

Woodhaven Forest defies market



DAVID HOPPER PHOTOS: FOR THE CHRONICLE

MODEL HOME: A two story model home in the Woodhaven Forest subdivision in Conroe, Loop 336 south and Sgt. Ed Holcomb Blvd. The neighborhood that experienced an upswing in growth with 154 home sites, and another 50 acres all ready for 100 more homes.

Conroe subdivision has good location

THE real estate market is slow in Conroe, but one neighborhood experiencing an upswing is Woodhaven Forest. Project manager Tony Padua said the secret to the subdivision's success is location.

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WELCOME HOME: A divided roadway and informational signs welcome visitors.

Future bright in Woodhaven Forest

■ Conroe subdivision has experienced growth upswing

By BETH KUHLES
CHRONICLE CORRESPONDENT

THE real estate market is slow in Conroe, but there are a handful of developments where houses are selling.

Conroe issued permits to build 275 new homes in 2009, down from a high of 854 new starts in 2006.

Among the subdivisions growing last year by more than 25 homes were Graystone Hills, Harborside, Woodhaven Forest and Stewart's Forest, according to an annual survey of new homes by the city of Conroe.

Permits were issued for 49 new homes in January and February.

One neighborhood that experienced an upswing is Woodhaven Forest on Loop 336 South at Sgt. Ed Holcomb Blvd.

Ready for more houses

This new subdivision has 154 home sites with another 50 acres ready for 100 more houses.

Project manager Tony Padua said the secret to their success is the location.

Just 1.5 miles from Interstate 45, the area provides easy access to either The Woodlands to the south or Texas 105 to the north.

The Conroe Regional Medical Center is less than a mile away.

"Location has been real important in keeping our sales up," Padua said.

"We are 1.5 miles from (Interstate) 45, seven miles from The Woodlands.

"You've got the medical center right there and you have easy access to (Texas) 105 or The Woodlands."

With home prices ranging from the \$140,000s to \$220,000, the development is also affordable.

It is attracting teachers, nurses, government workers and police officers, many from around the area.

"Conroe is up and coming and is the next best thing to the Woodlands," said Dana Foster, a real estate agent with Ronnie and Cathy Matthews Re/MAX Legends in Spring.

"It has lower taxes, it has the feeling of the trees and it is close to the Woodlands amenities.

"The schools are also good in the Conroe Independent School District."

Woodhaven Forest is surrounded by trees and open space and much of it will not be developed.

On one side is Camp Strake owned by the Boys Scouts of America and nearby is low-lying areas prone to flooding that are unlikely to be developed, Padua.

"The fact is we are surrounded by trees," said Padua.

"It our intention to leave it that way."



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WIDE, CURBED STREETS: Wide streets welcome visitors to the Woodhaven Forest subdivision in Conroe, Loop 336 South and Sgt. Ed Holcomb Blvd.

NEW HOMES

New homes in Conroe between 2004 and 2009

- 2004: 587
- 2005: 807
- 2006: 854
- 2007: 607
- 2008: 332
- 2009: 275

Source: Conroe Community Development

"Location has been real important in keeping our sales up."

TONY PADUA, project manager

Woodhaven Forest developers also take pride in extra wide roadways, which provide easy navigation around the neighborhoods, even when cars are parked on the street.

There are two builders available in the community at this time, Compass Point Homes and Gehan Homes.

Unlike many other subdivisions, Woodhaven Forest has houses built on speculation that are available for move-in home buyers.

Foster said the home builder provide quality, energy-efficient homes.

"The location and active product are selling homes," Padua said.

Despite the economy, Padua sees Conroe as an up-and-coming city. The Conroe Regional Medical Center is a large draw in the area, and the city and county governments are growing.

The city also has a very strong industrial base in Conroe Park North.

TOP-SELLING SUBDIVISIONS

Following are the leading subdivisions with the most houses sold in 2009 in the Conroe area, according to a survey by Crawford Realty commissioned by the Houston Chronicle.

