

New Homes

The Farmington Observer

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West side can profit from east side plans



STEVEN SIVAK

Over the Labor Day holiday, I had the pleasure of spending some time on the east side of Detroit watching the annual bicycle races and then riding through all of the Grosse Pointe, stopping for coffee along the way at a small funky coffee bar in one of the perfectly

scaled "downtowns". Except for Muck, the traffic control along these streets was superbly handled but much more important than that is the quality of construction, the vegetation in these areas and the human as opposed to automotive scale of everything on this side of the city.

Compare these neighborhoods and streets to the massive parking lots that are in front of every retail establishment on the west side. To be specific, look at Orchard Lake Road, with all of the strip malls with the car as the basis for design. To arrive at one of these places not in a car would be ridiculous. To arrive by bicycle would be dangerous beyond belief.

On the east side one could arrive by bicycle or car. One can even live in a comfortable way just seconds from these downtown areas in houses that are knitted together to form neighborhoods. On Orchard Lake Road, there can be no houses because of the vehicular noise, air pollution and other obvious reasons.

One of the most important aspects is that the neighborhoods are all connected - no one is cut off from anyone else - one can travel through the entire area without having to ride along a major car route. This his is what is great for kids learning to explore the world. This is also great for adults who wish to walk and ride and at the same time stay in contact

Please see SIVAK, C2

Condos close to downtown Brighton

A beautiful land topography, access to a private lake plus a terrific location in Genoa Township close to downtown Brighton bring folks to Country Club Manors of Oak Pointe. Wineman & Komer of Southfield, the developer/ builder, offers luxury detached condominiums - ranch, Cape Cod and colonial styles - on the former Burroughs Farms recreational property.

Base prices in the second phase of the community 28 building sites, range from \$300,000 for a 2,450-square-foot colonial to \$325,000 for a Cape Cod of 2,530 square feet. Each has three bedrooms and 2-1/2 baths.

"We were just attracted by the all-sports lake, just the beautiful, wooded, rolling terrain," said Richard L. Komer, whose company has built several small, luxury communities in the Bloomfield Hills area.

"We knew Brighton was an up-and-coming area for people pushing from the western suburbs of Detroit," Komer said.

"This is an ideal location right at U.S. 23 and I-96," said James G. Farkas, sales representative. "You can go in any direction and be within a half hour of work, shopping and entertainment."

"A lot of people will make the drive," Komer said. "This area still has a rural feel to it. People like that. Another thing people like is the old downtown that's being restored."

"We felt there was a market for detached (condos)," Komer added. "People coming out here are fairly affluent. We do a lot of customizing."

"We get primarily empty nesters," Farkas said. "We also get young professional couples. Both are engaged in careers and have little time for outside maintenance. We also have widowers and single people. This type of lifestyle is perfect for those categories."

"Most people coming in say they're looking to scale down," Farkas said. "The kids have moved out, they're in college or getting married. They say, 'We want something more manageable. We want to spend more time playing golf, traveling.'"

"They're impressed with the beauty of the natural terrain, the woods, lake and all the amenities," Farkas said. "Any resident can use the all-sports lake, beach. There are tennis courts they have access to."

Five floor plans are available.

Standard features include two-car garage, first-floor laundry, air conditioning, fireplace, carpeting, deck, basement, cooktop, oven, microwave and dishwasher. Landscaping also is



Ranch delight: This 2,080-square-foot model at Country Club Manors features sloped ceilings throughout, two bedrooms, two full baths, library, living room and dining room.

included. Exterior materials are brick, wood trim and stone.

Two models have been constructed.

The Lakewood, a ranch of 2,080 square feet, contains a library with cathedral ceiling, living room and dining room with sloped ceilings, and kitchen nook with island.

The master with cathedral ceiling has a pair of walk-in closets, separate tub and shower and two separate vanities, one with a sitting area. The condo also has a second bedroom, a second full bath and a half bath.

Base price is \$305,000 for construction in Phase 2, \$286,000 for the handful of sites still available in Phase 1. The model with upgrades, excluding furnishings, carries a price of about \$320,000.

The second model, the Golfview, is a Cape Cod of 2,530 square feet.

The main living area is laid out similar to the Lakewood - library, living room, dining room, half bath and kitchen nook. The first-floor master has separate tub and shower, two vanities and a pair of walk-in closets.

Two bedrooms and a full bath are

upstairs.

Base price is \$325,000 if constructed in Phase 2, \$306,000 in Phase 1. The model as presented is about \$350,000.

Fifteen of the 21 available building sites in the second phase carry a lot premium ranging from \$5,000 to \$15,000.

A handful of spec houses in various stages of construction were available in the initial phase.

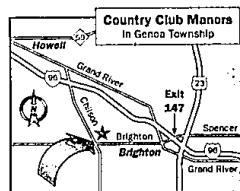
Buyers can join Oak Pointe Country Club that's part of the overall development. Different levels of membership require initiation deposits ranging from \$2,000 to \$15,000 and monthly dues from \$37 to \$270.

Country Club Manors is serviced by a community well and community septic system. It's within the Brighton school district boundaries. There are no sidewalks.

The property tax rate currently is \$20.44 per \$1,000 of state equalized valuation, half of market value. That means the owners of a \$325,000 condo would pay about \$3,325 the first year.

The monthly association/ maintenance fee is \$160.

Sharon Gabe bought a ranch in Country Club Manors.



TAMMIE GRANT/STAFF ARTIST

"I guess it had all the amenities I wanted - golf course, pool, club, water," she said. "I fell in love with it. I like the detached condos. It's a very up-north kind of surroundings."

"The builder is great," Gabe said. "Anything I've had, they've been taking care of. Relatives when they first came through said they've done a great job on construction."

The sales models at Country Club Manors, (810) 220-1122, is open noon to 6 p.m. daily. Take Exit 147 off I-96 and follow Brighton Road through town to the site.

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