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On the House: Dublin-area project blossoming

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Thirty minutes from Downtown, in the southeastern corner of Union County, a village is taking shape.

Launched five years ago, when the housing market was in rubble, Jerome Village is starting to resemble the mega-development it will one day become.

More than 250 homes are occupied in the community and another 120 are under construction. That's still a long way from the 2,200 homes expected when Jerome Village is finished, but the pace has picked up dramatically since central Ohio sales started rebounding in 2012.

The community's progress has mirrored central Ohio's economy: modest activity in 2010, some growth after 2012 and now in full swing.

"It's been growing steadily," said Tina Guegold, director of marketing for Nationwide Realty Investors, developer of Jerome Village. "Once we got the project started, it just kept growing."

A massive barn housing Pasquale's restaurant and overlooking a pool greets visitors to the development. Thirteen builders are working in Jerome Village's nine neighborhoods, and 11 model homes are open. The result is a sort of shopping center for homes.

While many homes in Jerome Village have been modest by new development standards — selling in the \$300,000s — the developer is turning its attention to affluent buyers.

Lots are being prepared for a neighborhood where homes will start at \$750,000 and rise to "several million" dollars, Guegold said.

While the community's first phases are pleasant and well-done, they don't offer a radical departure from other housing developments. The homes only hint at the nine tra-



Plum Ridge is a private, gated neighborhood that will bring 22 high-end custom designed houses to Jerome Village.

ditional architectural styles that Jerome Village celebrates.

The new, costlier parts of Jerome Village, however, are far more suggestive of the community's potential.

Homes more clearly reflect the craftsman, shingle, farmhouse and other architectural styles allowed.

But the most distinguishing feature in Jerome Village's new phases is the one often missing in new developments: trees.

Nationwide says 500 of the development's 1,500 acres will be kept green. The result will be a community far more akin to the heavily landscaped Muirfield Village than to New Albany, central Ohio's only other developments that rival Jerome Village in scale.

But Jerome Village still has a long way to go.

No progress has been made on the schools or commercial district planned for the community. Likewise, there are no alternatives to single-family homes in the community, although Nationwide is working with Epcon to carve out a spot for patio-home condominiums.

But now, a village is clearly in the making. ■