



Ad Populos, Non Aditus, Pervenimus

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First County 'Green' Home To Be Built In Westfield

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WESTFIELD – The first “green” home ever to exist in Union County will soon be built in Westfield. The five-bedroom, four-and-a-half bathroom colonial house will include a family room, a library, a living room, a large kitchen and a front porch.

“Green” homes use less energy and water, utilize natural resources, create less waste and are healthier and more comfortable for the occupants, according to the United States Green Building Council website.

“It is very important that the house has the same comfort as a regular home,” said Paula Golbin of Solar Realty, which owns the property and will construct the home.

Solar Realty recently received approval for a demolition permit to tear down the existing house on the property, said Town Engineer Ken Marsh.

Ms. Golbin, along with partner David Goodman, is working with the holding company E-Solar Properties to complete the project.

The house will undergo Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Green Building Rating System certification. In order for a development to earn LEED certification, it must meet certain standards. The number of “credits” the development earns determines whether it receives Certified, Silver, Gold or Platinum certification.

“We have worked three consecutive days for eight hours with two members of the LEED council to get certification,” Ms. Golbin said.

The house, located at 1221 Prospect Street, will include all natural resources and Energy Star rated appliances including paint without toxic materials, solar panels on the roof and a heat-exchange system to conserve heat and air. The house will also have special windows, lighting fixtures and bulbs.

“We’re building with smarter products so you can get more bang for your buck,” said Ms. Golbin.

Mr. Marsh said that “all appliances would [have an] Energy Star rating. The materials in the house will all be derived from natural resources.”

“Special soil and plants that absorb and use water will be used,” Mr. Marsh continued.

A special “blowout” of the home will improve the air quality and eliminate allergens. A variety of plants that will need less water will be used in the landscaping so “they get enough water, but not too much,” Mrs. Golbin said. A rain garden will be built to handle the water runoff.

“We want to give back to the environment, instead of depleting it,” said Ms. Golbin. “It’s the ingredients that go into this house that make it different.”

As of now, the actual budget of the house is being reviewed.

“That cost won’t be passed on to the prospective buyer,” Ms. Golbin said.

Owners of a “green” house are eligible for federal and state rebates, as well as tax credits and rebates from utility companies. Benefits of owning a green house include lower monthly water bills, lower replacement costs and a healthier living environment.

“We are going to deliver an eco-friendly home, as well as an eco-friendly lifestyle,” Ms. Golbin said. “It will not only be healthier, but good for your pocketbook as well.”

According to Golbin, commercial businesses, garden apartments and mixed used buildings will also be built “green.”

The house should be completed by January or February of 2008.

“We want to make sure everything is perfect,” said Ms. Golbin. “This will reduce global warming.”