

BAINBRIDGE ISLAND

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What's this?

Affordable housing advocates will give the first glimpse on Friday of designs for a 24-home development planned for Winslow's east edge.

"We're building a neighborhood that we hope will be seen as an asset to the entire community," said Carl Florea, director of the Housing Resources Board, the island group leading the Ferncliff Avenue project's development.

The resident-owned homes would incorporate earth-friendly features, common-use green spaces and an overall neighborhood design that puts out a welcome mat to walkers and cyclists rather than cars. The project would also add to the island's nearly non-existent stock of homes affordable to middle-income earners.

"Affordability and sustainability are our primary goals," said island architect Julie Kriegh, who is leading the project's design work.

The project is taking shape on 6.2 acres donated to the HRB in 2007. The HRB plans to begin building 24 single-family and duplex townhouses in 2010. The two- and three-bedroom homes would range in size from 1,200 to 1,400 square feet.

A second phase would include another 24 units in the years to come.

A qualified buyer could acquire only a site's house while the land would remain in an HRB-administered trust. The houses would cost substantially less than a typical house because the land's value would be removed from the purchase price, Florea said. Resale restrictions would limit equity to keep the homes affordable to future buyers.

The homes would include energy-efficient features and landscape elements that reduce stormwater runoff. Parking would be tucked away from the street and the overall design of the neighborhood would encourage walking and other non-motorized forms of transportation, Kriegh said.

HRB has raised \$100,000 for the project, and it hopes to generate much more from government grants and local donations.

The HRB design meeting is scheduled for 6 p.m. on Friday at Bainbridge Commons, 402 Brien Drive.