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Bill and "Cissy" Schuhmann plan to open an upscale consignment shop across the street from these residential units in Norton Commons. Their shop and live-in space are under construction.

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RON BATH |
BUSINESS FIRST

Setting up Shop

Business district takes shape at Norton Commons

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When Elizabeth "Cissy" Schuhmann, 59, returned to her native Louisville last year to be near family, she was delighted to discover Norton Commons taking shape.

The innovative design behind the 595-acre, mixed-used development was reminiscent of the Baltimore neighborhood she had come to love during her six-year stint in Maryland. Plus, when Norton Commons is fully developed in the fall 2016, it will have everything she wants — green spaces, landscaping features, shops, eateries and offices — within walking distance.

So she and husband, Bill Schuhmann, purchased one of Norton Commons' live/work units at 9426 Norton Commons Blvd. with the intent of living upstairs and operating an upscale consignment shop downstairs.



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The 1,000-square-foot store, which has not yet been named, will feature local artists' work, including paintings, jewelry and handmade cards, as well as antiques and home furnishings.

If everything goes according to plan, construction should wrap up in December, and the shop will open in the spring, said Cissy Schuhmann, who is the principal owner of the business. Bill Schuhmann, who retired from Aegon while in Baltimore, will assist her with the day-to-day operations.

Other businesses commit to live/work space

The Schuhmanns' live/work unit is one in a series of five such units, all attached, that residential construction firm The Builders' Group LLC is developing along Norton Commons Boulevard, near the Meeting Street intersection.

The Builders' Group, owned by brothers Tom and Terry Chynoweth, will lease the commercial space in the first unit, located at 9420 Norton Commons Blvd.

The company then will use the upstairs space — what has been designed as a two-story townhome in the other units — for its offices.

Plus, The Builders' Group will use a garage attached to the rear of the company's building. A carriage house that is above the garage has been leased.

The remaining live/work spaces the Chynoweths are developing potentially will house:

- An unidentified ice cream shop that is interested in the second unit, 9422 Norton Commons Blvd.;

- Karem's Grill & Pub, Norton Commons' first restaurant, which is slated to open Jan. 8 in about 1,200 square feet at 9424 Norton Commons Blvd. Louie Karem, a restaurateur

who also owns Limestone Bay off River Road and Karem's Deli & Catering in St. Matthews, plans to lease the residential space upstairs.

Karem's Grill & Pub initially will be open from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. Monday through Saturday. It will have seating for up to 40 peo-





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Saratoga Accessories & Design, a home accessories and gift items shop owned by Susan Vervilles, opened earlier this month. Saratoga carries merchandise on the first two floors. The top floor of the 1,500-square-foot building functions as a personal living space for Vervilles.

ple and will serve deli sandwiches, grilled burgers and steaks, appetizers, fresh salads and soups. It also will offer a take-out deli counter and a full bar.

• Dr. Brent Haerberle, a dentist who plans to move his office to 9428 Norton Commons Blvd. from 4010 DuPont Circle and live above the 1,086-square-foot commercial space. His unit also has a carriage house in the rear of the building that he plans to use as additional living space for extended family.

Larger units also taking shape

Like The Builders' Group, residential construction firm Lancaster Built Homes Inc. also has built two live/work units, one of which will serve as the company's Norton Commons office.

Lancaster Built Homes, located on Timber Ridge Road in Prospect, plans to use the basement of one of the units as a field office, lease the first floor to a commercial tenant and then dedicate the two upstairs floors to an in-house showroom. The second property will be available for lease or sale.

Other developers are embracing the live/work concept on a larger scale.

Mark Isaacs — a Louisville architect, developer and real estate agent who is known for his in-fill projects that combine commercial and residential use — has brought his signature style to Norton Commons.

His company, Legacy Homes, has constructed what is known as the Norton Commons Seniors Residences, a 25,488-square-foot building that consists of commercial space on the first floor and 24 apartments on the top three floors.

The affordable housing units are open to seniors age 55 and older who meet

specified income requirements.

Pediatrician Stephanie Russell is in the process of buying one of the office condos, a 3,500-square-foot space where she plans to open her practice Dec. 1.

Besides the Seniors Residences, Isaacs is in the process of building two similar brick structures — a three-story building and another four-story building — both of which will have commercial tenants on the ground level and residential space on the upper levels.



Isaacs

Instead of senior apartments, the other two buildings will offer condominiums priced from \$169,900 to \$245,000.

He said he is in talks with potential tenants for the commercial space, including a wine and spirits cafe, additional physicians and a hair salon.

Development activity is just beginning

The commitments so far are just a drop in the bucket compared with what is to come, said Charles Osborn III, a managing director in Traditional Town LLC, the company that is developing Norton Commons.

At least 60 lots have been dedicated to live/work units, he said, adding that it is difficult to estimate the square footage in this component because the buildings on those lots will vary in size.

But the big picture calls for a total of 200,000 square feet of office space and 360,000 square feet of retail space in Norton Commons.

The job of attracting those commercial users falls largely to Robin Hall, principal broker for Norton Commons Realty LLC, the entity that is marketing the property and managing real estate transactions for Traditional Town.

She doesn't seem to be daunted by the task. To the contrary, Hall is confident that the rate of development is clipping along at a strong pace.

