

REAL ESTATE

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Affordability a priority for builder

The 17th Annual Spring Parade of Homes showcases some of the most beautifully decadent houses constructed in metro Detroit — with grand staircases, professional-quality kitchens and huge master bedroom suites.

But in these rocky economic times, I'm more inclined to champion the builder who constructs an affordable yet stylish house — a home that a single mother can buy and use to teach her children the pride of ownership.

Don't get me wrong — I love, love, love the detail, design and amenities that are included in lavishly built homes. There's no better opportunity than the Parade of Homes to tour these houses,



SUZETTE HACKNEY

es, especially if you are shopping for a new home or simply want to steal some ideas. Still, luxurious features often come with a hefty price tag.

First-floor master bedrooms, for example, are the rage right now. These suites must be spacious, have divine bathrooms, a dressing room and his-and-hers closets.

But thanks to builders like Troy-based Saylor Building Co., even those who can't afford a house with a massive suite can still enjoy the perks of having a first-floor master bedroom. Saylor incorporated the bedroom as the marquee feature in a home under construction in Pontiac.

The best part: The house costs \$135,000.

"It's a throwback plan with a large covered front porch and modern amenities," said Roger Saylor, vice president of the company. "With that plan, we can fit a first-floor master suite along with a powder room on the first floor. The idea behind it was to build for people who don't want to run up and down the



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stairs. Families who have pretenses seem to be gravitating towards it. The older children can live upstairs and have their space, while the parents live downstairs."

The 1,450-square-foot home is located in Unity Park, near Woodward and Auburn, an aging neighborhood in Pontiac where infill homes are being built for low- to moderate-income residents.

In the last five years, Saylor Building Co. has constructed 18 homes in the area,

where houses date back to the early 1900s.

The Hawthorne, the name of the model with the first-floor master bedroom, is a Parade of Homes blue ribbon winner. The parade showcases 14 homes that were chosen from 106 as design winners in various price categories. Judges awarded ribbons based on best value for the price and other factors.

For those of you who want to tour the Hawthorne as part of the Parade of Homes, keep

This example of Saylor Building Co.'s Hawthorne home in Pontiac has a covered front porch, full basement and detached, two-car garage. It sells for about \$135,000. This model has been purchased and is not included in the Parade of Homes tour, but another Hawthorne is being built and can be toured.

in mind that it is still under construction. A block over, you can see what a completed home will look like, but someone already owns it, so don't try to go inside!

"I'm very happy with this home," Saylor said. "We've gotten great feedback and are providing what I consider a wonderfully affordable home." I second that.

Contact SUZETTE HACKNEY at 313-222-6610 or hackney@freepress.com.

See the homes

What: The 17th Annual Spring Parade of Homes

When: Now through April 16

How: Most model homes are open from noon to 5 p.m. or 6 p.m. daily. They're flagged with a Parade of Homes sign and you're free to walk right in.

Extras: A planning book with photos, maps and open-house tour hours is available at all LaSalle Bank branch offices. For information, visit www.laparaadeofhomes.com or call 248-952-1032.