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More than 1,500 have toured newly constructed RiverHeath buildings in Appleton

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Kris Oates - Community Director

First townhomes finished in RiverHeath project: FEB. 29, 2012: RiverHeath community director Kris Oates gives a tour of the first townhomes completed in the new development near the College Avenue bridge and Fox River in Appleton.

Written by Nick Penzenstadler Post-Crescent staff writer

APPLETON — As spring approaches, [developer](#) Mark Geall finds himself entranced by the ducks that hitch a ride on icebergs floating by on the creek behind his RiverHeath project near the Fox River.

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He hopes to sell that relaxing environment — and the fusion of nature and contemporary architecture — in the newly constructed townhomes beneath the [College](#) Avenue bridge near Lawrence University's Banta Bowl.

Three of the seven townhomes on the south side of the 16-acre development are finished, and another four are under way. Appleton aldermen and other city officials recently got their first inside look at the high-end homes.

"It was exciting that we were able to see the fruition of so many dreams to move this forward," said Karen Harkness, Appleton's community development director. "There



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Karen Harkness, Appleton's community development director, enjoys the view from a bedroom of a new RiverHeath townhome last month in Appleton. Three of the seven townhomes on the south side of the 16-acre development are finished, and / another four are under way.

Timeline

- May 2007: Denver-based Tanesay Development announces it has signed an agreement to buy 15-acres from Kaukauna Utilities that was formerly a [paper mill](#).
- June 2007: Tanesay unveils plans to build 75 condominiums ranging in price from \$200,000 to more than \$400,000.
- January 2008: Tanesay overcomes a hurdle with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources about the ongoing cleanup of the brown site and continues with plans for 61 condominiums.
- June 2008: Appleton Common Council votes to approve an agreement with [developers](#) to form a tax incremental financial district for the project.
- October 2008: Tanesay breaks ground on the RiverHeath project.
- May 2009: The council votes to approve roadwork and TIF district.
- June 2009: RiverHeath switches its strategy and offers leased units instead of condominiums in a multifamily structure.
- November 2009: RiverHeath awarded a \$1 million federal stimulus grant.
- March 2011: RiverHeath downsizes its plan from 56 to 26 apartments and adds plans for townhomes.
- March 2012: First furnished townhomes complete.

Karen Harkness, Appleton's community development director, enjoys the view from a bedroom of a new RiverHeath townhome last month in Appleton. Three of the seven townhomes on the south side of the 16-acre development are finished, and another four are under way. Dan Powers/The Post-Crescent

were so many city departments and contractors involved in this."

Some of the homes will be sold as entire units, selling for \$370,000 for 2,400 square feet of living space — two bedrooms, two baths and a garage. Others will be split into flats.

The homes boast floor-to-ceiling windows, hardwood floors and river views throughout — features that appeal to everybody, said Kris Oates, community director for RiverHeath and its real estate agent.

In recent weeks, more than 1,500 people toured the new box-style buildings that developers say bring Amsterdam-style architecture to Appleton.

"The reaction was way beyond what we could have expected," Oates said. "You listen and there's no noise from the bridge, even though it's right above us. It's been a very project-affirming few weeks for us."

Geall said the townhomes were built with empty-nesters in mind — those who wish to downsize, but want to retain a special piece of property. The homes will include an elevator to accommodate older owners.

"The people that might want to move here are sick of clearing the sidewalk. Because we're a condo association, that's all taken care of," Geall said.

The project's builder, John Hofferber of BerHoff Homes, said the structures are energy-efficient.

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