The coming months will see many new store openings, and others already are up and running.

For example, Saratoga Accessories & Design, a home accessories and gift items shop owned by Susan Vervilles, opened earlier this month.

Also located in a live/work unit on Norton Commons Boulevard, Saratoga carries merchandise on the first two floors. The top floor of the 1,500-square-foot building

Description: A 595-acre, mixed-use development that is designed to be its own community, with residences, shops, restaurants, businesses and recreational areas all within walking distance

Location: North of Ky. 22, just east of the Gene Snyder Freeway

Developer: Traditional Town LLC, which is owned by Charles Osborn Jr. and Rodney Henderson

Web site: www.nortoncommons.com

STATUS OF DEVELOPMENT

• **Home sales:** A total of 86 home sales have closed, and another 41 are under contract. Factor in the rental properties, and there are nearly 200 people living in Norton Commons to date. Projections call for a total of 500 residents by this time next year, 2,000 residents within the next five years and at least 9,000 residents when the development is completed in 2016.

• **Commercial tenants:** Goldberg & Simpson PSC law firm led the way on the commercial front when it broke ground on a 35,000-square-foot office building this past summer. Since then, a variety of other businesses have committed to the development.

• **Recreational areas:** The swimming pool opened this past summer. A park, located near Wolf Pen Branch Road, is nearly complete. Amenities include swings, benches and a court for petanque, which is similar to the Italian bocce lawn-bowling game.

functions as a personal living space that Vervilles uses as needed.

Along with existing outlets and those making last-minute preparations to open, Hall is in talks with several other business owners interested in Norton Commons.

Hall declined to identify the companies, but she said potential tenants include a coffee shop, a grocer/deli and women and children's clothing stores.

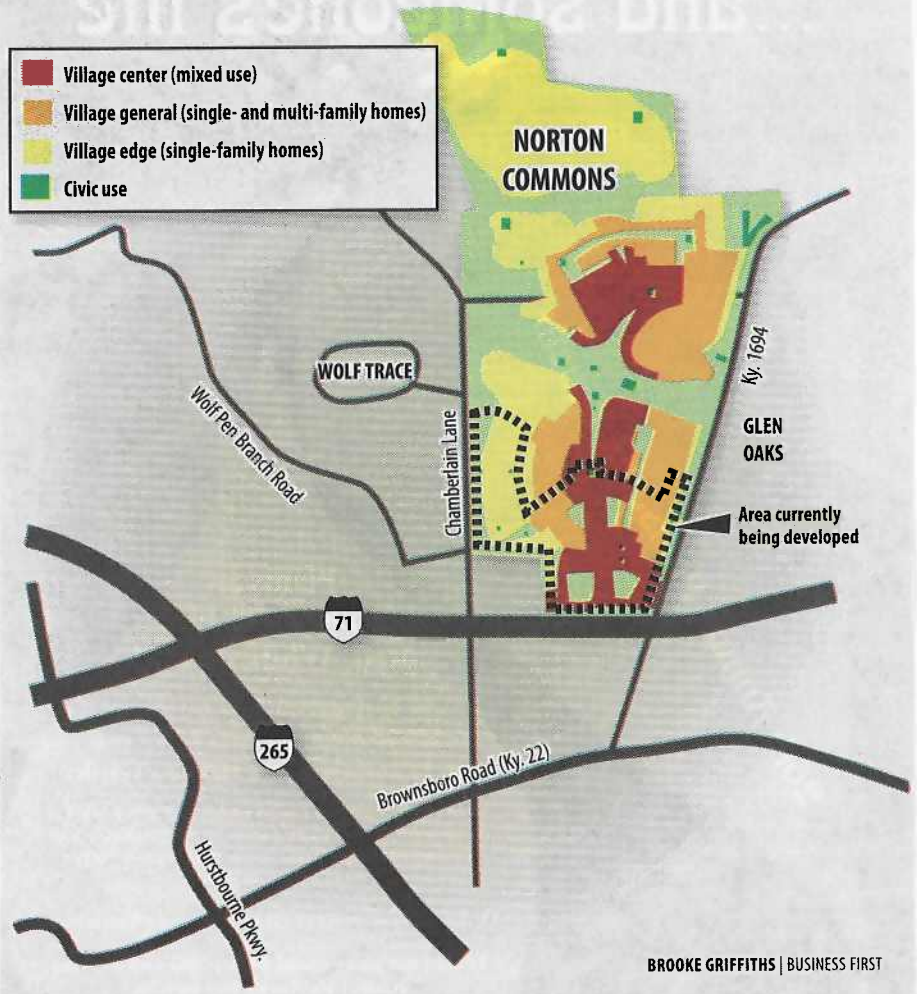
Activity on the retail front is bustling, and she expects the momentum will only continue to build.

David Tomes, also a Traditional Town managing director, agreed with her assessment.

Tomes, who owns a condo in Norton Commons, said it takes a while to get the volume of residents needed to support retail tenants.

But with nearly 200 residents in Norton Commons at this point, businesses are starting to take notice.

"The live/work space has come on strong, as we expected," Tomes said. |



RON BATH | BUSINESS FIRST
Bill and "Cissy" Schuhmann look around their future living space in Norton Commons. Downstairs, the Schuhmanns plan to operate an upscale consignment shop.