

Mill Pond Crossing in Simsbury

BY VALERIE BANNISTER
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WALKABILITY and a carefree lifestyle are just two of the advantages that Mill Pond Crossing offers those who move into one of 20 townhomes currently under construction off West Street in Simsbury. The townhomes are part of the Grist Mill Commons mixed use development featuring a rustic former gristmill next to a waterfall, pond and scenic Hop Brook Gorge

The townhomes – five buildings with four units each – overlook the water and the gristmill that houses Millwrights, a celebrated restaurant featuring chef Tyler Anderson's cuisine. On the other side are award-winning apartments. Two of the townhome buildings have been completed, and two units already have been sold, including the model.

The developers hadn't planned on selling the model right away. "But the people just had to have it," says Gary Emerito, a realtor with Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices New England Properties.

The flow of the community is also a draw for prospective buyers. Ron Janeczko of Landworks Development, who partnered with Chris Nelson of Nelson Construction in developing the community, points out how a sidewalk lined with lampposts leads down to the mill pond, a covered bridge over the water-

fall and Millwrights Restaurant. The walkway also leads to sidewalks that provide easy access to the town of Simsbury with its classic character and upscale flair.

The Simsbury town center offers a library, churches, shops, restaurants and the Performing Arts Center at Simsbury Meadows. There is also easy access to the Rails-to-Trails bike system, the Farmington River, golf courses and numerous hiking trails.

And if business keeps you busy, Hartford and Bradley International Airport are not far away.

The façades of the the townhome buildings have been designed to reference the historic look of downtown Simsbury and are partially decorated with "authentic Simsbury brownstone," says Janeczko. "This we actually pulled from the ground and sliced," he adds. The stone provides a continuity of style and a sense of place for the community.

The brownstone was discovered on the development site itself. While excavating Millwrights' parking lot, the developers found brownstone and sent it to a masonry company in Brookfield, Conn. to be cut.

The tri-level townhomes have their own unique flair. Each entryway leads to a bright open foyer, high ceilings, crown molding and hardwood floors. Janeczko points out the placement of a square window that

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lets in light but still provides privacy. Such thoughtful details are the hallmark of architect Jack Kemper. Popular in Farmington, he has been designing in the area for 25 years, says Janeczko. "These are the little features that Jack likes to include," he says.

People who choose to move into these townhomes are ready for more time to do what they enjoy most, whether it's hobbies, sports or philanthropy. "The point is this is a lifestyle change," says Janeczko. Buyers appreciate the fact that maintenance of their lawns and driveways is someone else's chore.

Look in the garage of most homeowners, Janeczko says, and there are probably snow shovels, lawn mowers and all kinds of tools. In the townhouses' two-car garages, however, you'll see kayaks suspended from the ceilings and equipment such as fly fishing rods.

"You don't have to do maintenance here. You can spend your time doing the fun things," Janeczko says.

What the townhomes do have are energy-efficient systems and lots of amenities, such as a fireplace in every home, says Janeczko. "We've always been on the cutting-edge of energy efficiency," he says.

A look at the developments created by Janeczko and Nelson reveals that "each one has been recognized by our peer group as an award-winning community," says Janeczko. "We're not



new to this." There are 700 to 800 happy homeowners in the Farmington Valley enjoying the homes built by this team, he says.

In the new townhomes, the kitchen is open to the living area. It has granite countertops and stainless-steel appliances. Outside, there is a deck. "Everything is made of low-maintenance materials, including the deck and railings," says Janeczko.

Downstairs is a den, providing a cozy place to hang out with friends, take in a movie or play games.

On the second floor of one model are two large bedrooms and a loft, which can be enclosed to make another bedroom. "There's nothing tight here," says Janeczko, pointing out the second bedroom. "It's a nicely sized home and bedroom – and there is plenty of closet space."

On the landing to the second floor are two large closets, one of which could be used for linens, supplies or extra clothing, while the other houses the laundry which means no running up and down stairs. And, of course, there's "the master suite, which is truly a suite," says Janeczko. The tray ceiling with its recessed cutout provides a grand feel to the room which also has a sitting

area as well as a large closet. The master bath has a walk-in shower, double sink, soaking tub, plenty of drawers for storing items and lots of tile, says Janeczko.

"We design and build things that we would like," he says. "We're pretty high in the fit and finish, but that's just how we like to do it."

"We're from the (Farmington) Valley," says Janeczko, "and have worked in Simsbury in the past. We're excited to do another project here."

And the partners are not done after Mill Pond Crossing. Carson Way, a community of 75 single-family detached homes, is just getting started in Simsbury.

For more information on the townhomes or to schedule a tour contact Gary Emerito of Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices New England Properties at 860-716-7601

Developer:
Mill Pond Crossing LLC

Price: \$389,900 to \$474,900

Style: Traditional townhomes

Rooms: 6 to 7

Bedrooms: 2 to 3

Baths: 2.5 to 3.5

Square footage: 1,807 to 2,680 square feet

Acreage: Over 2 acres

Tax rate: 38.51 mills

Best features: Quality construction, carefree lifestyle

Contact: Gary Emerito, Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices New England Properties, 860-716-7601

GaryEmerito@bhhsne.com

Valerie Bannister is a freelance writer based in Chester.