

Project reflects history, future

By Angela Fornelli

STAFF WRITER

SUGAR GROVE — There are no houses yet on the 1,300 acres that will one day be home to the Settler's Ridge community on the village's eastern edge.

The land remains as open as it was when it was covered in cornfields, before developers broke ground on the development in late October.

But as of last week, the heart of this neighborhood has been in place.

A bronze statue of a man sowing seeds, the trademark of this community that is built around the village's history, was placed where the neighborhood's central park will one day flourish.

"The image of the sower striding purposefully through the soil, casting seeds into the fertile earth, suggests forward movement and growth coupled with a deep-rooted connection to the land — all of which is embodied in the spirit of Settler's Ridge," said Dan Urben, vice president of marketing for the development.

The 2,470-home development is the largest ever to be approved in the village. It alone will house the amount of residents that currently make up the village — about 7,500 — when it is built out in seven years.

At the same time, it will reflect what the village was like when the first settler's came. Much of the land's natural prairie and wetlands will be restored and preserved. In fact, storm water will be managed through natural wetlands rather than man-made retention ponds.

The streets, public buildings and parks are named after some of Sugar Grove's original settlers. The homes will be accessed through back alleys.

"There's an old neighborhood charm," said Rich Young, acquisition manager for the developer, Kimball Hill Homes. "It's about knowing your neighbors and having a sense of place in a community rather than living in a subdivision."

Settler's Ridge will stretch more than four miles along Gordon Road — the boundary between Sugar Grove and Aurora — from Route 56 in the north to Jericho Road in the south.

It will be home to two elementary schools and possibly a middle school, 24 acres of commercial land and possibly a future Metra station.

The first residents will be able to move in at the end of summer 2006.



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Settler's Ridge will not only add 2,470 new homes to Sugar Grove. A sculpture of a man sowing seeds in the middle of the development intends to preserve the spirit of the town as well.