



PHOTO SUBMITTED

Newburg Meadows is pictured in foreground with cleared land along River Raisin ready for expansion of modular home park.

Newburg Meadows eyes April opening for new expansion

By RENEE LAPHAM
COLLINS

renee@tecumsehherald.com

Phase two of Newburg Meadows should open next April with more than 60 new manufactured homes, including many along Red Mill Pond. Phase one, which encompasses the former Paul's Trailer Park and additional sites, has 135 homes.

LaFonda Bontrager, regional manager for Four Leaf Properties, said this week that people will be "pleasantly surprised" to discover the new manufactured homes that are in the Newburg Meadows plan are nothing like the 1980s version.

"Most of these are stick-build, two by six, with drywall

throughout, premium flooring and carpet, city water and sewer, Carrier furnaces and central air, and they are all built with energy efficiency in mind," Bontrager said. "They will be 'solar panel ready' for those who want to add solar panels."

The planned unit development includes lots fronting Red Mill Pond, and Bontrager said homes on that side of the development will be set up so that homeowners can add a deck overlooking the water. There are three sizes and floor plans that homeowners can choose from. The smallest is 1,000 square feet and that model is built with vinyl walls rather than drywall. The other two models range from approximately 1,300 to 1,568 square feet. There are open floor plans

and blueprints with more standard designs.

"We've noticed that the open floor plan isn't what everyone wants," Bontrager said. "I think since COVID, people seem to want their own space. But we have several floor plans."

The manufactured homes come from Indiana and Ohio, and Bontrager said there are many Amish who work in the factories. They are clean, high-tech operations where the workers are well-versed in building the homes on an assembly line.

"There is a misconception that manufactured homes are not 'real' homes," she said. "But it's not the case."

The builders who work on the homes "really know what they are doing," Bontrager said. Brooklyn Stockdale, assistant property manager, visited the factory in Elkhart, Ind.

"It's the nicest factory I've ever seen, it's so clean," she said.

It takes about three days to complete a house, Bontrager said. The laws governing the building of a manufactured home are stringent — they have to pass two HUD (Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development) inspec-

tions, in addition to local and state electrical, building, and plumbing inspections. The payments include the mortgage, lot rent, and utilities. Residents pay \$20 per month for water as Newburg Meadows does not have individual water meters. Gas and electric are provided through Consumers Energy, she said.

A new clubhouse now graces the North Union Street entrance of Newburg Meadows, formerly the office and garage for the park. It has a large community living space available to residents as well as a kitchenette area. The new development will include park areas near the pond, Stockdale said.

Stockdale said the homes are "really affordable, quality homes."

"There is a need for affordable housing here, and this is very affordable," she said. "We're not just for seniors 55 and over, we welcome anyone."

Pets are allowed, although "aggressive breeds" are not welcome.

Managers and sales staff are onsite daily.

"We want residents to be happy," Bontrager said. "We are really proud of our properties."