

News > Local

Sharing Meadows prepares to add fifth village of new homes

By Deborah Sederberg
Staff Writer

Published: Monday, January 2, 2012 5:06 PM CST

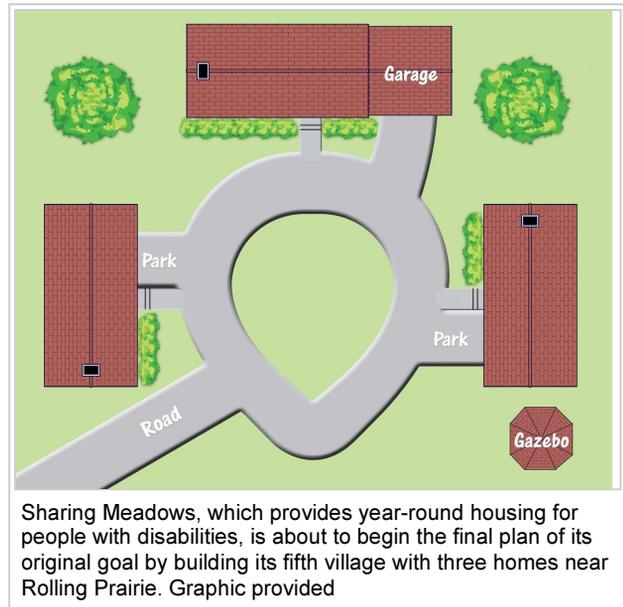
Print Page

ROLLING PRAIRIE — Four-fifths — 80 percent — of the dream is up and operating.

Now the Rev. Dennis Blaney, founder and president of the SHARE Foundation, which operates Sharing Meadows, a residential facility serving adults with disabilities (or "other-abled" adults, as the SHARE folks say) is taking the next step by planning to add a fifth village of three homes.

Sharing Meadows serves the vocational and social needs of residents in a village setting near Rolling Prairie.

Cost of constructing the village is estimated at \$501,000. Sharing Meadows hopes to break ground late next summer on the project.



Sharing Meadows, which provides year-round housing for people with disabilities, is about to begin the final plan of its original goal by building its fifth village with three homes near Rolling Prairie. Graphic provided

The Share Foundation still has about \$300,000 to raise "Because of the generosity of many people, we have already raised a substantial amount," Blaney said in a letter to supporters.

"We are asking you to consider pledging a gift of \$25, \$50, \$100 or more per month for the next year or to make a one-time donation.

"You have helped us to come this far and we are counting on you again," the newsletter states.

A Catholic priest, now retired from ministry in the diocese, Blaney is the former pastor of Sacred Heart Church in Michigan City.

Each village at Sharing Meadows consists of three 3-bedroom, 2-bathroom homes for two villagers and one steward or a couple serving as stewards to help villagers with various needs. Married couples and Catholic nuns have served as stewards as have single adults.

"We get young people just after college who want to do something meaningful with their lives before getting on with their careers or graduate school," said Kathleen Kelly, executive director of Sharing Meadows. Occasionally, active retirees serve as stewards, she noted.

The main goal is to be sure that each villager is "safe and loved," Kelly said.

The houses are factory-built. Two of the three in each village are secured on slabs and one is built over a basement. "We use basements for storage," Kelly noted, "and of course, in case of severe weather."

Each village has a garage to house one van per village.

"Sharing Meadows, provides a tranquil place for other-abled adults to live, work, and relax in peace and dignity," Blaney wrote in a recent letter to kick off a capital campaign for the fifth village.

"(At Sharing Meadows),the unique gifts of each individual are recognized and appreciated, as they are able to focus on what they are able to do."

Visitors flock to Sharing Meadows on the first Sunday of August every year for the annual Leprechaun Hunt and picnic.

The four villages plus an all-purpose building known as the St. Timothy Camp because it sometimes is used as a facility for other-abled summer campers in which to work and eat. Offices also are located in that buildings.

Other facilities include a wood shop, a guest house, a swimming pool with pool house and two storage buildings.

To help, those who are interested may mail checks to SHARE Foundation, P. O. Box 400, Rolling Prairie, Ind., 46371-0400. For more information, see the website at www.sharefoundation.org, where gift items crafted by the villagers, are available, or call (219) 778-2582.