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NewHomes

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FIFTEEN TWENTY-ONE SECOND AVENUE | seattle

All-glass condo tower creates 'a sculpture for living'

Many words have been used to describe Fifteen Twenty-One Second Avenue, ranging from "sleek" to "transformative." Architectural critic Lawrence Cheek calls it "a crisp, clean building ... with magic pleats and 'pop-outs,' and with the balcony issue neatly resolved with indoor solariums."

The downtown Seattle condominium tower, which stands 440 feet above Pike Place Market, is largely the design product of Blaine Weber, director of the High-Rise/Urban Projects Design Studio at the Seattle architecture firm Weber Thompson.

The 143 units at Fifteen Twenty-One Second Avenue are now 75 percent sold. During the process of designing Fifteen Twenty-One Second Avenue, Weber became a resident, too.

"Our clients directed us to design a sophisticated high-rise residential tower with a real 'Seattle sensibility,'" says Weber. "Our clients wanted an elegant yet understated tower design that would harmonize with its historic location and would also grace the Seattle skyline. To that end, my personal objective was to help create a building of its own time — an innovative, state-of-the-art tower that would make a definitive design statement — but not too bold,



View these homes

Open 11 a.m.-6 p.m. daily or by appointment at 1521 Second Ave., between Pike and Pine streets in downtown Seattle

Prices

From the low \$1 millions

Information

206-443-1521 or fifteentwentyone.com

because that is not what Seattle is about.

"The playful, angular and curvilinear geometry, the faceted façades and the bold sculptural elements of this tower are — more than anything else — the result of strategically pushing and pulling on the façades in an effort to create great living units so each has stellar views of Elliott Bay. The result is an all-glass building that many have called 'a sculpture for living,'" he says.

Weber says Fifteen Twenty-One Second Avenue was designed without the traditional terraces that can clutter a tower's façade. Such high-rise balconies "are rarely used in Seattle, thanks to our windy and rainy weather," he says.

The solution was to create internal solariums with bifold

windows that open at deck-railling height. Known as the “Glass Room,” these indoor-outdoor rooms typically include a fireplace and can be used year-round.

Weber says he’s toured dozens of homes in the building and has seen Glass Rooms used as an open-air dinette off the kitchen, a music room, a reading room and a daylight art studio.

“The ‘see forever’ views of this project are made possible by avoiding the letterboxing effect that results from terrace projections or any up-turned or down-turned beams,” says Weber. “Our unique structural design, combined with the

unmatched quantity of vision glass, offers spectacular wrap-around vistas and fantastic light in all the homes.”

The developer at Fifteen Twenty-One Second Avenue acquired view easements over existing buildings to the west to ensure bay vistas would never be blocked by future development. Weber Thompson architects then set out to create a water view from every home.

“People don’t believe this is possible until they tour the project and see how it was accomplished with some very creative geometry and a favorable street grid,” says Weber.

There are three to five homes per floor. Average floor



plans measure 1,946 square feet, which Weber says feels like a penthouse on every level.

“Judging from the very positive comments that I hear from other city dwellers and

fellow homeowners, people seem to like the way the tower responds to its neighborhood context and the skyline — that is a good feeling,” he says.