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First Residents Move onto Former Asarco Site
Stack Hill's first residents move in

RUSTON, Wash.— It has been well over a century since the public has had access to this prime view property located in the Town of Ruston. The smelter, which originated in the late 1800's, has been undergoing demolition and clean up over the last 20 years. Now a new chapter has officially started – Stack Hill's first residents have moved in. Polly & Bill Blankenship are now living on the property that once was the site of the historic Asarco smelter stack. The couple moved in last month after the completion of their custom rambler.

The Blankenships were the first to purchase a lot on Stack Hill and have eagerly awaited the completion of their custom home. After researching many other places to live over the past several years, the Blankenships settled on Stack Hill for its views, neighborhood, infrastructure, and the ability to build a custom home to fit their lifestyle. When asked what they like most about living on Stack Hill, "The view is at the top of the list. We'd been looking for a north facing view that doesn't look directly at the sun and finally found that in Stack Hill," says Bill Blankenship, a retired Weyerhaeuser executive.

Stack Hill reclaims the property where the 562-foot Asarco smelter stack once stood. The structure was demolished in 1993 and the land has since been remediated under supervision of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The EPA released Stack Hill for residential construction in fall 2007.

"We are thrilled to reach this milestone. The community has had so many false starts regarding the final clean up of this smelter site. To have someone living on Stack Hill

and calling it home is the official notice the clean up has been completed, and skepticism is wiped away with the arrival of Bill and Polly's moving van," says Mike Cohen, who co-owns MC Construction Consultants, Inc. with his wife, Julie McBride. "When we entered the competition for the privilege of developing this great property, we quickly focused on Stack Hill as a great single family home community. The location is as good as it gets, with unparalleled views and great proximity to the best that Ruston and Tacoma have to offer with Point Defiance and the Ruston Way waterfront esplanade as its neighbors. All the lots have great views and most can view Seattle's Columbia Center tower and the Space Needle, Olympic Mountains and the expansive waterway between Vashon Island on up to Des Moines."

In addition to offering sweeping views of Commencement Bay and beyond, the Ruston neighborhood sits above Point Ruston's mixed-use community currently under construction on the waterfront below, adjacent to the Tacoma Yacht Club and Point Defiance Park, Zoo & Aquarium. "We really like the small town atmosphere of Ruston, and have already gotten to know many neighbors. It's a very friendly, local community," says Blankenship.

"It is nice to finally see all of the hard work by the Town that has occurred over many years reviewing and permitting the Stack Hill development to come to fruition," says Michael Transue, former Mayor of Ruston. "It is an exciting time for all our residents....seeing the former Stack Hill site being developed with beautiful homes is a wonderful step in the redevelopment process."

Three homes at Stack Hill have been completed to date, with the fourth expected to be completed mid to late April, with several others in the design phase, says Cohen. The first model home opened in September of 2008 and has drawn an average of 20 to 30 visitors per day during open house weekends, according to Cohen. Stack Hill's permanent sales office is located in a second model home, which hosted its grand opening on February 22, 2009. The grand opening was seen as a huge success with 333 visitors attending in just over a three hour period. "It was great to see people really excited about this project," says Julie McBride. This is thought to be a record number attendance during a single day open house.

Plans call for 36 single-family custom homes at Stack Hill, all to be designed and built by MC Construction. Blankenship gives MC Construction a high rating as a contractor. “In total, we had a very good experience with MC Construction. They pay close attention to detail and we couldn’t be happier with the end product. We especially liked the fact that the design-build and engineering was in-house at MC, so use of an outside architect was not necessary.”

To date, 16 home sites have been reserved, says Cohen. All 36 homes will be both Built Green and Energy Star certified through the Master Builders Association of Pierce County and third party verification, respectively.

To learn more about custom homes and available home sites at Stack Hill, visit www.PointRuston.com or contact Julie McBride at (360) 456-6307, ext. 16 or Julie@mcconstruction.com.

Members of the media can view and download images at www.pointruston.com/pressroom.

About Point Ruston, LLC

Point Ruston’s developer is Point Ruston, LLC, a real estate partnership based in Ruston, Wash., led by managing partner Mike Cohen. Cohen is president of MC Construction, the company providing planning, management and construction expertise to the development. With offices in Olympia, Ruston and Tacoma, Wash., MC Construction has designed and built over 500 custom homes. They have a 25-year track record as an award-winning builder of custom homes, condominiums, apartments and commercial buildings in the South Puget Sound region, including these Tacoma condominium projects: Hawthorne Hill, Allenmore East, and Apex Apartments and Penthouses, in Tacoma.

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