



## The Cedars — buzzing with activity

**The Cedars, a long-neglected neighborhood just south of downtown, is poised to become Dallas' next exciting development area.**

At least, that's what Dallas outsiders believe.

The Cedars has attracted some residential development heavyweights, including Jack Matthews of Matthews Southwest, a Canadian developer who converted the old Sears building into Southside on Lamar and is building the Beat condominiums.

The Urban Land Institute with offices in Washington, D.C., sponsored a contest this month for teams of graduate students to come up with a vision for how to develop The Cedars. A team from the University of Pennsylvania won the \$50,000 prize by proposing a new plan that featured mixed uses of land, including flex loft/commercial buildings that could be used for both work and living.

Keeping a close watch on the contest and on all development in



Photos by Aeneas Ford

**Zad Roumaya is one of the out-of-town real estate developers who believe that The Cedars neighborhood south of downtown Dallas has enormous potential. His 49-unit Buzz condominiums has only seven units left.**

Roumaya turned a vacant lot once owned by several Dallas families into a successful residential building.

"I am the little guy skiing behind the big guys' boats," Mr. Roumaya says of Mr. Matthews and others active in The Cedars.

Mr. Roumaya recently bought his fourth property

in The Cedars.

He sat through an entire day of presentations by the graduate students at the ULI competition, looking for a vision of how The Cedars might be developed.

"The Cedars is the area of Dallas with the hottest potential over the next few years," Mr. Roumaya says.

But he laments that there is no one in Dallas with a vision for what this area — so close to down-

town and full of potential — might become.

The ULI chose The Cedars for its nationwide competition because, in the words of senior vice president Gayle Berens, "Being so close to downtown and other activities, it seems like a logical place for development to go."

Mr. Roumaya came to The Cedars in the late 1990s looking for space for an art studio. Not your typical real estate developer, he designs and produces metal and aluminum sculptures, pen and ink drawings, acrylic renderings and architectural art, and he writes poetry.

After a few years in his studio, he took an interest in a neighboring piece of dirt as another blank canvas.

"I broke all the rules of development. I bought the land without any real idea what I was going to do with it," Mr. Roumaya says.

What he decided to do was "sculpt" the Buzz, a dense, modern building that has attracted young, urban pioneers who like living in and near downtown.

Completed in early 2007, the Buzz has been very successful. There are only seven units left, priced from \$170,000 to \$220,000 and offering 814 to 1,081 square feet of living space.

The Buzz, a prototype for the development the competing graduate students called for, was

built to exacting environmental standards.

Because it is well-insulated and takes advantage of shade from upper balconies, the units use much less electricity than typical condominium buildings.

A common breezeway on each floor is designed to pull air through it, keeping the breezeway cool without air conditioning. Each unit features an energy-efficient garage-type door that serves as a window, which can be pulled up to allow breezes in. And each owner is given a \$1,500, pollutant-free Moped. The owners ride them to shop at the Urban Market and visit the art museums where they have free memberships. One owner uses his bike to walk his dog.

Mr. Roumaya's company is aptly called Change Chamber because he is a big fan of change, he says.

Developing the potential of The Cedars, he believes, is still a challenge, although the vibrancy of the area has increased significantly, he says.

The name Buzz came to him when he was telling his wife, Heather, he thought the condominiums would sell because the owners would enjoy being "a part of the downtown quick buzz."

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### TUCKER HILL

## Community hosts Spring Market and model launch

**Tucker Hill also will be sponsoring the Spring 2008 Parade of Homes.**

and Darling Homes, as well as Tucker Hill's Founder's Square.

In addition to the giveaway model tours, John Deere

been working closely with the Home Builders Association of Greater Dallas, participating builders, local contractors and

have a designated area to show off their latest and greatest products. To learn more about times, sponsors and how to purchase tickets,





# The Dallas Morning News

## The buzz hits sales mark

The buzz condominium development has 70 percent of its units under contract at 50 percent completion, hitting its sales objectives, David Griffin of David Griffin & Co. Realtors, broker for developer Change Chamber Development, says.

The buzz, a new development in The Cedars, "is a new type of offering and people are responding," Mr. Griffin says. Pricing for one- and two-bedroom residences are from the \$162,800 to \$237,800.

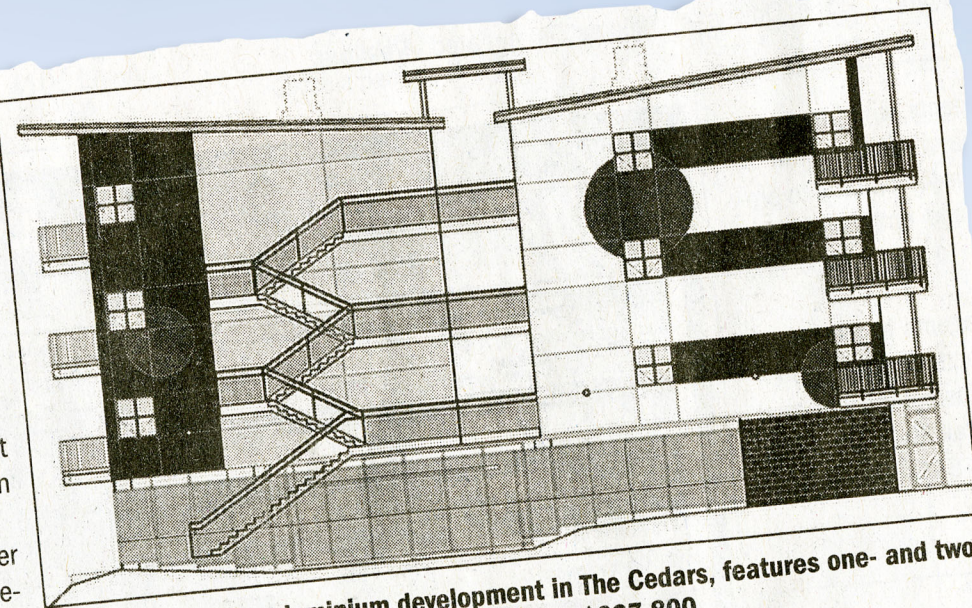
"I purchased at buzz because I truly feel that it has a great product to offer. It's not a high rise. It's not an apartment conversion. It has its own personality. It will turn heads and attract some really interesting people," Michael Kies says.

Another owner, Richard Schwiner, agrees. "I wasn't even in the market, but after previewing buzz with some clients, I was so inspired by the developer's vision to create this eco-friendly, affordable and architecturally unique concept that I put a contract on a downtown-facing loft the next day."

Another buyer, Thomas Anderson, says he has been watching new residential developments around downtown for several years. "If the right one at the right price came along, I would make a move. Then came buzz."

Melissa Toman says she loves the special touches like the artwork of the sunrises on each balcony at the Buzz. "I am a detail person, and these things mean a lot. The best part is that I can afford this unique and amazing place."

As buyer Christian Chernock says, "If the Cedars is the next Uptown, this could be the smartest purchase of my life."



**The buzz, a new condominium development in The Cedars, features one- and two-bedroom residences priced from \$162,800 to \$237,800.**

Of the 49 dwellings at the buzz, 15 remain. "With completion in February 2007, now is the time to come by and visit our sales center," Jenni Stolarski, co-listing agent with Carolyn Sacks, says.

The buzz offers tours every day by appointment at the sales center at 1201 S. Akard.

For more information, visit [www.davidgriffin.com](http://www.davidgriffin.com) or call Ms. Stolarski 972-248-5733 or Ms. Sacks at 972-733-5207.