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73 UNITS The Livmor, on Frederick Douglass Boulevard and West 115th Street, is scheduled to open in January.

Momentum in South Harlem

By IRWIN ARIEFF

A second luxury condo, the Livmor (livmor.com), with 73 units and the same 25-year tax abatement, is due to open officially in January at 301 West 115th Street.

“We have had a great deal of interest, even before the printing of the offering plan,” said Dawn Tsien, an executive vice president at Prudential Douglas Elliman, which is handling sales for the Livmor.

It will offer one-, two- and three-bedroom apartments from 808 to 2,100 square feet and priced from the mid \$400,000s to \$1.1 million or \$1.2 million, some with private roof terraces. Amenities will include a yoga studio, a media room with projection TV, a children’s play space and a kitchen for catered events.

“I consider the Frederick Douglass Boulevard corridor to be an extension of the Upper West Side at this point,” Ms. Tsien said. “Many years ago, some people said you couldn’t go above 68th Street, and now it is even above 125th Street.”

Ms. Tien described potential buyers at the Douglass and for Harlem in general as “people who are perhaps priced out of the Upper West Side. It is like any emerging neighborhood,” she said. “People have been moving to these various areas because of the attraction of the size of the apartments and the affordability of the product.”

The Douglass and the Livmor join condominiums like SOHA 118 at 301 West 118th Street. SOHA 118 (soha118.com) is a 15-story building with 91 apartments ranging from one- to four-bedrooms. The building opened its doors in early 2008 and about two-thirds of its market-rate units have so far sold.

The emerging luxury market is drawing almost every category of potential buyer, agents said, including families, young professionals, single women, gay couples and empty-nesters seeking to move back into the city.

“There are probably 15 or 20 new condo or co-op buildings that have popped up between 110th and 125th along Frederick Douglass Boulevard in the past six or seven years,” said Eric McLendon, a senior sales associate at Corcoran. “It is good for the neighborhood and it’s good for buyers as well, and the spring market is poised to be a big one.

Any buyer that comes up here is going to spend much less than in other parts of the city and get more, and these luxury buildings are attracting a wider audience.”

“Harlem Guy,” a blogger at HarlemCondoLife.com, a Web site dedicated to “all that’s great about Harlem,” calls southern Harlem “truly spectacular.”

“You have new condos, new stores and new restaurants springing up,” he said in a telephone interview, concealing his real name, he explained, to ensure that he and his fellow bloggers can write honestly.

“It takes just half an hour to get home from Midtown by cab or train, and it’s a true melting pot, just what New York is meant to be. If you’re a local, you may feel priced out or unhappy over all the recent real estate activity. But from what I see and hear, there is plenty of room for everyone in Harlem; it’s a huge piece of New York.”

(Excerpt)

