

Garnet Oaks



Mile-long woodland trail winds through a 24-acre conservation area

Location: Foulk Road, Bethel Township, Delaware County, PA

Developer: Realen Homes, Ambler

Development Period: 1992 - 1994

Size: 58 acres, mostly forested

Percentage of Open Space: 50%

Project Highlights

- 76 single-family homes
- 24-acre wooded conservation area
- Diverse recreational opportunities and extensive trail system highlighted by a mile-long trail

Description: Over half of this 58-acre site is conserved as permanent privately-owned open space. Smaller lot sizes, 10,000-20,000 sq.ft, did not hinder sales. In fact, the open space enhanced the sales of these smaller lots in two ways: increased absorption rates and higher prices for those lots that abut the open space according to developers' own sales data for lots adjoining open space versus no open space.

Conservation Areas: In addition to wetlands, the development preserves secondary features

including a line of mature sycamore trees, an existing farm lane, a stone wall and springhouse and several areas of healthy deciduous upland woods.

Landscape Stewardship: Realen Homes took special measures to protect the trees on individual house lots and within the street right-of-way. They collaborated with the Morris Arboretum in preparing a training manual for subcontractors and conducted training sessions in tree conservation practices.



The developers preserved a line of mature sycamore trees



Amenities include a well-equipped playground, trails with boardwalk and quiet picnic grove

Recreation and Amenities: The centerpiece of Garnet Oak's open space is the near mile-long woodland trail which winds through the 24-acre conservation area connecting a well-equipped playground and a quiet picnic grove to the street system in three locations. The trail traverses areas of wet soils elevated on a simple low wooden boardwalk and features numerous small plant identification tags for various trees along the trail. Realen's staff also designed and produced an eight-page trail brochure for residents, which illustrates the flora, fauna and environmental areas, and the historic features along the trail.

Stormwater Management: The trail guide highlights the developer's use of low-lying woods as a temporary detention area for which many trees within the preserve would have been removed to provide for a conventionally-engineered basin.



For more information, contact:

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