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Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Local Builders See Green

Smart green home enters San Francisco housing market

San Francisco, CA – July 14, 2003 – Local builder Lorax Development, LLC will begin marketing a new “green” home this August. Rebuilt from the ground up, the beautiful 3-bedroom home in the Mission District/Valencia Corridor features the latest environmental building materials and smart technologies – and uses solar energy to power and heat the home to take full advantage of the sunny Mission neighborhood.

Located in a quiet cul-de-sac at the edge of Noe Valley in the Valencia Corridor, Lorax Development used solar power, radiant heating in the floors and a whole house fan to make this an extremely energy efficient home. The Mission District is the ideal neighborhood for solar power. When the fog rolls in and takes over the rest of the city, it’s still sunny and warm in the Mission. Solar is the ideal energy solution – it’s clean, readily available and once installed, solar power is free.

“PG&E uses net metering,” says Lorax partner Joel Micucci. “On sunny days, the meter actually spins backwards, and we put energy back into the grid. At night, power is drawn from the grid as usual and the meter spins forward. You are billed once a year for your “net” energy usage. But we expect this house will be energy self-sufficient, providing cost savings for many years.”

Lorax Development’s mission is to build green and to build smart. By definition a green building is designed to minimize the total environmental impact of its materials, construction, operation and deconstruction.

“It’s an approach you can use to design, build or remodel a home or building. It’s healthier to live and work in, uses energy and resources more efficiently and employs materials that are gentler on the environment,” says Mike Kerwin, partner. “It’s more expensive to build this way, but we’re betting that San Franciscans will share our values.”

In addition to green building products such as fiber cement siding, recycled and engineered lumber and TREX decking, the house also utilizes metal stud framing, low VOC paints, caulks and low-gas carpets.

“We’ve tried to substitute environmentally friendlier products at every stage of the building process,” says Pat Loughran, partner. “We hope that green building becomes commonplace. Costs will come down, materials will be more readily available and technologies will continue to improve.”

Not only is the home environmentally friendly, but also it is technologically smart. The home features Cat5 wiring throughout the house for cable TV and computer networking, and a whole house audio system with ceiling speakers and volume controls in every room. A video security system allows one to view and speak to visitors before opening the door.

Green Features:

- Photovoltaic (solar) system - produces electricity to provide whole house power
- Radiant floor heating – hydronic heating with solar-heated water (25- 40% more efficient)
- Ten skylights throughout main floor minimize the need for “electrical lighting” and keep the home light and bright.
- Bamboo flooring throughout. An abundant and renewable resource, bamboo does not require replanting when harvested. Mature bamboo has an extensive root system that continues to send up new shoots for decades.
- Solar heated water
- Fiber Cement siding
- Engineered lumber and new TREX composite wood fencing
- Metal stud framing
- Recycled lumber
- High volume fly ash concrete - The manufacture of Portland cement accounts for 6 to 7% of the CO₂ that humans produce, adding the greenhouse gas equivalent of 330 million cars driving 12,500 miles per year. But by adding fly ash (at ~ 25% volume), a waste by-product of coal-fired power plants, to the concrete creates a stronger, more durable product and reduces concrete's environmental impact considerably.
- whole house fan – provides cooling and total air turnover

Smart Features

- Stereo speaker system with speaker controls in every room
- Laptop plug in stereo jacks in kitchen
- Cat5 wiring throughout (cable, phone, internet)
- Front door video security system

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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