

HOME/REAL ESTATE

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SECTION 1

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A busy market feeds a trend for these appealing attached homes

BY ELIZABETH RHODES
Seattle Times staff reporter

When building contractor Martha Rose found two adjacent rat-infested rental houses "that hadn't been maintained in 30 years," she had no qualms about tearing them down.

The next issue was what to build in their place. One mammoth luxury house? The land, across from the Seattle Golf & Country Club in North Seattle, would certainly support that.

Instead, Rose thought smaller, but not small. And attached, but not apartments or condominiums. Rather Rose joined other builders in constructing what shows signs of becoming a trend in local home building.

On the West Coast, she built a decidedly East Coast type of housing: town houses. Seven of them in two buildings on her corner parcel of property. (The fact that something came down so something else could go up is an in-city trend, too, that's propelling a little bit of a building boom.)

"A lot of the smaller to medium-size builders who do work in the city of Seattle are essentially taking down single-family houses and putting up town houses, which achieves some of the density that Seattle needs to achieve," confirms

Tim Attebery, who tracks Seattle building trends for a trade group, the Master Builders Association of King & Snohomish Counties.

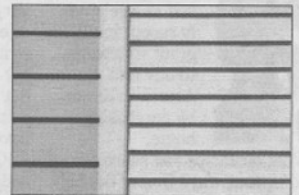
"The builders are reacting to the market. The market wants these town houses," Attebery adds.

Indeed the area may be having only a modest building boom, but "we are in a selling boom; the sales this year for new construction are about 35 percent above what they were for last year," reports Suzanne Britsch, citing a statistic that includes all types of housing construction. "It's also true that more town houses are being built."

Britsch, president of the real-estate consulting firm Real Vision Research, defines a town house as a ground-related unit that's attached to another unit. Many are two story, however no one lives above or below. Some have small, private "patio" yards.

Additionally, there can be different types of ownership. A town house can be "fee simple, meaning you own the land and the structure from the inside (of the unit) out," Britsch explains. Or it "can be a condominium where you don't own the land, but you do own the airspace within the dwelling unit."

Because there are no big chunks of raw land left in Seattle, most town house developments are small, making it easy for their growing presence to slip below the



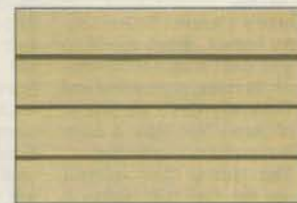
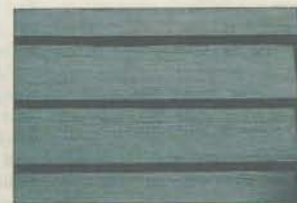
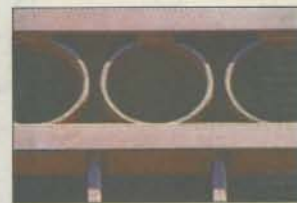
Close-up details show some of the different materials, colors and textures Rose incorporated in the Fairway View project.



Builder and developer
Martha Rose.

PLEASE SEE **Town houses** ON I 2

Going to town houses



To give the Fairway View Townhomes some of the character of individual houses, builder-developer Martha Rose painted the exteriors a palate of vibrant colors. She also varied the rooflines and entries.

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