

2009 MNCBIA Environmental Awards

Entrant: Covell Communities

Category: Land Development

Project: Chester River Landing

Chester River Landing is located on the banks of the Chester River within the city limits of Chestertown, Maryland. Situated due east (across the Chesapeake Bay) from Baltimore, Chester River Landing is only ninety minutes of driving time from the metropolitan centers of Philadelphia, Washington, D.C., and Baltimore along some of Maryland's most scenic roadways. Guests at Chester River Landing have been known to visit by boat traveling one hour from the Chesapeake Bay along the Chester River and an enchanting coastline that curls past grand homes from the 18th and 19th centuries situated on farmlands broken only by the tidewater tributaries of the Chesapeake. The beauty of the Eastern Shore and its waterways, the tranquility of a rural setting, and the ambiance of living history offer residents a variety of pleasing experiences.

Chester River Landing was created from an EPA recognized Brownfield site, previously a fuel transfer and storage location. Through the combined efforts of the Maryland Department of the Environment, the Army Corps of Engineers, Environmental Resources Inc, McCrone Engineering, Restoration Ecological Services, and Covell Communities, Chester River Landing has become the envy of the city. During the clean-up and construction of this waterfront property all associated organizations worked together to develop and return this area to its natural splendor.

With the goal for a reduction of environmental impact and in the desire for the perfect community, Covell Communities wanted even the local wildlife to move in; therefore we reestablished a wetlands conservation area. Environmental concerns along the Chesapeake tidal areas are at a critical point with new construction development along those shorelines. Giving back nature a hospitable tidal area Covell Communities lead in the redevelopment of a tidal wetlands area that had been silted in over the years. This wetlands area is critical to the local wildlife in providing a tidal water habitat to nest and repopulate while being protected from the surging waters of the Chester River.

Additional site improvements were made to this Brownfield site that directly affects the surrounding natural environment. The mouth of Radcliff Creek empties in to the Chester River along one side of the development. Between the combination of tidal surges and silt runoff areas of the creek delta had deteriorated. With the installation of stone sills along the perimeter the community was able to reestablish beach areas with native grasses. Oyster shell walking paths were created along the shoreline to provide the residences with ways to view the natural surroundings while allowing a reduction of impervious surfaces. With the impossibility of completely removing all the environmentally toxic material from the site clean-up, the walking path include a drainage system below the shells that collects any remaining material and runoff and redirects it to a control pond before it reaches the Chester River.

Designed for those who appreciate life's finer leisure's, Chester River Landing offers everything you desire from a waterfront home including beautifully landscaped pocket parks throughout the community. The community entrance area includes a park area that incorporates a pond with an illuminated fountain and collects all rain and runoff from the community and its homes, filters the water, and returns it to the Chester River. A central waterfront park was also created includes of a fire ring and plenty of green space to relax and watch the flowing river and harbor with friends and neighbors. Included in each of these parks natural landscape designs limit watering needs for the community as well as maintains the local wildlife habitat.

Matching the existing town's architecture was the main focus in the construction of the community. A wide range of home styles were developed to meet the needs of the residents, all designed with immediate and future needs in mind as our owners mature in age. Products such as three story elevated 3,250 sq' townhomes, 3,200 sq' one-level penthouses, 2,275 sq' two story townhomes, and 1,300 sq' single floor living homes all meet the requirements of the purchasers at any stage in their life. Each home style home has been constructed to last as well as efficient using the best finishes and equipment available. All homes include features such as tankless water heaters, manifold water supplies, high efficiency HAVC systems with automatic damper control, air sealed insulation packages, Energy Star rated appliances and fixtures, argon filled windows, and maintenance free exteriors. Combine the construction materials/methods used as well and the environmental improvements made and Chester River Landing is truly a unique development that will be appreciated well into the future.