

# Green Sanford's Creek

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Phase I of North Carolina's first "certified green" community is well on its way to completion, with only five of the 17 lots still available, along with one move-in ready home. When Sanford's Creek was certified as a "green" community in July of 2009, it was only the fourth certified green subdivision in the entire country.

Custom builder Gary Silverstein, has, over the last several years, created a neighborhood with the future in mind. Sanford's Creek in Colfax will contain 32 homes when fully built.

The homes in the community, many with basements, are priced from the mid \$300,000s and start at 2,300 square feet. Each plan has three or four bedrooms with a two-car garage (or larger), and Silverstein is Sanford's Creek's exclusive builder.

According to Gil Vaughan of Prudential Yost & Little Realty, an ecobroker and listing agent for Sanford's Creek, "Most builders just build to code. However, a select few, such as Gary Silverstein, go above and beyond the standards."

"Gary is an NAHB [National Association of Home Builders] Certified Green Professional, a BPI [Building Performance Institute] Certified Building Analyst Professional and chairman of the Triad Green Building Council," said Vaughan.

This knowledge translates into what Vaughan called, "healthy, energy efficient and environmentally friendly" homes, starting with the idea that a "house still has to breathe." To accomplish this, the homes at Sanford's Creek have a special filtering system that allows fresh air to mix with air inside the home, providing a healthier atmosphere for the owners.

Energy efficiency is built into the design of each home from the ground up with a sealed crawl space surrounding the HVAC system and duct work, which Vaughan said results in lower power bills. Additionally, the framing, insulation and energy efficient windows and doors keep each home airtight – reducing the loss of heated air in the winter and cool air in the warmer months.

"This community is only for buyers who want a home that saves them money while allowing them to enjoy the benefits of a healthy, eco-friendly, energy efficient, more comfortable and sustainable living environment without giving up on quality," said Vaughan.

Choosing a sustainable living environment at Sanford's Creek does not mean sacrificing beauty. The one Sanford's Creek home available for move-in at this time is an example of the quality and the visual appeal associated with designing an exterior with brick veneer (stone accent is another option), James Hardie siding and Trex decking, which is made from recycled soda bottles. All these products are selected for low maintenance and extended life.

"We want to keep the integrity of the look of the community with classy craftsman-style homes for an inviting neighborhood appeal," said Vaughan. "Of course, all homes must be able to be built to Energy Star standards."

"The design of the interior is solely at the buyers' discretion. We do try to make sure that they have a house that will be re-sellable someday if they ever do decide to move. And, once again, the interior features must allow the home to achieve an Energy Star or higher rating," said Vaughan.

The finished home at 3505 Sanford's Creek Ct. will be certified as a 5-Star Energy Star home and an NAHB Certified Green home. This certification will be done by a third party verifier.

Among the many energy efficient features are dual flush toilets, an on demand Navien tankless water heater, a compact fluorescent lighting package and a fireplace with blower for heat recovery. The carpet is "Green Label" – made from recycled soda bottles – and allergen resistant.

Just as important to the green philosophy is recycling the materials that are used on the job, including scrap wood, dry wall and aluminum. The leftover and waste materials from each building site are sorted to see what can be recycled. Said Silverstein, "We are finding that around 50 percent of the materials that have gone in the waste stream are recyclable. That is significant."

In order to create an environmentally responsible site, said Vaughan, the builder/designer has to create plans that do not have a significant impact on the area's natural resources, including wildlife and water. He added, "We like to say that we have left the land in the same or better condition then when we found it, while we are creating an environmentally friendly, sustainable and healthy place to live."

Sanford's Creek is zoned as a rural preservation district. According to Silverstein, "We set aside half of the land as a natural common area and we are building homes on the other half." Within the natural common area, the builder has been especially sensitive to the ecosystem – the woods, the wildlife, the creek. "All of it is very important to us, and being sensitive to those areas and maintaining them is critical to our mission."

One final way that Silverstein seeks to give back to the environment is by creating a respect for the greater community. "What we're looking to do is not only create green neighborhoods, but green communities with respect for the environment and each other," Silverstein said. Part of this philosophy means insuring that Sanford's Creek is in harmony with its surrounding neighbors.

The community hopes to foster that sense of mutual respect and community through sharing the development's walking trail. "We share the trail with Horsepower, a nonprofit therapeutic center that takes handicapped kids, mostly, and works with them through the medium of horses," he said. "Hopefully we are creating a community with Horsepower. We don't want to create islands of neighborhoods. We want there to be inter-connectedness between all the different communities here," Silverstein said.

Sanford's Creek is in northwestern Guilford County close to the intersection of Pleasant Ridge Road and NC 68, convenient to Oak Ridge, Greensboro and Winston-Salem. The area public schools are Colfax Elementary and Northwest Middle and High schools.

For directions and more information, contact Gil Vaughan at (336) 644-2091 or visit [www.justcallgil.com](http://www.justcallgil.com) or [www.silversteinconstruction.com](http://www.silversteinconstruction.com).

This story was written with assistance by Zoe Murphy.