



Writer: JULIE LONG

RANT #91

Development Names Should Start Making Sense

It's just me, or have other people noticed that most housing developments have nonsensical names? The other day my husband and I drove past a plan in its beginning phases. A big billboard said *Coming Soon: White Tail Ridge*. Suffice it to say there probably aren't any deer frequenting this spot — unless white tail are fond of the sound of bulldozers.

But let's forget about whether there are or will be or ever were deer in this neighborhood. Let's consider the other word in the name: Ridge. From my vantage point on the road, I was looking *down* a slope at a small treeless valley with a couple of homes already erected.

There was no ridge. The only elevation was a hillside beyond the homes, which certainly didn't live up to the promise conveyed by the word *ridge*.

My point is, shouldn't developers at least *try* to be truthfully descriptive with a housing plan name? The developers of this particular plan might have chosen *Gibsonia Glen*, or *The Lowlands*, or even *Sunnydale*. A little creativity, guys, that's all I ask.

Here are some general guidelines to aid in conceiving the appropriate name for a development: Places without trees should not utilize words like *woods*, *woodland*, *grove*, *timber*, *forest* and *orchard*. Treeless developments would be better described by words like *meadow*, *field*, *pasture*, *clearing* or *farm*. If a plan name

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includes the word *hill*, *ridge*, *bluff*, *promontory* or *point*, the site better include a hill, ridge, bluff, promontory or point.

Here's the name of another housing plan near me: *Orchard Meadow Park*. Well, which is it? There ought to be a one-noun rule when naming housing plans. And for goodness sakes, how about an adjective?

Maybe housing developers should employ the same marketing people who

name shades of lipstick and fingernail polish. I've seen polish labeled Shangri-La Liliac, Venus de Mauve and Awaipui Purple. If dozens of slightly different shades of purple polish can be differentiated, surely we can find creative names to properly suit housing plans.

So what about Treesdale? Well, if

yesterday and what do you know: between the bare hills of homes in the Treesdale community there are, in fact, dales. And yes, those dales have plenty of trees. Someone was using the ol' noggin.

Our good friends live in a plan called Tall Timber. And, bless the developers, there actually are tall trees in all the yards. The area used to be woods, and instead of bulldozing it all, they took the care to leave a stand of timber in most of the front yards, and most of the homes have wooded back lots. I commend both the site development and the name, which is truthfully descriptive and attractive. Although, as our friends have found out, the taller the timber, the harder it falls. They've lost a dozen trees to heavy winds since they moved in three years ago.

But it's okay. I'm thinking *Fallen Timber*. Or *Timber Lain*. ☞

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