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Developers try to capture history of 'Old South' Hernando in Jefferson subdivision

Memphis Business Journal - by [Jamie Appling](#)

Four local developers from Hernando decided in 2005 to build a subdivision with a specific vision in mind -- tradition. The Jefferson Group has teamed up with Looney Ricks Kiss Architects, Inc., to make that dream possible.

Richie Burnette, Roy Holmes, Pat Davis and Rip Walker are developing the new subdivision called Jefferson in memory of the Old South.

Hernando was originally known as the settlement of Jefferson in 1833. The developers wanted to tie in this piece of the county seat's history to their establishment.

Burnette, president of The **Burnette Co.**, a commercial and industrial real estate brokerage firm, has lived in Hernando for 30 years and grew up in the Mississippi Delta. Holmes has been in the developing and general contracting business for 35 years. Davis is a retired bank president from New Albany, and Walker works as a real estate appraiser.

The team began planning for the subdivision in 2005 and began construction five months ago.

There is one home completed, four under construction by Dream Home Construction and 66 planned for the first phase. There are 66 more acres to develop for phases two and three. An open house will be held Oct. 11.

"We came in late in the game, but we decided to work with them because with this subdivision, they are doing what we try to do with each of our homes," says Carson Looney, principal in charge of housing with Looney Ricks Kiss. "We don't build cookie-cutter homes, but we do want continuity throughout a community to bring it all together."

Looney says working with the developers was interesting because they were all from such different backgrounds, but they all had the same vision -- creating a great place to live rather than selling units.

The homes are modern, easy-living homes with a "rooted and timeless" design, Looney says. The homes will range from 2,800-3,500 square feet and cost \$300,000-\$395,000, Walker says.

Walking trails with benches every few hundred feet cover the streetscape, offering views of a gazebo fashioned after old town-square meeting places and a pond with a fountain.

They both are lit up at night, making it a more beautiful setting after the sun goes down, Burnette says. Phase two of the subdivision will include a swimming pool.

"With the state the housing market is in, we had to set ourselves apart and offer something more than just another row of houses that happen to have a name at the beginning of the street," Holmes says.

Hernando's population has grown 55% from 6,812 in 2000 to 10,580 in 2006, according to the **U.S. Census Bureau**.

"Hernando is a unique town -- it is the only 'town' left in the county," Burnette says. "It has the square and the traditional feeling we were trying to capture, so it was only fitting to build here."

Doug Dickens, vice president of special projects for **Boyle Investment Co.** and recent award winner for his Pinnacle of Germantown development, says to create a good subdivision, a developer must pay attention to location, economics and environment.

"You have to treat the land with tender loving care and try to save the natural components as much as possible," Dickens says. "The location, design team and builders must all work in sync for it to work successfully."

The team hopes Jefferson's convenient location near Wal-Mart will be a selling point, Walker says.

The team planted trees as they began planning in the hopes of creating an established environment, Burnette says.

"We hope when people look around five years from now, this place will look as if it has been here for 20 years," Burnette says.

Jefferson

New subdivision in Hernando, Miss.

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