



Focus on the FUTURE

MARTY HOPE
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With city officials looking to developers to be more resourceful in the way they use the land, the industry is facing planning and design challenges.

Developers are being asked to increase density and to blend land uses, including live/work scenarios — and at the same time appease the residents of communities that will be affected by these regulatory changes.

Such were the challenges

Carolina Homes faced when it began planning for its Evergreen Centre project — a mixed-use development in Genstar Development Co.'s southwest community of Evergreen.

The project will see one floor of residential apartments over ground-floor commercial bays.

This is a change of direction for family-owned Carolina Homes, which has been building single-family and multi-family homes in Calgary and other regions of central and southern Alberta since 1979.

The company's most recent residential project was Everoak, a community of 85 homes that wrapped up last spring.

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Marty Hope, Calgary Herald, and Carolina Homes
James Fleck, project manager for Carolina Homes, with plans for the Evergreen Centre development in the city's southwest.

FROM PAGE J1 CHANGE: Change direction

The builder earlier closed out a multi-family housing project in the northwest called Panatella Landing, says Carolina general manager Gary Cooper.

"With the closing of these two Calgary projects, we now set our focus on the future," he says.

Part of that future is Evergreen Centre.

Consisting of four buildings, Evergreen Centre has been zoned to allow nine light commercial units at street level with as many as 12 residential suites above.

Located at 230 Eversyde Boulevard S.W., it is the last multi-family site in the massive community.

"It's been a challenge to bring something on that looks good and that the surrounding communities are happy with," says Carolina project manager James Fleck.

Because of the low profile of the development, it will blend in with the residential neighbourhoods around it, he says.

As well, it fits in with the city's Plan It Calgary guidelines.

Approved last year, Plan It aims to boost the city's density as it guides growth for the next 60 years.

"We feel that Evergreen Centre gives the city a trendy, traditional-looking product that provides a nice balance of commercial and residential uses," says Fleck.

In addition, it will have a very small development footprint, tak-



Calgary Herald Archive

Panatella Landing, one of the developments by Carolina Homes, as seen in 2006. The multi-family project has now been closed out.

ing up about one-half hectare of land for buildings and parking.

Pre-selling has begun on the development.

The residential units — each with two bedrooms, two baths, spacious kitchens, vaulted ceilings, a private entrance and one parking stall — will range from 1,096 to 1,138 square feet and will be priced from the mid-\$200,000s.

Measuring 1,110 square feet, the commercial units will start in the mid-\$300,000s. Each will come with two parking stalls and a private entrance.

As well, full interior improvements are available, says Fleck.

"We contemplated leasing the commercial space, but we don't want to be landlords. We're builders," he says.

Zoned as it is, possible commercial uses will include medical or dental facilities, or some other type of service business that will have a minimum of traffic to it.

While live/work is a possibility, Fleck sees the residences appealing to young professionals working elsewhere who are looking for an upscale home in a southwest neighbourhood.

At the same time, though, live/work has not been ruled out.

"We're excited about revisit-

ing an Old World concept where a merchant could live above his place of business," says Cooper.

Paul Boskovich, development manager for Genstar, says his company has been supportive of Carolina's idea. He calls it a project "unique for the suburbs" because of the residential/commercial tie-in.

"Carolina has been working on their development permit for this project for several years, in part because it is such a unique one," he says. "It is a small project, but a good example of maximizing the use and yield for strategically located multi-family sites."

Adds Fleck: "We had to be creative in how we used the land and I think we've achieved what we set out to do."

He says that it's likely Carolina Homes will do more projects similar to Evergreen Centre.

"More and more, builders and developers have to think outside the box about how they use the land while creating something appealing," he says.

While Carolina aims for a summer completion for Evergreen Centre, it is also moving ahead with plans for a new multi-family project named Coventry Manor which is slated for the north-central Calgary community of Coventry Hills.

IN SHORT

PROJECT: Evergreen Centre, a four-building project that will include nine light-commercial bays on the ground

floor and as many as 12 residential units above.

BUILDER: Carolina Homes.

AREA: Evergreen in southwest Calgary.

DEVELOPER: Genstar Development Co.

PRICES: The residential units will be priced from the mid-\$200,000s and the commercial bays from the mid-\$300,000s.

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