

come to Culpepper Landing

HOMEARAMA IS CLOSE TO NATURE, OFFERS OPPORTUNITIES TO LIVE GREEN AND AGE IN PLACE | **By Karen Haywood Queen**

Homeowners in the Homearama community of Culpepper Landing in Chesapeake can get close to nature on foot, on bikes and in the water. The neighborhood will include hiking and biking trails through a 150-acre conservation area, neighborhood parks including a dog park, an aquatic center for swimmers, as well as a marina leading to the Great Dismal Swamp Canal.

The twelve homes in Homearama will be open Oct. 3–18, from noon until 9 p.m. Sunday through Thursday and until 10 p.m. on Friday and Saturday. Admission is \$10 for adults, free for children 12 and

under. A Taste of Chesapeake sponsored by Columbia Natural Gas and *Hampton Roads Magazine* on Oct. 14 from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. will allow visitors to sample some of the best cuisine this area has to offer.

Featured houses include The Whitaker: Welcome Home a green, modular home designed to be easy to be built and easy on the environment and a certified Easy Living home designed to make it easy to age in place. Other homes include: The Sydney Lambert, named for a five-year-old cancer patient with proceeds to benefit the Children's Hospital of the King's Daughters, built by The Walters Company Inc.; The Chesapeake House with prod-

The Elderberry:
A Christmas Tradition House 6
Lot 25



The Thanksgiving House House 6
Lot 25



The Lindsay House 6
Lot 25



The Dover House 6
Lot 25



The "Bright Idea" House

House 6
Lot 25



ucts and décor that reflect the city's culture and heritage, built by Widener Corp.; The Thanksgiving House ready for turkey day, built by Definitive Homes; The Christmas House decorated for the holiday celebration, built by WATAB Construction; The Walnut Cottage reflecting the style of *Virginia Living* magazine, built by Stephen Alexander Homes; The Lindsay; The Dover; The Crow's Nest; The "Bright Idea" House; and Morningside Manor.

When you hear modular homes, you may envision a trailer park. Perish the thought. This is not your grandfather's vinyl doublewide on wheels. The Homearama green-modular home, The Welcome Home, is designed by an architect, set on a brick foundation, and features a HardiPlank exterior.

"We typically think of doublewides sitting on the road with a vinyl wrap-around," says Scott Brooker of SGB Homes in Chesapeake, who built The Welcome Home. "These homes are built just like any other house would be." Maybe better.

The difference is this home was assembled by Haven Custom Homes inside and then shipped here. "It's been built out of wood that was in a controlled environment," says Brooker, an independent builder for Haven Homes. "The wood is not going to warp." It's set on a foundation in the same way as a stick-built home. You won't be able to pick out the modular home from any of the others in Homearama, he says.

Modular homes go up in almost half the time as a conventional stick built home—four months compared to seven months or longer. They're more sound proof between floors because the ceiling on the first floor is actually separated from the floor of the second level. The homes are reinforced so they can travel safely down the highway from the building site in Pennsylvania.

The Welcome Home has 2,900 square feet, back and front porches, a large foyer, and an oversized two-car detached garage with a workspace, storage system and

The Crow's Nest

House 6
Lot 25



House 6
Lot 25

The Sydney Lambert: TBA Charity House to Benefit "CHKD"



House 6
Lot 25

The Elizabeth: The Chesapeake House

walk-up storage. Other features include a downstairs master with three other bedrooms upstairs, three and a half baths, a custom kitchen with granite counters and plenty of cabinet space, great room, formal dining room, mud room, laundry room with a deep sink, 10-foot ceilings downstairs and 9-foot ceilings upstairs. Asking price is \$489,900.

Green features include a closed loop geothermal heating/cooling system that means the homeowner's heating and cooling bills will be less than half compared to a conventional HVAC system. Other green



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Modular construction saves time and money.

features include energy efficient low-E windows and doors, insulated plumbing and lighting fixtures, Zip System roof and wall sheathing that keeps water out during and after construction, low VOC (volatile organic compounds) paints, carpets with no off-gassing of chemicals, and cork flooring in one room.

Brooker began building modular homes in 2004. He worked with Haven and was impressed with the quality and service. "I couldn't build that home in the same fashion Haven built it," he says. "If I wanted to offer my clients a superior product, I knew I had to build a rela-

tionship with Haven." Since then, Haven has won numerous awards for one of its designs, the Tucker Bayou, the 2007 *Southern Living* Idea Home.

Easy Living is the theme of the home built by Herb Watson of The Walters Company Inc. The goal of this home is to allow residents to age in place and to be accessible to anyone—regardless of age, injury or handicap. The home will be certified by the Virginia Easy Living Home Coalition as meeting the group's standards of: easy access with at least one step-free entrance into the central living area of the house with no threshold or trip hazard; easy passage throughout the home with entrances and all interior doorways either 34 or 36 inches, and easy use with a bedroom, accessible bath with maneuvering space, kitchen and entertainment area all located on the main floor accessible via the step-free entrance.



Herb Watson of Walters Construction

But you won't feel you're in a nursing home when you visit; these features are subtle and designed not to scream 'handicapped accessible.' "This home has lots of special features that won't necessarily be noticed ... until the need is there," Watson says. And the features that will make it easy for someone using a wheelchair or walker will benefit others too.

"If you are carrying groceries or moving furniture, it's much more safe," says Rhonda Allison, Virginia Easy Living Coalition project coordinator. "If you need to roll a stroller in, it's easy to get that stroller in. It's an accessible house. It's a visitable house."

This two-story home includes 3,500 square feet, a two-car garage, five bedrooms including master suites on both floors, four and a half baths, hallways that are at least six feet wide, a showstopper art gallery overlooking an English garden, a large family room, kitchen, breakfast area, large utility room/laundry room. Bathrooms have pedestal sinks—both for appearance and to allow a wheelchair to slide under if needed. Floors are hardwood, ceramic tile and carpet. The exterior is HardiPlank. The home is priced at \$499,900.

This home, as many Easy Living Homes do, goes beyond the program requirements for certification. It's set up so that a homeowner could add more features later. For example, while there are no grab bars in the shower, the walls are blocked so someone could add grab bars later. A pair of large stacked closets is set up so an elevator could be added later. There's a sprinkler system. When you walk into a room, lights come on automatically. But there are light switches—actually they're toggles that allow the user to bump them with an elbow—excellent if you don't have full use of your hands or if your hands are full carrying

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groceries or a toddler. Three levels of bar heights in the kitchen can accommodate people of different heights and/or those using wheelchairs. In the event someone calls 911, an exterior light will blink on and off to alert EMS personnel where to stop.

The point is to incorporate luxury, beauty and accessibility seamlessly and subtly.

“The no-step-up entrance is through the art gallery, which happens to be the most attractive room of the home,” Watson says. “This is a very nice luxury home that would work for you and me and everyone else.”

For more information on this year's Homearama, visit www.homearama.tv.



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