

Botsford

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Once you do that, Wineman said, you begin to see things a little differently.

"Even if you're (a healthy senior), it's not the same as it is for you or I."

"For example, the lighting is about twice what you or I would like or even need," Wineman said. The additional lighting comes from recessed fixtures. "That way it is subtle."

Reasonable costs

From a builder's perspective, Wineman said he doesn't expect the additional features to add significantly to the time of construction — it will add some cost, but not as much as one might expect.

"A lot of it comes down to planning," he said. "And the hospital really did their homework."

Since a lot of the additional safety and convenience features are being built at the planning stages, a lot of options are designed out, he said. "That speeds up the building."

Wineman said he'll likely adopt some ideas he's learned at Botsford Commons in other Wineman and Komer projects.

"We've always tried to take the things we've done in our custom homes and incorporate it into our other projects — even if people don't see it or know it's there, these things make a subtle impression and add to the value."

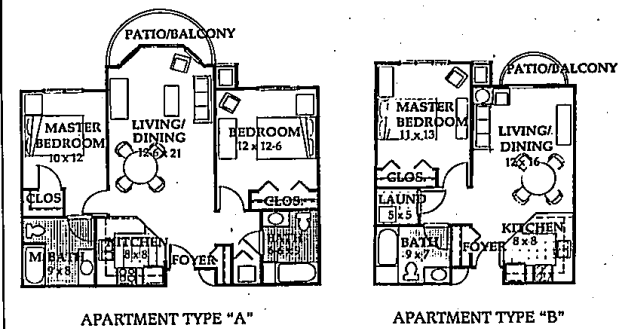
Of course, not everything being developed for Botsford Commons can be adapted because the condominiums are part of the Botsford Commons community.

"But, if I add some of these things and people say I can live here 10 years instead of five, that's a selling point," Wineman said.

Not profit driven

Scott Bowers, partner at the architectural firm of Bowers and Rein Associates in Ann Arbor, said although he has worked on projects intended for senior citizens before, the level of commitment from Botsford Hospital has set this project apart.

On other projects, there have typically been more constraints because of a combination of cost controls and a lack of understanding. "Our job (as architects) is complex because we work with developers on design versus cost," Botsford wanted to control



costs too, but the research and understanding into the needs of active and dependent senior citizens works in the project's favor.

"There is profit in it, but it's not as profit driven as some other projects," Bowers said.

Little changes can make a big difference. Lighted wall switches, hand rails, under-cabinet lighting, extra-wide halls and doors, adjustable closets, barrier-free entrances, single level, and wheelchair-adaptable kitchen cabinets are just a few of the additional features that can make independent living for senior citizens easier.

In addition to these safety and convenience features required by the hospital, research and focus groups provided insights into what senior citizens want and what builders and developers think they want.

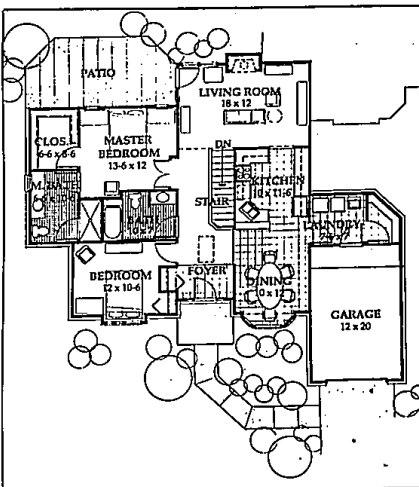
"For example, there is a mind set that says buyers want vaulted ceilings, custom woodwork and custom floors."

"As it turns out, they want nice, but economical without a lot of toys," Bowers said.

Another surprise learned from senior focus groups was that square footage isn't as important to senior citizens as it is to younger people and that the open floor plans are less popular.

"They like more closed floor plans with rooms that have a specific purpose."

By visiting members of the focus groups in their own homes, Bowers said he discovered that a lot of people with 2,000 square foot houses really only use 600 square feet.



Floor plans: At top is a look inside the two apartment styles offered at Botsford Commons. Type A has 1,000 square feet of living space. Type B has 650. Above is the plan for the 1,250-square-foot patio homes. A survey of seniors showed they prefer closed floor plans to the open plans favored by most younger buyers.

The most important aspect of Botsford Commons, however, is the perception of commitment the buyers have about Botsford.

"It's not so much the sticks and bricks, but how you're going to be treated, the service, and the quality of life."

Glass etching is affordable, do-able

If you've ever stopped to admire an etched glass door, window or mirror, you know that the effect is both unique and stunning. The combination of clear polished glass with a delicately contrasting frosted geometric or pictorial design enhances just about any setting.

What you may not know, however, is that you can etch glass right in your own home or shop — with a few simple, easy-to-master techniques.

Glass etching involves frosting or abrading the glass surface to create a dull, nontransparent area. The three most common methods for getting the job done are acid-cream etching, sandblasting and diamond-burr engraving. Each of these techniques can be approached with a modest investment of time, space and cash.

Etching glass not only makes an enjoyable project, but the results add character to your home. Whether you choose to etch an entry door, sidelight panel, bathroom window or mirror, you have the ability to transform ordinary architectural and design features with distinctly personal detailing.

When choosing glass to etch, keep in mind that the best material is one-fourth-inch-thick plate glass or laminated safety glass. Standard one-eighth-inch-thick window glass can be used, but the results will not be as good. And, the thinner glass is much more apt to break when placed under the mechanical stresses of diamond-burr engraving and sandblasting. If you wish to work with one-eighth-inch glass, the best technique is acid etching.

The only type of glass that should not be etched is tempered glass. Tempered glass has been heat treated in a way that creates great tension within the material. When the surface is etched, the internal stresses may cause the glass to shatter. Generally, tempered glass is labeled as such in a corner of the pane.

If you are planning to etch a door or window with double glazed panes, you should check with the window manufacturer to see if you will void any warranty by etching. In this case, it might be better to etch another panel and mount it over the insulated pane.

There are many sources of designs for your glass project. Check your local library or book store for books that feature stained glass patterns and traditional designs. You can develop your own design to give your project a personal touch. The only limitation here is to keep in mind that block designs with broader etched areas work better than thin-line drawings.

Regardless of the technique you choose, begin by making a full-size drawing of your design to transfer to the work. While you're in the planning stage, consider whether the lines and areas you draw will be etched into the glass surface or whether the background will be etched and the design left clear. Often the ultimate use of the panel will be the deciding factor in this regard.

When the design is to serve as a decorative embellishment on a window or mirror, the design itself is etched to maintain broad transparent areas.

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