



Courtesy illustration

**CORNER CONCEPT:** Variable lot sizes are a distinctive feature of the Clevenger's Corner plan for a mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly development which was submitted to the Culpeper County Planning Commission in December.

# Developer submits plans for Clevenger's Corner

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Jim Epstein, chairman of Washington, D.C.-based EFO Capital Management, Inc., has submitted preliminary paperwork to the Culpeper County Planning Commission for a commercial and residential development at Clevenger's Corner.

Epstein began developing plans for the site about 10 years ago.

"I wasn't really ready to

take on the whole thing because the county and the residents weren't ready to look at the residential component," Epstein said in an interview in early December.

"There was still a fear about density and the number of units, so we focused only on creating a commercial component to it."

That plan was subsequently set aside, Epstein said, with the realization that

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"there was not really a way to make it economically feasible to do the commercial component and then do the residential component afterward. We set it aside and got involved in another project called Belmont Bay."

On the Occoquan River near Woodbridge in Prince William County, Belmont Bay is "a huge mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly development," Epstein said.

"That occupied us for 10 years, 2000 to today, when we are working on our last little parcel on it," he said.

Belmont Bay, he said, "is a great project I'm very proud of," and contains concepts he's eager to bring to Clevenger's Corner.

"I approach doing this in a slightly different way, and that is with variable lot sizes," Epstein said of the Culpeper project. "The classic objection to a subdivision is that all the houses are exactly the same, there is no variation and there is no village character to it. All you have is plastic houses dipped in brick."

Because of lot-size variety, it is not possible to designate upfront exactly how many houses would be built, Epstein said, but the number is 275 at a maximum, if every house were a Cottage. That won't happen, he said.

The overall design is intended to be "mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly," Epstein

## Home sweet home

Urban planner Laurence Aurbach, writing in Winter 2004 edition of *The Town Paper*, a well-regarded publication dedicated to the review of Traditional Neighborhood Development and headquartered in the renowned planned community in Kentlands, Md., reviewed the 80-acre Belmont Bay town center.

On a rating system of from one to five stars...

Housing diversity: ★★★★★

Mixed use: ★★★★★

Connectivity: ★★★★★

External connectivity: ★★

Compactness: ★★★★★

Block size: ★★★★★

Streetscape: ★★★ 1/2

Frontages: ★★★ 1/2

Architectural aesthetics: ★★★★★

Civic space: ★★★★★

Location: ★★★ 1/2

"In summary,"

Aurbach wrote, "Belmont Bay successfully creates a sense of place and a reasonably attractive, walkable environment for its residents. Its current character is that of a resort retreat and low-maintenance bedroom community for young professionals and retirees."

said. Initial commercial offerings will likely include a bank and a pharmacy.

And, closest to his heart, a restaurant/inn.