

NEW HOMES

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River Pines: Attached, detached options

Construction is well under way in the final phase of River Pines Condominiums — unusual in that both detached and attached units are offered to prospective buyers by Italo-American Condominium Corp.

"This is one of the last planned unit developments for a large condo community in Farmington Hills," said Norton Chaiken, sales manager.

When the last quarter of the puzzle is put into place, nearly 400 units will be built on the 90-acre site off Nine Mile between Halsted and Drake.

Seven floor plans are available, ranging from \$164,000 for a ranch of 1,337 square feet with two bedrooms and two baths to \$219,900 for a Capo Cod of 2,100 square feet with three bedrooms and 2-1/2 baths.

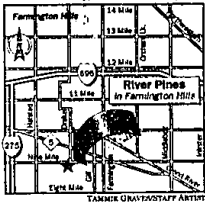
"I think this is the best sub around from quality, beauty, workmanship and how we deal with people," said Tony DiFederico, the developer/builder along with his brother-in-law, Mario Preziuso.

"We have the same materials, the same doors, the same casings here as I use on a \$500,000 house in Plymouth," DiFederico said.

"We bend over backward for people and accommodate them any way we can," Chaiken added. "It's the personal touch that sells here."

And plenty of amenities at no extra cost, too. A fireplace, air conditioning, dishwasher and oven, two-car garage, basement, first-floor laundry, a flooring allowance ranging from \$1,400 to \$2,000, a lighting allowance from \$500 to \$600, a wood deck at the front entrance and sod are included at base price in all plans.

Brick is the primary exterior material with wood siding and trim. The model, a ranch with two



baths, features a great room with cathedral ceiling and a kitchen/nook with a pantry and an opening in the wall facing the dining area and great room. The master suite has two walk-in closets and a separate tub and shower. The second bedroom in the model is decorated as a den.

Base price of the 1,493-square-foot unit is \$168,900.

The great majority of buyers in River Pines are retirees or have older children, Chaiken said.

Most people who buy a detached unit make significant upgrades including a roof deck and whirlpool tub, he added.

Just 18 stand-alone units will be available in the final phase. The attached units will be clustered four to a building.

DiFederico said he believes his accessibility also has a lot to do with the success of the subdivision.

"We got involved. I can't sit in an office all day. We do a lot of houses around Livonia, Plymouth, Canton and Farmington, and a lot of people say 'I see your signs.'"

"I know all of the details that go inside. Myself and my brother-in-law personally take care of people," DiFederico said.

He gave an example.



River Pines: This condominium community in Farmington Hills offers a beautiful landscape and plenty of amenities at no extra cost within the units.

"People say a door won't close and it's been 2-1/2 years. I tell Mario, 'Send someone over.'"

"It's care-free living," Chaiken said. "With Tony's reputation, he's more of a custom builder."

River Pines, within the Farmington school boundaries, is serviced by city water and sewers. All utilities are metered to the individual unit.

The property tax rate is \$39.74 per \$1,000 of state equalized valuation, half of market value. That means the owners of a

\$167,000 condo unit would pay about \$3,300 the first year.

The monthly maintenance fee ranges from \$119 to \$160, depending on size for an attached unit — 10 percent higher for detached units.

Fred and Angie Morris were among the first to move into a ranch at River Pines eight years ago. Fred is president of the association.

"It's so close to freeways and shopping," he said. "Most of all, the site looked so beautiful. I

count our trees as special. You go into other places, you won't see the trees we have."

"We wanted a ranch so we could live, if we had to, on the first floor," Morris said.

Ed and Yvonne Grace also are longtime residents.

"Basically, we liked the floor plan of the unit," Ed said. "We're in a two-story. It has a very open floor plan, a 20-foot ceiling in the living room, a bridge that goes across from one bedroom to another. Each bedroom has its

own full bath. "We liked the setting. We liked what the builder was doing saving tree lines."

"It seemed like a place where people cared about where they lived. Cost per month to maintain was reasonable enough," Grace said.

The sales model at River Pines, (810) 474-1060, is open 1-6 p.m. weekdays, noon to 6 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays, closed Thursdays.

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