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PHOTO BY MARTY BRINKMAN

In this open floor plan at 719 Still Meadow Lane in Fox Hill Farm, the dining room's drop circle ceiling frames a custom chandelier and large windows provide views of a koi pond with three waterfalls and the beauty of Fox Hill Farm.

Ample opportunities in Fox Hill Farm

BY SALLY KEENEY
CORRESPONDENT

There is a beautiful contemporary house available in the rolling woods and meadows of Fox Hill Farm in Hillsborough. A working farm of 1,300 acres for more than 50 years, Fox Hill Farm still has large ponds and open meadows as it did when two generations of the Fox family tended cattle there.

Now that the farm has given way to homes for the growing Triangle area, residents will appreciate how much time the Fox family spent preserving the rural character by keeping greenways and open spaces as well as adding walking and horseback riding trails, ponds and other water features for the enjoyment of its residents.

It's a great place for communing with nature and riding horses. Home owners with 10-acre lots can board horses on their property. Those with smaller lots can board horses at one of several facilities in the area. There are 207 lots — ranging in size from two to 10 acres — in the Fox Hill Farm Home Owners Association that have been sold or are currently for sale. Homes have been built on about three-quarters of those 207 lots.

Developed in five sections, Fox Hill Farm is now in its fourth section of development with home sites starting at \$116,000. Wooded, partially wooded and open home sites from two to five acres with restrictive covenants ensure privacy and natural beauty for everyone living on the farm.

The contemporary home at 719 Still Meadow Lane in Fox Hill Farm's fourth section is set on almost three-and-a-half acres on a knoll that allows views of the koi pond and three waterfalls from large expanses of glass in the home's 5,225 square feet.

The house was designed in 2004-2005 for Cheri Ross and Tim Lenoir as a joint venture by architects David Arneson of Center Studio Architecture in Durham and Lyn McClay of DesignSpec in Chapel Hill. It was built in 2006 by Kenny Pope Builders. Interior design was by Cindy Spuria of Sitzer Spuria Studios. Landscape design was by Todd Whaley of Edge

Effect Landscape of Hillsborough.

Arneson and McClay used stone, steel, cedar and glass to create rooms that effortlessly put those inside in touch with the great outdoors. A long, stone wall runs the length of the house which was designed for both passive and active solar. A front door with forged bronze hardware welcomes visitors to enjoy the feel of Cumaru hardwoods underfoot and the sight above of brushed steel I-beams with copper rivets.

All public rooms in the house open to the center-island kitchen with its light cherry cabinets, granite counters, brushed steel fixtures and appliances, including a Sub-Zero refrigerator, Miele ovens, Wolf industrial-grade range and Fisher and Paykel two-drawer dishwasher.

There are dual Rumford fireplaces in the family room and screened



Flagstone in the wide driveway lead to a contemporary home on 3.5 acres.

porch. Other public rooms include a 49- x 10-foot gallery, large living room with fireplace, dining room with drop circle ceiling, and a well-equipped media room. The main level also has an exercise room with adjacent full bath; laundry room with adjacent powder room; and a home office with vaulted ceiling, windows on all four walls, as well as built-in mahogany bookshelves

SEE CONTEMPORARY, PAGE 2B

Housing changes needed for people, planet

Last month I wrote about the passing of Mrs. Effie Nunn Merritt and how her memorial service was symbolic of the passing of an era in the Northside neighborhood. Last week I attended the funeral mass of Chris Derby, who died unexpectedly at the relatively young age of 57.

Robert Dowling

I didn't know Chris well but I always thought of him as a very nice person, willing to engage in thoughtful conversation. At the funeral mass, I learned that Chris was not just a big man, he was a man with an even bigger heart. A devoted husband and father, Chris was a shining light of positive energy to all who knew him, but particularly his family.

For some reason, Chris' passing has had a more significant impact on me than I would have expected. It reinforced for me the importance of using our time well. We all grow older every day and none of us knows when we too will leave these mortal bodies behind. Therefore, we should live our lives with purpose and joy (preaching to myself here), more concerned about the wellbeing of others than ourselves.

How does this relate to affordable housing? I believe that we are a thoughtful, compassionate community that lives purposefully. I don't think we want to become a place primarily for students, retirees and the well off. We care about our community and how it is changing.

Chapel Hill and Carrboro are great places to live, but many among us are unable to live here and are forced to commute long distances to work. The recent snow and ice taught us that many of the people we depend upon, such as UNC Health Care employees, our bus drivers and our teachers need additional in-town housing options.

Of course, there are others who are in even greater need, such as homeless veterans, people with disabilities and those who work at or close to the minimum wage.

As I have said before, 'the market' is unlikely to provide rental or ownership housing that is affordable without sufficient incentives. I'm glad that elected officials in both Chapel Hill and Carrboro are currently studying our ordinances and incentives. I would encourage us to move forward, knowing it won't be perfect and we'll need to make changes again in the future. But if we err on the side of compassion for people and planet, we should be alright.

After all, time is passing us all by. Let us proceed with purpose and joy.

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