



TO CREATE A HOME

The Architect's View

Tom Zoedes, a Farmington architect who does some residential work, says that a custom house is not for everybody. He says that a couple should consider the likelihood that they will be staying in the area permanently, or at least three to five years, and weight the probability that the husband's employer will transfer him to another city. If their stay here is likely to be temporary, a tract house is probably a better idea. But people looking for a permanent home that is tailored to their needs should definitely consider a custom home. According to Zoedes, a home designed by an architect for a particular couple will be better suited to them, will be better quality for the money, and will not necessarily cost more per square foot than a tract house. It is difficult to judge the monetary value of getting exactly what you want. Contentment is an intangible.

Zoedes says that real estate agents have lists of land available. He also recommends driving around to find an area you would like and then making inquiries regarding vacant land. If you see a vacant piece of land you would like that has no "for sale" sign, jot down the location and check with County Records, he advises. They will give you the names and addresses of people who own the property, and you can contact them.

Zoedes recommends that if you pick stock plans from a book and choose a custom builder instead of an architect, that you get bids from three or four builders and let them know that they are bidding against each other. An architect will always get contractors to bid against each other, and will usually go directly to the sub-contractors -- one for plumbing, one for electrical work, one for cement work, etc. -- eliminating the general contractor, who otherwise receives 15% to 20% of the price of your house as payment for his work. You can act as your own general contractor under the guidance and direction of your architect, who will make periodic checks to be sure the work is being done properly and in the proper sequence.

You could, of course, act as your own general contractor even without

the services of an architect, but you might make some costly errors and not even recognize them until too late.

Zoedes does not work on a piece-meal basis -- just drawing up plans, for example. It's the whole thing or none, and the other architects he knows feel the same way. This is not to say that you would not find one who would draw up plans for you for a flat fee. However, most architects make more money on the industrial and commercial work they do than they do on residential work and usually only do the residences because they enjoy it. To draw up a house for a couple and then handing them the plans in exchange for their money is a little like selling your baby instead of fully raising him to adulthood before letting him go.

It is no more difficult to obtain money from the bank for a custom home than it is for a tract home. First get a commitment for the mortgage from your bank. They will lend you construction money, or they will pay your subcontractors directly. You will need plans, specifications, firm bids from all your sub-contractors, and a final price to take to the bank.

If your total house budget is under \$40,000, you may have difficulty finding an architect who would be interested, since land for your \$40,000 house could well cost you \$10,000.

But why would you want to limit your house to \$40,000? Probably because you'd also like to eat and wear clothes. But listen to this, and figure out how it applies to your personal situation. Zoedes commented that with financing and taxes the way they are, you might as well finance \$50,000 to \$55,000 and get what you want. Most of the extra you would be paying is deductible, since the largest part of your monthly payment (like over 80% in many instances) goes for interest and property taxes. The higher tax bracket you are in, the more sense this makes (and the more likely you could afford the house). A \$100 tax deduction means \$20 less tax you will have to pay if you are in the 20% bracket, but it means \$50 less tax if you are in the 50% bracket.

value and will give them much pleasure in the meantime. If it comes down to a choice between the area and the size of the house, choose the better area and take less house, he advises. As the realtor's axiom goes, the three most important considerations in picking a house are location, location, and location.

Continued from Page 6

Wolfe advises that a couple is wiser to go a few extra dollars on a house if necessary to get what they want, since a small difference in price is not as important in a house as it might be on something that is a shorter term purchase. He advises that a couple buy as much house as they can afford, since it will undoubtedly appreciate in

Definitely out of the Ordinary



Why?

Because **KINGSTOWNE MANOR** offers you a quality building in an ideal location that gives you peace, quiet and plenty of fresh country air.

When you invest in condominium living your return includes freedom from lawn care, snow shoveling and maintenance! You receive a big dividend in nature, because **KINGSTOWNE MANOR** is located in the rolling country side near fishing, boating and golfing.

Look at these beautiful advantages

TWO BEDROOMS - FULL BASEMENT - 1 1/2 BATHS - A WOMAN'S DREAM KITCHEN RANGE -- REFRIGERATOR - DISPOSAL - DISHWASHER - CENTRAL AIR CONDITIONING - 10'x12' PATIO - FULLY CARPETED - CERAMIC TILE FLOOR BATHS - COMMUNITY HOUSE - SWIMMING POOL - CAR PORTS

ALL FOR ONLY

\$26,900



Kingstowne Manor

MODEL LOCATED AT:
2639 KINGSTOWNE DR.,
West of 2681 Pontiac Trail

MODEL PHONE:

624-4679

MODEL OPEN EVERY DAY 12 TO 5

Rentals Available **QUEENS DEVELOPMENT CO.**

