
Posted on Sun, Jun. 08, 2008

Red dirt's in my past and often on my pants

JOE MARUSAK

I caught the blueprint bug early in life.

As a boy, I looked forward to summer vacations in the mountains of northeastern Pennsylvania where my grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins lived.

One of my favorite stops was my Uncle Jim's real estate development company, where he'd gather the children around a shiny conference table and lay out the renderings of a resort or housing community. His enthusiasm over each of his visions rubbed off on us all.

I'd also sit in the passenger seat as his main guy, Andy, drove a pickup along the bumpy dirt roads of budding developments to check on their progress.

Those memories may explain why I've loved telling readers about new developments in their communities during my 19 years at the Observer, and why I can't wait to write about them all the more in Red Dirt.

Having arrived in 1989, long before I-77 Exit 25 and Birkdale Village, I've witnessed the tremendous housing, retail and commercial growth that has transformed the Lake Norman region's landscape.

And continues to, with such major planned communities as The Village of Lake Norman in Cornelius, Langtree at the Lake in south Iredell and Larkin off I-77 from Troutman to Statesville.

If you see red dirt churning in your town, I'd appreciate a heads-up so I can tell everyone else in this column.

I've never minded red dirt ruining a few of my pairs of pants over the years, and I expect to mess up a few more.

Please contact me at 704-987-3670, ext. 12, or RedDirtAlert@charlotteobserver.com. Please provide at least a first name and your hometown.

TIDBITS

Windstone Crossing offering 49 custom homes in Troutman

Workers will break ground in about a week on the first estate home in the Windstone Crossing development off I-77 Exit 42. Paramount Homes Development Corp. is building the 49-home community on about 35 acres off Ostwalt Amity and Pilch roads. The development is another sign of how residential growth is moving rapidly north along the Interstate 77 corridor from Mooresville.

The subdivision has wooded lots from a half-acre to three-quarters of an acre, with prices from the \$230,000s to \$270,000s. The seven home models are from 1,800 to 2,400 square feet.

Paramount Homes founders Ed Belanger, Charles Sanders and Joseph Criscuolo have a combined 60 years of custom home building. Belanger and his father founded Crystal Bay Homes in Ronkonkoma, N.Y., in 1980.

Locally, the partners' Paramount Builders has constructed homes from the \$400,000s to \$600,000s in the Paramount Shores community off Slanting Bridge Road in Sherrills Ford and in Troutman's Winding Forest development, where prices range from the \$600,000s to \$700,000s.

Morrison Plantation: Work starts on final set of live-work townhomes

Charlotte-based Meeting Street Homes & Communities has begun work on two of three buildings that will house the final 16 live-work townhomes in the Morrison Plantation development, off Brawley School and Williamson roads and N.C. 150 in Mooresville.

One of the three-story buildings is fully framed. It's on Plantation Ridge Drive and will have three units, said Debbie Padley, Meeting Street new home sales consultant.

Work has begun on the first floor of the second building, on nearby Singleton Road. It will have four units, Padley said.

The third building is planned for Singleton Road and Town Center Drive. One unit in that building will

be retail-commercial only, Padley said.

Five of the 16 units already have been sold. Th units range from 1,800 to 2,500 square feet and \$265,900 to \$349,900.

Developers intend to complete the first two buildings by year's end. The start of work on the third building is still to be determined. Morrison Plantation already has about 30 such live-work units.

Joe

Marusak