

## **Sullivan Strives to Fill Housing Need**

**By Ramsey Al-Rikabi**

There's no law on the books to require work-force housing in Sullivan County, but some developers need no prodding.

"There's a demand for it," said Bill Pammer, the county's commissioner of planning and community development.

"The advantage for (developers) is to diversify their development proposals so that they appeal to a range of home buyers," Pammer said. And they appeal to that range by building homes people in Sullivan County can afford, not just luxury second homes.

Although there is no specified price range, Pammer classified work-force housing costs between \$99,000 and \$180,000 for a "working professional with a wage at the median income."

Median family income in 2004 in Sullivan County was \$48,600, according to Housing and Urban Development data. The median family income in Orange was \$65,500.

Compared with those of Orange County, Sullivan County's property values are lower, making Sullivan more attractive for developers to build work-force housing. For instance, the median home price for the first quarter of 2005 in Sullivan County was \$159,000 compared with \$299,000 in Orange.

A handful of developments – including a recently proposed luxury resort and housing project in Livingston Manor – mix high-end homes with a cluster of work-force housing units.

"Where there's a demand, we try to meet it," said David Krieger, vice president of development for the Livingston Manor project, which will have 76 homes priced between \$150,000 and \$185,000. "It will be attractive, affordable, achievable housing for people that live here."

Others, like the **Schoolbell Townhouses** under construction in Liberty, will have 68 homes between \$119,000 and \$140,000. The developer, **Jeremy Gorelick**, also plans to have a chunk of the proposed 500 or so homes in his Walden Pond project outside Woodbourne priced as work-force housing.