



Sellers Dennis and Kay Benbow put their 9,114-square-foot Mediterranean Revival mansion on the market May 4. They had owned it since 1994 and held their daughter's wedding at the home.

The buyers are Tom and Asia Saltmarsh, who are moving from Winter Park to be closer to family who already live in the neighborhood. They quickly snatched up the property before it even officially went on sale.

"The day we put our sign up in the yard, we had a neighbor come and ask more about the property and we showed it that afternoon," Cambron told **GrowthSpotter**. "They literally wrote the contract on site."

Because of the quick contract, the property never fully went on the market. The time between the May 4 listing and the closing date was the inspection period.

Cambron said the buyers are planning to keep much of the character that makes this house special but may expand the kitchen to open it up more for better views.

The estate has a great waterfront location on 1.77 acres with Lake Adair in the front and Lake Concord in the back. It also has a rich history dating back to 1928 when it was built for coal heiress Grace Phillips Johnson.

Johnson was a philanthropist who made many contributions to the Central Florida area. The Johnson Center at Rollins College was named after her family.

With its large entertaining spaces, the home has been the site of many area charity functions and keeps to its sense of style.

"They really kept the history of the 1900s they did not, even with an addition, take away from that period. A lot of the finishes are original." Cambron said.

The design is the work of architect David Hyer. He worked mostly in the Orlando and Charleston, South Carolina areas in the first part of the 20th century and was known for using a Mediterranean or Neoclassical style in the buildings he designed.

Murals of Florida birds and wildlife by artist Sam Stoltz were once featured throughout the house. One painting of a peacock created using textured stucco remains.

There is a lot of Hyer's original design details throughout the home's rooms including the seven bedrooms and six full bathrooms.

The sellers added on a large main bedroom suite to the first floor. What was the original owner's suite is upstairs and has lots of marble, a clawfoot tub, huge shower, and ornate faucets.

The house has a classical feel with several fireplaces, lots of marble, high wood ceilings, chandeliers, and tile including tile floors and painted tiles on the staircases.

For convenience, there are two kitchens and two laundry rooms.

Guests of the new owners will have plenty of space in the two-bedroom guest suite above the detached four-car garage with its own kitchen and laundry room.

Outside, the pool is inviting with lake views and there is an outdoor kitchen with a covered patio. There is also a dock.

“It’s wide open space down to the lake. It’s a lot of green space. Then if you go over towards the guesthouse, it’s winding pathways to the greenhouse and the guest house with statues and fountains,” she said.

While the house is grand, Cambron says the location is special.

“When you’re on the property, it’s almost like you’re in your own world. It’s grand and the grounds are gorgeous. You see water everywhere,” she said. “You’re surrounded by water and then at night you see the city lights there beyond the lake.”