



Shepherds Way offers high-end country living

The beloved Dewey-Granby Oak is a sprawling and sturdy tree, a beautiful specimen to behold. Small wonder local builder John Fitzgerald selected this tree, which stands across the street from his Shepherds Way community, as a logo for his properties.

The tree holds a special place in the hearts of local residents and is included in the Granby Land Trust, which also holds land that abuts Fitzgerald's development. When Fitzgerald, who lives nearby on the other side of an adjacent field, heard that the land was for sale, he wasted no time in purchasing the property. He had roamed the fields and forest as a child. "I thought it was better for me to develop it than to look at what someone else did," he says.

Although Fitzgerald has intimate knowledge of all aspects of building, from architectural design to grouting floor tiles, he decided to team up with the award-winning Kemper Associates Architects of Farmington in developing the community. Eight unique traditional-style home designs were created. Some designs show Colonial Georgian exterior influences such as stylish doorways, flowing hipped roofs,

pedimented dormers and front gables. Some designs offer an ornate chimney fully exposed on one side of the home, running from the ground and towering distinctly above the roofline.

Partial to being hands-on and working with few sub-contractors, Fitzgerald and his crew installed impressive trim work in the model home at Shepherds Way. Reflecting the standard for all the homes built here, finger jointed 5-1/4-inch crown molding caps the dining room, foyer, upstairs hall, living room, master bedroom, kitchen and library walls. Shadow boxes and chair rails adorn the foyer, dining room and stairway walls. Even the upstairs hall is decked with chair rails.

Wired for a home theater and a flat panel TV, the family room features a brick fireplace with a bluestone slab hearth and a mantle custom built onsite. A coffered ceiling in the living room adds elegance without being overly indulgent. Smooth mahogany railings topping poplar balusters and posts grace the oak stairs. Red oak flooring is used in most of the active rooms, while custom stone and tile covers the floors of the mudroom, bathrooms and laundry room.

“We take something with formal attributes and make stone slab hearth and a mantle custom built on-site. A coffered ceiling in the living room adds elegance without being overly indulgent. Smooth mahogany railings topping poplar balusters and posts grace the oak stairs. Red oak flooring is used in most of it casual,” says Fitzgerald. He studies amenities in other homes and incorporates what he likes into his interiors. He also listens to his clients. “We like to work with the clients. Some of the best ideas we get are from our clients.”

“The quality and detail that John brings is not run-of-the-mill; it’s top quality,” says Susan Arsenault, a realtor with William Raveis New Homes. She and fellow realtor Maria Babicki are pleased to be working with Fitzgerald, who has had his home interiors featured in *Hartford Magazine*.

The model home, the only home to be completed before being sold, is a masterwork full of amenities that belie the selling price of \$699,000. “It’s a fantastic price because \$50,000 worth of goods and services are provided that aren’t included in the price of the home,” says Fitzgerald. Vendors are showcasing their products in this model home. Kohler plumbing fixtures are used in the bathrooms and kitchen. Pella windows and doors are attractive and energy efficient.

Exterior siding is compliments of James Hardie. This impressive siding is a fiber-cement mix that makes it impact resistant against hail and windblown debris.

It is non-combustible and is warranted not to rot, warp or delaminate. Amazingly, this siding holds paint three to four times longer than wood, yet looks and feels like real wood grain.

Fitzgerald describes Hollaway Appliance Center in Simsbury as being “just fantastic to work with.” Two appliance options supplied by Hollaway are available to homebuyers. The top option includes a General Electric Monogram double-wall oven, gas pro-range top, microwave and dishwasher. The refrigerator is a Kitchenaid with a French door and bottom freezer. All these appliances are stainless steel.

Every kitchen at Shepherds Way will have custom cabinetry and granite countertops. Bathroom vanities will have granite or marble countertops with a four-inch backsplash. Goshen Stone Company supplies native flatstone for the patio and sidewalks.

When it comes to interior climate control, Fitzgerald favors two Lennox forced warm air furnaces – one for each floor – with a built-in humidifier to help prevent dry air-related skin and a breathing problems. Central air conditioning is featured and a propane-fired, 80-gallon hot water heater will supply the entire family with plenty of long, hot showers. Other amenities are underground utilities, a central vacuum system and a security system. The three-car garage is spacious with access to a full, unfinished basement.

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