness "program" on the tower's main floor includes a basketball half-court, weightlifting gym and a co-ed sauna. On the eighth floor, plans call for a "multipurpose lounge" with kitchenette and catering service.

The west tower will continue the design style of the east, but with a more "hotel-like" feel, says Woodrow. A tech lounge will offer residents a place to gather for conversation, business meetings and connect



VINCE TALOTTA/TORONTO STAR

"They use all the space, they don't waste," says buyer Yun Zhu, whose new home costs around \$500,000.

to Wi-Fi. The adjacent media lounge with a large theatre screen provides an opportunity to watch live events. The fitness program in the west tower is cardio-focused with treadmills, stationary bikes, and a yoga studio.

It's a development that Collecdev president Wager hopes will be the foundation that residents will truly build upon to create their homes.

That livable design also attracted Zhu, though she will be living in a

smaller 690-square-foot, one-bedroom suite.

"They use all the space, they don't waste," says Zhu, whose new home costs around \$500,000. And though the building won't be completed for about 2½ years, Zhu says she's glad to have the time to prepare. "I don't have much money right now to purchase a condo that is already built," she says. She is paying the deposit for her condo on a payment plan.



COURTESY COLLECDEV

> WESTWOOD GARDENS CONDOMINIUMS

Builder: Collecdev
Architect: Kirkor Architects
Interiors: Tomas Pearce Interior Design Consulting Inc.
Landscape: Land Art Design
Location: 8868 Yonge St.
Building: Two towers, 15 storeys, 370 units
Suites: 480 sq. ft. to 1,500 sq. ft.
Pricing: From \$288,990 to \$1 million
Occupancy: Fall 2020



COURTESY COLLECDEV

"The majority of our project is focused around two-bedroom and three-bedroom units that allow for the spaces to be livable," Collecdev president Maurice Wager says. The two-tower development will share amenities and common spaces, including a landscaped courtyard.

> CONDO LAW

Fitting two vehicles in one parking spot?



Gerry Hyman

My unit has one parking spot which is large enough for my car and my motorcycle. The manager advises that I must remove one since the declaration refers to a parking spot for "a" motorized vehicle. The board interprets "a" to mean one. If there's room, is it not reasonable that I be allowed to park both vehicles?

You may be correct that parking both vehicles is reasonable. A declaration prohibition, however, need not be reasonable in order to be enforceable. "A" motorized vehicle indicates one vehicle only.

My neighbour across the hall is a heavy smoker. The smoke enters my unit and is affecting my health. Management has said there is nothing that they or the corporation can do. Is that correct?

No. The Condominium Act requires the corporation to enforce the Act. Section 117 of the Act prohibits any activity in a unit or common elements that is likely to cause injury to an individual. That includes injury to a person's health. A court action could be commenced pursuant to Section 134 of the Act requesting an order that the corporation take the required steps to enforce Section 117.

Alternatively, the court could be requested to order stopping the smoke, an established carcinogen, to escape to other units or to the common elements, constituting a health risk contrary to Section 117.

Two years after we bought our unit, a loud humming noise began — apparently from the garbage room below our unit. We have been told that the noise is

from a large fan that was recently hooked up and that nothing can be done about it. Is that true?

The garbage room fan, if operating correctly, should not be so noisy as to prevent the proper use of your unit. If that is the case, necessary repair or replacement of the fan is the obligation of the condominium corporation.

You may be correct that parking both vehicles is reasonable. A declaration prohibition, however, need not be reasonable in order to be enforceable

The board has sent notices to owners that it needs entry for security staff and a plumber to inspect for leaks in pipes and to install a water conservation device on each toilet.

There are no leaks from my plumbing and I have water-saving, dual flush toilets. Can I refuse entry?

Section 19 of the Condominium Act permits entry at a reasonable time, on reasonable notice, by the corporation — or a person authorized by it — to perform the duties of the corporation or to exercise its powers. I am of the opinion that in the absence of evidence of a leak from your unit, entry to inspect for an unknown leak is not within the objects, duties or powers of the corporation.

Similarly, there is no object, duty or power of the corporation enabling the corporation to replace or alter a unit component such as a toilet. I believe that the entry notice does not comply with Section 19 of the act and is not valid.

Lawyer **Gerry Hyman** is a former president of the Canadian Condominium Institute and author of Condominium Handbook. Send questions to gerry@gerryhyman.com or fax to his attention at 416-925-8492.



DREAMSTIME

One reader has a building manager who won't allow a car and a motorcycle in the same parking spot.

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