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Capital Living

THE APPEAL OF 'LOCK-AND-LEAVE' LIVING

by *Tonie Auer*

In an area like Washington, D.C., where many high-profile executives, politicians and diplomats live and work, homebuyers often look for “lock-and-leave” living in full-service buildings. It’s more than just a convenience, because many owners need discretion and additional safety measures — concepts that resonate with high-net-worth individuals, Millennials and empty-nesters alike, who often want the same freedom in their lives. They want simplicity and personal attention from a full-time, on-site professional staff as well as controlled-access doors, garage entrances and elevators.

“In most cosmopolitan cities, residents want to be in an urban environment near shops, restaurants and the theater; they want to experience the excitement and nightlife of the city, but also expect to travel at will and on impulse,” says Mei-Mei Venners, real estate broker and director of sales and marketing for developer Eastbanc. “They want to lock their front door and not have to worry about their city condo. They want it all.”

A STEP BEYOND CONCIERGE

For people who like to travel, projects like The Mather Lifeways, a proposed life plan community at 7929 Westpark Drive in Tysons Corner, designed for residents age 62 or older, provides that lock-and-leave lifestyle.

“We defy expectations of what senior living is supposed to be. While

many homeowner associations and condominiums tout their lock-and-leave lifestyle, living in a life plan community takes that lifestyle to a new level that supports aging well,” says Mary Leary, The Mather LifeWays president and CEO. “Life plan communities provide an important benefit: a continuum of living options, which enables people to plan ahead to access additional services, including health care, if ever needed.”

Like many luxury condos and residences, The Mather Lifeways will take care of maintenance and housekeeping services, as well as collecting or forwarding packages and mail. They can also handle coordination of pet care for residents, if requested, she says. It is targeted to open in 2023 with construction anticipated to begin in 2020.



Jeff Sauer

The distinctive cantilevered glass façade at The Westlight condominium residences.

“Our community in Tucson, Arizona, has many residents who like to travel during the hot summer months to enjoy cooler climates elsewhere. They leave with confidence, knowing that everything is still being taken care of at home, even when they’re not there,” Leary says.

The Mather Lifeways in Tysons is within easy reach of Dulles International Airport and Ronald Reagan Airport, and public transportation is within walking distance. “The site is located on one of the most attractive streets in Tysons within a convenient two- to three-block walking distance to many restaurants, upscale grocery stores, the Metro, and an abundance of luxury and necessity retail. This area also features comprehensive health care services and many universities,” she says.

WHITE-GLOVE TREATMENT

Service is bumped up another notch at The Westlight (developed by Eastbanc), a high-end luxury condo project located in the heart of D.C.’s West End between 23rd and 24th at L Street. Delivered in October 2017 with residents scheduled to move in by the end of the year, the build-

ing has 71 units and is about 70 percent occupied.

“We have a 24-hour front desk concierge, plus a doorman. But that next layer is the difference. We have a porter to run errands for residents inside and outside of our building. For example, if a resident is ill and needs a prescription picked up at the local pharmacy, our porter will run this errand. Or if one of our busy residents realizes on the way home that it is their wedding anniversary, a simple call to our staff and the porter will have a bottle of champagne and flowers ready by the time he or she pulls into the garage,” she says.

Adding to this next layer is an in-unit services maintenance program. This program is designed for those homeowners who may have multiple homes, who travel or who have busy work schedules and prefer not to worry about remembering or scheduling routine maintenance, such as changing HVAC filters or checking tubs, showers, and sinks for caulking, Venners says. If a resident is on extended travel or spending the winter at their home in the islands, a caretaker can check on their unit while they are away.