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Residential growth tear in Westfield continues as 1,000 new homes are proposed this month

May 13, 2021 | Kurt Christian

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Indianapolis-based Platinum Properties Management Company plans to partner with Beazer Homes to build the Winterburg neighborhood with 325 single-family homes just west of Casey Road, between 186th and 193rd streets. (Rendering courtesy city of Westfield)

Westfield broke records last year for the number of residential building permits it issued, and developers are still pitching large-scale projects with hundreds of new homes along the northwest side of the city.

The Westfield Advisory Plan Commission approved Ohio-based Epcon Communities' 89-

home Courtyard of Westfield project during its meeting last week before holding public hearings for residential projects with a combined 583 homes. The body is scheduled to review

several residential petitions at its next meeting on May 17, including Carmel-based Estridge Development's proposed 553-home Midland neighborhood. Estridge CEO Clint Mitchell said his company's nearby 675-home Harmony neighborhood is about to sell out, one year sooner than originally expected, so now is the right time to start adding inventory.

"Westfield has become an extremely desirable place for people to move to in the Indianapolis area, and we have people moving from all over the country," Mitchell said.

The Builder's Association of Greater Indianapolis found the number of single-family building permits issued in the greater Indianapolis area increased by 24% from 2019 to 2020. Hamilton County had the highest number of permits issued in the report area last year, with a 13% year-over-year increase in new home construction. Within the county, Westfield made up approximately 40% of the 2,607 permits issued in 2020.

Westfield has continued to dominate in 2021. Between January and March of this year, the city approved 399 single-family residential building permits. The next-closest community within the Builder's Association of Greater Indianapolis report area was Indianapolis, with 344 permits approved as of the latest report in March.

Midland

The proposed Midland neighborhood on the west side of Ditch Road, between State Road 32 and 166th Street, could bring 403 single-family detached homes and 135 attached townhomes to the area.

The four product types within the single-family footprint would include one- and two-story styles, with anywhere between two and five bedrooms. The attached townhomes would be two- and three-story buildings with two- and three-bedroom formats.

Mitchell said Midland's homes would cost about the same as those in Harmony. He expects the townhomes to sell for roughly \$300,000 and the single-family homes to reach anywhere from \$500,000 to \$600,000.

"We see it as another type of Harmony neighborhood that's highly amenitized, walkable, has the extensive landscaping and lakes and trail systems—like Estridge does in all of its other neighborhoods," Mitchell said.

One key feature Mitchell highlighted was a plan to extend the Midland Trace Trail, which he said currently ends at the property. He said the plan is to extend the trail west through the development as a centerpiece, similar to how townhomes were built up around the Monon Trail in Carmel.

That trail will divide the property between the residential portion to the south, and a future multifamily, retail and commercial sector planned between the trail and State Road 32.

Branching off from that trail feature, the Midland neighborhood will have three miles of trails connecting pocket parks, playgrounds, a pond with a fishing dock, a neighborhood clubhouse, outdoor basketball and bocce courts, a large neighborhood pool and splash pad, an amphitheater and a pavilion for activities like farmers markets.

Zoning for the project was approved in 2006, but Estridge needs primary plat approval from the city before it can start development this summer. Mitchell plans to start building in the winter to deliver the first homes in a grand opening next spring.

“There’s no timeline yet on the commercial,” Mitchell said. “A lot of it is going to depend on the pace of our development and others around it, having the rooftops in the area to support retail businesses. There is quite a bit of other activity to the north and east along State Road 32 that’s not far away at all. This is the next place in line.”

Other projects

In addition to approving Epcon’s development plans for 89 single-family homes at the southwest corner of 151st Street and Towne Road last week, the city’s plan commission also heard proposals to rezone 214 acres from agricultural to planned unit developments.

Lennar Homes of Indiana plans to expand the 55-and-older Osborne Trails community currently under construction north of 193rd Street and east of Six Points Road by 60 acres.

That expansion at the southwest corner of 199th Street and Horton Road, if approved, would allow the homebuilder to add 192 single-family homes to its neighborhood with the same development amenities, architectural standards and home product offerings as the first phase.

Lennar anticipates the average sales prices to range from approximately \$290,000 to \$415,000.

Meanwhile, Indianapolis-based Platinum Properties Management Company plans to partner with Beazer Homes to build 325 ranch and two-story homes on 154 acres, just west of Casey Road, between 186th and 193rd streets.

Jon Dobosiewicz, a land use professional with Carmel-based Nelson and Frankenburger, represented Platinum in proposing the Winterburg neighborhood. He told the plan commission the homes would range from \$390,000 to \$460,000. The plan is for construction to start in 2022, with residents moving in during spring 2023.



Indianapolis-based Platinum Properties Management Company plans to partner with Beazer Homes to build the Winterburg neighborhood with 325 single-family homes just west of Casey Road, between 186th and 193rd streets. (Rendering courtesy of the city of Westfield)

The neighborhood is also expected to feature a trail system and pocket parks.

Cindy Spoljaric, a member of the city’s plan commission and city council, is worried about the number of homes that continue to be approved in Westfield’s rural areas. She said she’s not sure the city’s existing infrastructure is a match for the pace of development.

“We’re getting near that border we consider rural,” Spoljaric said. “I get very concerned when we are approving another 300-plus homes, and we already are inundated with new homes. We’ve had a record number of housing permits for several years now, and this is the kind of thing contributing to that—which is good and bad.”

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