

Efficient parking

'Green' is driving force for condominium projects in Chelsea

CHELSEA If Linda Plano buys a loft condo at Forbes Park in Chelsea, she'll probably have to leave her Volkswagen GTI behind.

It won't fit in the parking spaces.

Forbes Park developers plan to stock their main lot with a fleet of two-seat, fuel-efficient cars that are just 8 feet long — and available on demand for residents.

"I would look to make sure there's room for groceries," Plano said of the Daimler-Chrysler-manufactured Smart cars being marketed as an amenity at the Chelsea project. "Assuming that it's affordable, then this is a great idea."

It's one of the eco-friendly features being offered at the 225-unit project where condos start at \$250,000.

And it highlights what industry observers say is an emerging style of residential development: going green.

The rising costs of fuel has put increased emphasis on efforts to be energy efficient. Sales of sport utility vehicles are down, while hybrids are more popular than ever.

It's not just fuel-efficient



CHITOSE SUZUKI/AP

JAMES BILL, project manager of Urban Design Development Corp., rides a Smart Car at the Forbes Industrial Park, a condo development site in Chelsea. Forbes Park developers plan to stock their main lot with a fleet of two-seat, fuel-efficient cars that are just 8-feet long and available on demand for residents.

vehicles that are being featured at housing complexes.

The Davis Square Lofts in Somerville, built by the Forbes Park developers, capture and re-use storm water, and extensive ventilation is designed to make air conditioning unnecessary. They include "sky walk" hallways,

which eliminate the need for interior lighting.

At Chelsea's Forbes Park, the home of a former printing plant along two creeks that flow into Boston Harbor, three buildings will be razed to make way for canals, a dock will be built in hopes of a water taxi to

Boston, and there will be 106 parking spaces designed to snugly accommodate Smart cars that get 60 miles to the gallon and top out at 37 mph. Regular-sized parking spaces also will be built, but the Smart cars get the best location.

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