

Custom Factory-Made Homes Transform Harbor Crossings in Egg Harbor Township

By Kevin Post, Business Editor
Photos by Ben Fogleto

Harbor Crossings is transitioning into the new era of land-lease communities, with factory-made homes whose features and qualities leave the days of mobile homes far behind.

“We’re transforming the park, one home at a time,” said Robert Dolan, whose Dolan Pleasantville Associates owns the Black Horse Pike development.

“Buy a new home now at Harbor Crossings, and it’s a high-efficiency Energy Star house manufactured by the Pine Grove Homes division of Pleasant Valley Homes of Pennsylvania. It can be a modular home or one piece, with two or three bedrooms and one or two baths, and range from 900 to 1,400 square feet,” Dolan said.



Robert Dolan, of Dolan Pleasantville Associates, shows a new two-bedroom, one-bath unit at Harbor Crossings in Egg Harbor Township. Buyers can choose the size and features of the homes, which are factory-built and shipped to the development.

The community is tied into the area’s history, and is leaving some of that history behind as the Atlantic City Race Course that once employed some of its residents has shut down.



Dolan said before his father, the late Edward J. Dolan, purchased the development in 1977, it was known as the Pleasantville Tourist Camp and probably dated to the early 1960s.

“I’d say a lot of the people were from Philadelphia,” he said. “When Atlantic City Race Course was so busy, a lot of the jockeys lived here for the season. It was called a tourist camp because it was really a vacation spot.”

Now, new residents are often people who already live in the area and are looking to downsize their house and costs, “looking to live a simpler lifestyle,” he said.

A key piece of that lifestyle came in nearly a decade ago, when Dolan Homes and South Jersey Gas ran natural gas mains throughout the community. That means new homes have heat, hot water, dryers and stoves that use the least expensive of the main home fuels.

“A lot of people here had oil or propane heat. Natural gas is just a lot easier, and people love it,” Dolan said. Buyers choose the size and features of their homes, which are then factory-built, shipped to Harbor Crossings (sometimes in two units) and erected on a redeveloped home site with sod, landscaping and concrete driveway.

Customizing can include the room sizes, flooring, skylights, appliance packages, cabinetry and countertops.

The homes, which buyers own outright, range in price from \$70,000 to \$125,000, with about \$90,000 typical, Dolan said. A list of companies provide financing up to 20 years on home purchases, but downsizers often just pay for the house up front.



The home sites are leased for about \$545 per month, which includes city water and sewer, property taxes, and trash and recycling collection. Homeowners pay personal utilities and are required to cut the grass and maintain the landscaping, he said.



If a homeowner moves out, they can sell the home. “They find a buyer, who makes an application to become a resident,” he said. “We do a background check just like an apartment house would do.”

Manufactured homes in single sections and in multiple sections seem about equally popular in New Jersey.

In 2013, of the state’s 203 new manufactured homes shipped, 110 were single-section and 93 were multi-section, data from the Manufactured Housing Institute show.

Harbor Crossings has 190 occupied sites. It is licensed for as many as 240 sites, but is focused on redeveloping the existing sites as the old trailers become available.

“We’re taking one particular street within the community and redeveloping it, from one end to the other,” Dolan said.

While one-at-a-time transformation takes time, it already has yielded results obvious to those familiar with Harbor Crossings.

“We get some people who used to live here, some coming back to purchase homes, and they’ll say, ‘I remember this place 20 years ago and I can’t believe what you’ve done with it,’” he said.

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Harbor Crossings

Location: 6737 Black Horse Pike, Egg Harbor Township

Units: 190

Prices: \$70,000 to \$125,000

Lease: \$545 per month includes taxes, city water and sewer, and trash and recycling pickup

Owner: Dolan Pleasantville Associates LLC; Robert Dolan, managing member

Founded: 1960s; Dolan family purchased in 1977; changed to Harbor Crossings in mid-1990s

Phone: 609-641-1444