

Dumping site transformed into Rosedale area home

By Dawn Bormann, *The Kansas City Star*

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When builders visualized the largest redevelopment project in modern Rosedale area history, no one expected to carve 11 feet of trash from one lot before uncovering virgin soil.

The property at 3829 Minnie St., Kansas City, Kan., once was considered one of the area's worst illegal dumping grounds. Now, however, the address has turned into a benchmark for Rosedale's revitalization efforts, after several groups worked together to construct \$129,900 arts and crafts-style residence on the site.

And this is just the beginning, Rosedale leaders and developers promised Wednesday, when they unveiled the Minnie Street home. Two similar homes already have sold, and developers are confident that the home on Minnie will be next.

The home is part of a \$20 million redevelopment project that would bring about 120 homes near the University of Kansas Hospital and the 39th Street corridor.

The rocky terrain, abandoned lots and dump sites all along the wooded bluffs in the area long have prevented developers from investing there. A partnership among the Rosedale Development Association, City Vision Ministries (two nonprofit organizations) and the Unified Government of Wyandotte County and Kansas City, Kan., was responsible for the project. Ground was broken in June.

The Unified Government provided tax-increment financing for substantial infrastructure improvements in a 24-acre area in and around the project.

The nonprofit groups provided the financial backing necessary to fuel the project. Without that assistance, the development would have been unthinkable, said John Harvey, executive director of City Vision Ministries. He said that just excavating and filling the lot at the Minnie Street address cost about \$30,000.

"It's part of the reason it's been sitting here and no developers wanted to come in," Harvey said.

The redevelopment project is divided into two phases. The first, Rainbow Park Gateway, will consist of 10 new town homes and 10 single-family homes, including the residence on Minnie. Vacant lots and substandard houses will be replaced with homes priced from \$129,000 to \$145,000. The second phase, Mission Cliffs, would include 60 town homes and 40 single-family homes. The price range would be \$150,000 to \$200,000.

As homes are demolished and lots cleared in the neighborhood, developers have tried their best to retain the charm of Rosedale homes. The Minnie Street home got praise from several neighbors recently, including Unified Government Mayor Carol Marinovich, who lives in the Rosedale area.

"You can tell it's a new home, but it fits in so well," Marinovich said of the exterior architecture.

Developers said they wanted to make sure that the new homes blend in with existing ones to keep the neighborhood's tight-knit feel.

"We want them (existing residents) to stay; we don't want to destroy the community," said Wendy Wilson, executive director of the Rosedale Development Association.

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