

Home Building on the Strand Is Coming Back Green



Rendering by Andrea Taylor Ballard

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~Tom Baker

Impressive Green Buildings recently began construction on its new signature green home in the Sago Plantation section of the Legends development at 732 Jade Dr in Myrtle Beach. The green home makes use of the newest energy efficiency, renewable energy, conservation and technological advances in homebuilding. More than that, this house is built with the most healthful toxin-free materials and waste-free construction methods, and even includes a high-tech lap swimming pool for fitness. Mind, body and spirit are all considered in this Earth-friendly, energy efficient new home, as the future of homebuilding has taken a leap forward. This may even give a boost to the sluggish new home building industry in South Carolina as well. The green home structure is now “closed in,” meaning that the shell and outside are complete and protected from weather, and that the interior finishes, trim and construction can

proceed. While some of the systems are still being installed, tours and demonstrations of this “house of the future” will be led by Tom Baker, owner of Impressive Green Builders, during the Jan. 23 all-day public open house. There will also be a special Green Building Council preview on Jan. 18 from 6 to 8 pm.

Impressive Green is well known for concrete construction, and this new home will be built using the Insulated Concrete Form (ICF) method that is fast becoming common along the Strand. ICF is perfect for this area due to both its inherent strength in resisting hurricane damage and its exceptional insulation characteristics in our hot and humid environment. The walls are made with insulation forms that surround a reinforced concrete core, allowing for waste-free construction and strong, air-tight walls. Buildings constructed using this system seal well and maintain steady interior tempera-

tures with a variance of barely a degree or two. “This is planned as a zero energy building,” Baker explains. “With rooftop solar hot water heating, supplemental solar electricity and low energy requirements, we’re hoping to bring the house in at a net zero utility bill.”

Denise Sherman planned the landscaping, with native species and natural ground covers that require very little watering. “The bedding plants are a local raspberry vine, and water for landscaping comes from the rainwater recovery system,” Sherman said. Design and landscaping were coordinated with the Sago Plantation/Legends developers, and this house on the lake blends in well with the conventional homes that surround it, in spite of the special features. “There’s a little more water-demanding turf than I would have liked,” Sherman added. “The developer had certain neighborhood requirements for lawns that we had to meet, so we did.” Baker consulted with Claude St. Hilaire of the Home Energy Group in Charleston on ways to meet Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) criteria on this project. Baker expects to reach no less than a LEED gold certification for the house, though his fingers are crossed that it achieves the higher platinum level. “This certification becomes a part of the value of the house, and the appraiser and bank will recognize that,” Baker said.

Features include high energy efficient windows and doors, a geothermal heat pump air conditioning system with special dehumidification for added efficiency, solar hot water heating, supplemental solar electric systems, rainwater recovery systems, a sophisticated electrical control system for house utilities, Energy Star appliances and CFL and LED lighting. Interior finishes are sustainable, renewable, non-toxic and do not contain off-gassing chemicals. According to Sherman, “The beautiful carpeting that Amanda at Impressive Green chose is actually a corn-based product—can you believe it?”

For more info on the Earth-friendly LEED Home at Sago Plantation and the public open house event, call Impressive Green at (843) 215-2607 or visit ImpressiveGreen.com. See ad page 11.