

CONDO LIVING

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New building is “triumph of optimism over pessimism”

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SPECIAL TO THE STAR

Celebrating the topping off of a new building days after the tragic destruction of other buildings in New York is an act of optimism and nothing to feel awkward about, Gary Switzer said recently.

Switzer, executive vice-president of Great Gulf Homes, and two dozen celebrants were on the top floor of The Morgan, a 16-storey condominium being built in the heart of Toronto’s fashion district on Spadina Ave. at Richmond St.

“How can we celebrate in a world filled with such pain and sorrow,” asked Switzer.

“And yet we do have something to celebrate today, and it’s not just this particular building on this particular corner in this particular city,” he went on. “We are builders and many people here today are involved in what is called the building business, as constructors, as designers, as writers, as planners.

“Though we tend to be blasé and even cynical about our role in society, construction and building are the manifestation of a civilization’s values and aspirations.

“Is not building and dedicating a building today the ultimate act of optimism? What I believe we are celebrating today is this triumph of optimism over pessimism, of hope over despair, of creation over destruction,” said Switzer, an architect and project manager for The Morgan.

The art deco building, finished with polished stone and yellow brick, was designed by a team from Quadrangle Architects headed by Les Klein. It sits on the northwest corner of the Spadina/Richmond intersection and Paul Bedford, Toronto’s chief planner who attended the celebration, said the new residence will be bringing new life to the lower Spadina neighbourhood.

The floors in the 16-storey building start stepping back after the 11th floor and the topping off ceremony was hosted amid the bare concrete walls of what will be a three-storey penthouse suite with more than 5,000 square feet.

Sandra Frassen, sales manager at Great Gulf, said many of

the purchasers of the 217 units at The Morgan are young professionals aged 25 to 30. Realtor Pat Baker said a handful of suites remain, ranging in size from 615 square feet to 2,390 square feet with prices running from \$170,900 to \$684,00.

Frassen said Great Gulf is offering a bonus of an \$8,000 stainless-steel kitchen appliance package with the remaining suites. The sales office is across the street on the southwest corner of the intersection.

Switzer said the design of The Morgan was intended to blend the old manufacturing nature of the neighbourhood with its new role as a street offering both a place to live and a place to work.

He said it was a vision of Bedford’s to create one of Toronto’s most vibrant, dynamic areas in what had been a declining manufacturing district.

Across Spadina, residents are moving into the new District Lofts, a 14-storey condo designed by Peter Clewes of Architects Alliance and developed by Context Developments Inc.

