

Home remodeling in front-row seat

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Morrell Builders Inc. and Pride Mark Homes Inc. have seen the future in Rochester, and it is remodeling.

The longtime home builders have opened Inde Intuitive Design, with a 5,000-square-foot showroom, in a new building in Perinton.

Inde Intuitive Design will focus on redesign, additions and project management. The two companies are hoping to capitalize on the stability of the Rochester housing market and the desire of homeowners to redo their existing properties.

Jeff Morrell, co-owner of Morrell Builders, said the new facility at 1501 Pittsford-Victor Road is now the headquarters for both home builders, though he figures the showroom will be the big draw. The 21,000-square-foot building will also accommodate other tenants.

Rick Herman, CEO of the Rochester Home Builders' Association Inc., said many builders are diversifying into remodeling. "People are spending more on their homes. People are more content in their old homes. But they want granite countertops."

The redesign business can be lucrative. Morrell said redesigns can range from \$15,000 to more than \$300,000, and the demand in Rochester is probably 10 times larger than the new-home market.

Marketed as a one-stop redesign center, the Inde Intuitive Design showroom has many types of faucets, tiles, shingles and other items on display inside model kitchens, bathrooms and living rooms.

This type of new design center will allow homeowners to do their comparisons -- of paint colors to carpets and of carpets to tiles -- without running all over the city, Morrell said, arguing that that process can frustrate and confound consumers.

"Somebody is pulling all the pieces together," Morrell said.

Inde Intuitive Design is situated on the main road to and from Victor and Eastview Mall to catch traffic.

Even though the business doesn't have a grand opening until Sept. 23, the firm has signed 20 redesign contracts already, Morrell said.

He said major redesigns usually begin in the kitchen. Homeowners then focus on the master bedroom and master bathroom.

Fading in popularity in new-home construction is the dining room. Morrell said his home-building business averages 35 houses a year, but he hasn't built a dining room in three years.

Herman said dining rooms are largely a thing of the past.

"People are into open areas and open spaces. They eat in the kitchen area, or a great room area."

Pride Mark Homes was formed in 1972. Its principals are Jim Barbato Sr. and Jim Barbato Jr.

Morrell Builders was founded in 1947.

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Abstract (Document Summary)

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