Subdivision	School Dist.	Typical Pr. range (1,000s)	price sq. ft.	price sq. ft.	pct. chg.	sales 2009	sales 2008	tot. in sub.
Walden	Montgomery	\$127-\$148	\$85.24	\$82.83	-4.0%	172	2,503	
Bentwater	Montgomery	\$190-\$758	\$104.17	\$91.66	-12.0%	96	1,648	
April Forest	Montgomery	\$123-\$386	\$85.11	\$85.70	0.7%	85	1,700	
Royal Forest	Willis	\$54-\$102	\$59.46	\$59.56	17.0%	56	453	
Graystone Hills	Conroe	\$232-\$371	\$90.42	\$91.67	1.4%	45	240	
River Plantation	Conroe	\$112-\$240	\$69.98	\$58.55	-16.3%	39	1,238	
Caddo Village	Willis	\$74-\$98	\$56.74	\$56.55	-0.3%	39	389	
Grand Harbor	Montgomery	\$265-\$594	\$108.40	\$101.50	-6.4%	38	438	
Seven Coves	Willis	\$127-\$303	\$83.87	\$84.85	1.2%	37	600	
Point Aquarius	Willis	\$125-\$456	\$85.02	\$87.86	3.3%	35	644	
Crown Oaks	Montgomery	\$276-\$414	\$111.35	\$98.81	-11.3%	31	452	
Teas Lakes	Willis	\$117-\$152	\$78.58	\$77.72	-1.1%	30	342	
Cape Conroe	Montgomery	\$110-\$190	\$76.40	\$79.52	4.1%	28	697	
Lake Conroe Hills	Willis	\$72-\$140	\$71.43	\$77.04	7.9%	26	434	
Rivershire	Conroe	\$110-\$170	\$64.50	\$61.64	-4.4%	24	561	
Lake Conroe Forest	Montgomery	\$49-\$145	\$80.19	\$74.41	-7.2%	22	611	
Stewarts Forest	Conroe	\$147-\$280	\$73.74	\$73.59	-0.2%	20	317	
Montgomery Trace	Con., Mont.	\$230-\$386	\$99.91	\$103.05	3.1%	19	344	
Summerset Estates	Conroe	\$65-\$81	\$59.14	\$54.97	-7.1%	17	337	
Artesian Oaks	Conroe	\$97-\$126	\$66.43	\$62.37	-6.1%	17	226	
Stone Star Ranch	Conroe	\$32-\$64	\$29.37	\$34.41	17.2%	16	NA	
Crighton Woods	Conroe	\$327-\$455	\$95.02	\$92.30	-2.8%	15	124	
Tejas Creek	Conroe	\$112-\$145	\$75.24	\$71.66	-4.8%	15	166	
Grand Lake Estates	Montgomery	\$218-\$389	\$97.30	\$90.66	-6.8%	14	199	
Corinthian Point	Willis	\$104-\$211	\$78.15	\$68.04	-12.9%	14	258	
Briar Grove	Conroe	\$112-\$163	\$78.77	\$77.28	-1.9%	12	130	
Shady Woods	Conroe	\$78-\$128	\$73.57	\$57.82	-21.4%	12	139	
Kellyn Oaks	Conroe	\$66-\$95	\$51.60	\$51.31	-0.6%	12	70	
Ridgelaque Shores	Conroe	\$201-\$347	\$91.76	\$88.48	-3.6%	12	150	
Crighton Ridge	Conroe	\$299-\$471	\$100.98	\$99.34	-1.6%	11	291	
Robinwood	Conroe	\$76-\$110	\$62.96	\$59.85	-4.9%	11	262	
La Salle Crossing	Conroe	\$83-\$135	\$52.99	\$58.52	10.4%	11	201	
Deer Run	Conroe	\$100-\$143	\$97.37	\$80.12	-17.7%	10	115	
Parkside of Panorama	Willis	\$131-\$158	\$87.56	\$84.42	-3.6%	10	88	
