

Developer to take unique approach to living space

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By MATT DECEMBER

A local architect is hoping to build a unique community in Washington Township with a focus on agriculture.

Jason Amott, owner of Earth Environments, said the idea for the project started when a friend bought the Clare Tinknell Farm property at 31 Mile and Mound roads in Washington Township.

Amott said he will be working with the property owner to convert the property into a unique community.

"We have to work on a different philosophy because most developers buy a piece of property and try to figure out how to chop it up as many times, because that is how they make their money," he said. "This is more of an assembly of properties and trying to put them back together."

Amott said the goal for the 180-acre property is to make it into an agricultural community.

Amott said he put together three years of research regarding local demographics, Michigan initiatives, case studies and more as they try to decide how best to move forward.

Amott said the community will be home to approximately 30 families living in structures ranging from Washington Township's minimum square footage to approximately 2,000 square feet.

"We are trying to keep them smaller, compact, more interesting," he said. "We are really going to integrate the structures with the site, landscape grounds - it is not going to be boring."

Amott said farming will still take place on the 180 acres of land. He said they are examining how to maintain and use the farm buildings currently located on the property.

"It is a community farm. There will be arrangements to enjoy your farmstead and roam your land," said Amott.

Amott said the property has historic value because it is reportedly where James Thornington, the first white settler of Washington Township, lived in the early 1800s.

Amott said one of his goals in this project is to research Thornington and the original property, and how it transitioned to where it is today.

Currently the property is being farmed.

"Outdoor living spaces are going to be huge," he said.

Jennifer Bruen, who will work on the project with Amott as a community planner, said this is just not another subdivision.

"This is not a subdivision," she said. "We are kind of going back to the old way of doing things."

Amott said this will be an entirely unique living experience.

"Subdivisions are an old way to look at things," said Amott, who added that he would like to see the project entirely completed in five years.

People with interest in the project, or with suggestions or questions, should email Earth Environments at earthenvironments@gmail.com