

This Week's Feature House Tour

Schoolbell Townhouses are Stylish...and Easy on the Pocketbook

By Rita Ross

Well-built housing that's reasonably priced is sure to attract attention, and a new Sullivan County Development has been creating lots of buzz.

Schoolbell Townhouses consists of 68 units in ten buildings on a hillside just outside Liberty, a town that's been undergoing quite a renaissance in recent years.

Principal builders, Jeremy Gorelick and Peter Belgard, both live in the Liberty area and know the region well. Belgard has been a realtor for more than two decades; Jeremy is president of Emanon Equities, a real estate development firm started by his father, Jerrold, more than 25 years ago.

And, since both Gorelick and Belgard are intimately familiar with the area, their goal has been to tailor the Schoolbell project with a specific market of buyers in mind.

"The basic concept is to offer quality construction that's easy on the pocketbook, for people who want a safe, secure housing solution," explains Belgard.

Schoolbell Townhouses are a perfect solution, say Gorelick and Belgard, especially for buyers who are traditionally priced out of the regional real estate market. These range from entry-level professionals to female heads of household to empty nesters.

Floor plans for the units range from a 717-square foot, one bedroom style known as the Birch, to two-story, three bedroom models known as the Oak and the Chestnut, both 1,539 square feet.

"Nothing else that's currently available in the county or surrounding area quite fits this need for well-priced, quality residences," adds Gorelick. "That's why we're so enthusiastic about the project. People can own their own home here and not pay much more than it would cost to rent."

Gorelick and Belgard are also excited about the fact that buyers have plenty of choices. Seven models, to be exact. And there's more – Belgard points out that each model also offers various space and accessory options that can be fine-tuned according to a buyer's specific needs.

For example, the Pine, a two-bedroom unit, offers one bedroom that's slightly larger than the other – a helpful arrangement for a parent/child or senior/caregiver living arrangement, or a single buyer who might want office or guestroom space.

The Evergreen, another two-bedroom model, features rooms of equal size, with the option of an added second bath. This could be especially handy for siblings sharing a home, or folks living in a roommate arrangement.

The three-bedroom, two-story choices are versatile too. "They are great for larger families, people with kids, or grandchildren who come to visit, or for buyers who want a home office," says Belgard.

Exterior features of the Schoolbell Townhouses include aluminum seamless gutters and maintenance-free vinyl siding. Windows are double-glazed to enhance noise reduction and energy savings. Thick insulation in exterior walls also helps boost energy efficiency, and forced-air propane systems offer a reliable heat source.

The builders add that they're proud of the fact that the development is architecturally designed, not modular, as is the case with many constructions done today.

Standard indoor features include wall-to-wall carpet in the living room and bedrooms, designer vinyl tile in the kitchen and laundry, and ceramic floor tile in the bathroom. Central air conditioning is standard, too, as are nine foot ceilings on the first-floor units, which offer a feeling of added spaciousness.

Buyers can customize their dwelling to their heart's delight. Options include choice of cabinet finishes and handle styles, granite countertops in the kitchen, and more.

The kitchen is often the hub of a home, and these are designed for efficiency with standard appliances that included a refrigerator, self-cleaning oven, stove and washer/dryer.

Plenty of other upgrades are available too. Among them are sliding glass-panel rear doors, full basements, and skylights and garages available in some units. More add-on choices are hardwood floors and cozy-nest amenities, including remote control gas fireplaces and Jacuzzi tubs.

After buyers choose the options they want, the townhouses are individually finished. "Then about four to six weeks later, the new owners can move in," says Gorelick.

Another factor that buyers will adore is the fact that they can say goodbye to lawn mowing, snow shoveling and repairs because maintenance is provided by the Schoolbell Homeowners Association.

The location is ideal, too, says Belgard. "Downtown Liberty – a town that has a real, old fashioned Main Street with shops, a pharmacy and even a museum," he says. The complex is just steps away from Liberty High and Middle Schools, and a 10-minute drive to Catskill Regional Medical Center.

Access to Route 17 is also convenient, adds Gorelick. And there's a lot more nearby. "You'll find parks, golf courses, lakes, antique stores, Monticello Raceway and Might M Gaming, the Bethel Woods Center for the Arts that's opening in July, and all the natural beauty that Sullivan County has to offer."

With all this going for the project, the comfortable, affordable, Schoolbell Townhouses are sure to appeal to buyers of all kinds. The first phase is now complete, and phase two is expected to open this June. A third phase is currently in the planning stage.

For more information, contact the Schoolbell Townhouses sales office at 845-292-0400 or visit their Web site at www.schoolbelltownhouses.com