Shadow Bay	Willis	\$19-\$130	\$37.58	\$23.26	-38.1%	10	81	
Olde Oaks	Willis	\$79-\$124	\$51.64	\$61.08	18.3%	10	96	
Southwind Ridge	Conroe	\$120-\$185	\$69.22	\$76.88	11.1%	9	104	
Emerson Estates	Conroe	\$23-\$41	\$25.95	\$23.07	-11.1%	9	NA	
Falcon Spring/The Lake	Montgomery	\$222-\$505	\$100.40	\$76.71	-23.6%	8	49	
Sunrise Ranch	Montgomery	\$93-\$129	\$67.70	\$63.32	-6.5%	8	90	
Timber Line Estates	Conroe, Willis	\$162-\$259	\$102.94	\$112.29	9.1%	8	145	
Woodcrest	Conroe	\$84-\$108	\$55.91	\$65.57	17.3%	7	232	
Oak Tree	Conroe	\$188-\$237	\$93.63	\$95.00	1.5%	7	NA	
Crockett Trace	Conroe	\$38-\$77	\$35.86	\$30.30	-15.5%	7	NA	
Panorama-Hiwon	Willis	\$118-\$189	\$70.77	\$72.12	1.9%	7	211	
Silverstone	Conroe	\$314-\$472	\$96.15	\$85.35	-11.2%	7	121	
Shady Oak Estates	Magnolia	\$40-\$94	\$40.74	\$44.81	10.0%	7	NA	
Pin Oak	Willis	\$20-\$45	\$26.79	\$25.22	-5.9%	7	NA	
Twin Shores	Willis	\$137-\$529	\$89.94	\$87.13	-3.1%	7	150	
Clear Water Cove	Montgomery	\$117-\$246	\$83.49	\$88.77	6.3%	7	85	
South Shore Estates	Montgomery	\$247-\$448	\$138.92	\$123.08	-11.4%	7	89	
Summer Wood	Willis	\$132-\$170	\$74.89	\$71.64	-4.3%	6	72	
Artesian Forest	Conroe	\$87-\$141	\$65.76	\$63.99	-2.7%	6	115	
Lake Conroe Village	Montgomery	\$26-\$80	\$35.01	\$26.59	-24.1%	6	37	
Walnut Cove	Willis	\$23-\$64	\$41.53	\$45.04	8.5%	6	255	
Buffalo Springs	Montgomery	\$224-\$255	\$104.38	\$97.84	-6.3%	6	NA	
Texas National	Conroe, Willis	\$114-\$160	\$76.83	\$74.37	-3.2%	6	160	
Foster Oaks	Conroe	\$83-\$97	\$65.60	\$53.80	-18.0%	5	122	
Pinay Point	Conroe	\$105-\$129	\$80.04	\$75.43	-5.8%	5	72	
Arbor Place	Conroe	\$100-\$128	\$54.26	\$49.14	-9.4%	5	136	
Vill. at Crockett Trace	Conroe	\$65-\$81	\$50.65	\$47.04	-7.1%	5	50	
Pinewood Forest	Conroe	\$80-\$130	\$45.72	\$47.70	4.3%	5	60	
West Fork	Conroe	\$230-\$336	\$84.34	\$86.16	2.2%	5	103	
Stone Ranch	Montgomery	\$152-\$193	\$97.98	\$93.70	-4.4%	5	55	
White Oak Hills	Willis	\$36-\$70	\$34.60	\$29.02	-16.1%	5	NA	

"People see the north and they associate Conroe as an extension of The Woodlands," Padua said. "The Woodlands ends at (Texas) 242 and in three more exits, less than

six miles, you are already in Conroe. A lot of people really like The Woodlands, but the prices are very expensive. It is like Inner Loop prices in Houston."