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Bridge Valley is located off Highway 10 just northwest of the Village of Clarkston

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PHASE III NOW AVAILABLE

Sivak *from page F1*

small gardens are popping up just about everywhere in the city. In this area, quality has the upper hand over quantity.

Many articles back I wrote about the importance of this concept and how we as a culture had generally lost touch with it. Due to limited space, this concept is rigorously enforced and as people's incomes have increased they have been forced to buy better things (like landscaping and additions) as opposed to bigger things.

So the house that I would like to build will fit in to the neighborhood but will have a little twist or two. There are, by the

way, a few modern houses in the neighborhood.

The program will have three bedrooms and two-and-one-half baths. All three bedrooms will be located on the second floor. The first floor will contain a modest kitchen with a bar (for eating) and an attached "formal" dining.

There will also be a modest size den, a "generous" living/family room, foyer and powder room on the first floor. Total size is targeted at 1,750 square feet. The basement will be unfinished, and the garage may be either attached or detached (the neighborhood has more detached than attached garages), depending on

how the scheme falls into place.

The targeted buyer is a mid 30s to mid 40s family with two or maybe three children who enjoy this kind of neighborhood and are willing and able to buy one of the very few new houses to be built in this neighborhood in a long time.

Houses in this area are currently selling for \$140 per square foot (lot included). But new construction is always more expensive than existing construction. So in the end the house will retail for a minimum of \$250,000. Modifications to the specifications will be possible.

Certainly, this will not be the

ultimate in architectural styling — too risky and too expensive for a first project. It is a spec and has to be relatively easy to sell.

But I am betting that it winds up looking infinitely more architectural than the taupe colored, multi-false roofed, uninteresting "chalet" of too many of today's builders.

Steve Sivak is a licensed architect in private practice and an adjunct professor of architecture at Lawrence Technological University in Southfield. He specializes in well-crafted residential and commercial architecture and can be contacted at (313) 769-8502.

Web site links to 450 firms

PRNewswire — Next time an encounter with your home repair contractor or builder leaves you scratching your head over supposed "manufacturer recommendations," go to the source to get the straight scoop.

Wickes Lumber's Internet home page (<http://www.wickes.com>) offers over 450 links to building and remodeling manufacturers, giving the casual browser as well as the skeptical consumer and professional builder easy access to the most up-to-date and accurate information about products and services. A user-friendly search engine allows searches by company name or by subject.

"Visitors to the home page regularly tell us 'thanks, that's what my builder told me but I didn't believe him,'" said Gene

Curtin, Wickes's vice president of information systems. "But finding that single bit of information using the standard search engine is like looking for a needle in a haystack. Search for 'windows' on WebCrawler and you'll be faced with over 96,000 matches with everything from 'Corvette convertible tops' to 'window decals!'"

Visitors needing extra help can consult Wickes' resident answer man, Guy Bartnik, who responds by e-mail with advice and direction on how to solve home repair problems or building dilemmas.

"As one of the largest suppliers to the trade, we see and review thousands of products and services each year and then share the best of what we find on the Web site," said Curtin.

North Woods *from page F1*

Bill and Jennifer Johnson will be moving into a colonial with daughter, Holly.

"We wanted a four bedroom with the master on the upper floor," Bill said. "That one offered pretty much the biggest house you could get for the money. That house was a pretty good buy. It's probably bigger than what we need, but ... we could swing it."

Location also proved to be a draw for the Johnsons. "It's close to where we both work (Ypsilanti and Ann Arbor)," Bill said.

Sanjeev and Madhur Malhotra also ordered a colonial.

"We were getting more for the money," Madhur said. "I really like the elevation (exterior appearance). The kitchen is really big ... really beautiful with a big island in the center. It's four bedrooms. A lot of closet space. The loft was really nice."

The models at North Woods Place, (313) 495-3017, are open 1-7 p.m. weekdays, 1-6 p.m. Saturday and Sunday, closed Thursdays.

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