

# OPEN LINES

A Publication of RGS ASSOCIATES, INC.

FALL 2003

## *Garden Spot Village—Phase 3*

### A Successful 10-year Partnership

2003 marks the tenth anniversary of RGS Associates. It also marks the tenth year of a successful working relationship between Garden Spot Village and RGS Associates — which began back when it was just “RGS” doing the work.

Garden Spot Village was Dick Stauffer’s first client on his own. Their relationship, which has thrived through two Garden Spot Village administrations and two generations of RGS project management, continues to flourish through the third phase of campus expansion.

Phases 1 and 2 included planning that resulted in 566 residences — from personal care, to skilled care, to assisted living, to independent living apartments and cottages. And building and service amenities that include a chapel, “Main Street” shops and services, a Village

Center, swimming pool, fitness center, centralized dining facilities, a community library and outdoor living courtyards.

Phase 3, which includes land use planning for about 41 of the 108+ acres that comprise the campus, is an expansion characterized by several noteworthy aspects.

Although the initial phases provide many excellent quality-of-life features, in Phase 3, Garden Spot Village and RGS were particularly attuned to the wants and needs of people who would live there. RGS conducted focus groups to determine how Phase 3 could provide an even better quality of life for residents. The insights they gained have resulted in numerous progressive moves to accommodate an evolving generation of retirees,

*Continued on Pg. 2*



*For an update on RGS and the new NPDES Phase 2 storm water runoff regulations, check out “Education, Planning and Risk Management” on our web site.*



*Garden Spot Village*



**Land Development  
Consultants**

including residences with more square footage and two-car garages, enhanced recreation amenities, such as walking paths, large lawn areas and outdoor gathering places—even a “gardening area”—complete with tool shed, on-site water and drive-up access—where residents can give their green thumbs a workout.

Of particular note is the new 40,000 square foot Garden Spot Village “Center for Health.” A cooperative effort between the Village and Ephrata Community Hospital, the Center will include doctors’ offices, a medical supply retailer, a community room with café—as well as portable (truck-based) MRI and CT capabilities. What’s more, the Center will not only serve residents, but the surrounding communities, as well.

All of these innovations didn’t come without challenges, however. In particular, because of Garden Spot Village’s unique location on the fringe of New Holland Borough, cooperation between the Village, the Borough, Earl Township and the neighboring Rosedale development was key. So, in addition to determining the best land use plan for the Village’s current needs and future visions (there will be a Phase 4), RGS took a lead role in fostering cooperation through early and ongoing discussions with all parties to arrive at a plan that everyone could agree upon.

Issues that RGS helped the groups work through included zoning modifications to enable the Center for Health to operate at the Village, and partnering with the Borough, Township and Rosedale to plan roadway improvements to enhance traffic control and public safety now and into the future.

Says Garden Spot Village CEO,

Steve Lindsey, “We had a lot of land use issues to deal with to make Phase 3 meet the diverse needs of our residents. As usual, RGS provided the creativity and excellent planning skills required to accomplish those goals. But perhaps their most important asset was their ability to mediate the differing interests of all the parties involved. They were able to help us accomplish our goals while successfully addressing the concerns of two local governments and a neighboring community—that’s the kind of service that brings exceptional value to a project like this. Their understanding of the technical issues, ability to deal with the interpersonal issues, and preparation for public meetings quickly establish them as a credible expert in any discussion...and that reflects well on us. It’s reasons like these that have kept us looking to RGS for our land use planning all these years.”

RGS Vice President and Client Manager, Mark Hackenburg, adds, “Rarely is land use as cut and dried as just developing the plan. There are always public issues that need to be addressed. It’s our job to provide that level of service to our clients. It’s the way Dick has operated from day one—and nothing has changed today.”



## Client Perspective

### *Positive Partnership*

## Eagle Heights

Eagle Heights will be a community of diverse housing that makes every acre count—and complements its neighbors.

“We knew from the beginning that RGS was the firm to bring Eagle Heights to life,” said developer David Charles. “My partner, Vic Kicera, and I like working with Joel Snyder and the RGS team—and we’ve seen other RGS projects that truly made the most of small tracts.

“I think, beyond the design aspects, though, a big key to the project’s success thus far was RGS involving Manor Township and the Lancaster County Planning Commission early on. Both were quite pleased with the plans, which made optimum use of the acreage, while satisfying zoning requirements in a very creative way.

“The plan also went a long way toward helping to gain acceptance from the surrounding residents,” said Vic Kicera. “They didn’t want a development across the way—and they let us know in no uncertain terms. But the plan demonstrates that Eagle Heights will be an attractive complement to their community. Plus, RGS built in a buffer zone to further minimize any potential impact.”

Charles added, “Often when you propose to develop near an existing neighborhood you encounter some resistance. It’s human nature. But RGS’ plan, I think, has helped alleviate much of that. We believe the acceptance level will greatly increase when they see the uniqueness and charm of Eagle Heights.”

## *Eagle Heights*

# High Density That Doesn't Feel That Way

Development partners David Charles and Vic Kicera have been working together for the past 13 years, and have partnered with RGS on numerous projects for the past eight. When the opportunity to develop a 50-acre tract in Manor Township, zoned for high-density residential mixed use, presented itself, Charles and Kicera saw exciting possibilities.

The partners' vision for the project was to create a very livable community where, even though high density was the order of the day, single-family homes, townhouses, duplexes and apartments would harmoniously coexist in and among the property's natural surroundings.

Says Vic Kicera, "We could see it. The high ridge that forms the backdrop on the north side of the land would be the perfect setting for the single-family homes. The elevation provides beautiful and very marketable views. We chose RGS for this project

both because of our past successes with the firm and because of a land plan they had developed for a similar situation that had many of the characteristics we were looking for in Eagle Heights."

RGS Vice President and Client Manager, Joel Snyder, recalls, "Dave and Vic felt this little tract of land had the potential to be quite special. They wanted more than simply 'clusters' of mixed use housing. They wanted a unique neo-traditional arrangement that, while tight-knit, also has a sense of separation — 'breathing room' for the residents, if you will. They wanted optimum use of the land to accommodate the township's requirements, but with a pleasant, neighborhood feel."

RGS answered the call with a plan that lined the main "boulevard" with townhouses situated close to the street, which defined the streetscape and created a distinctly urban personality — a "street life" charm. A park-like

"roundabout" forms the intersection between the two main streets, creating an attractive centerpiece, while serving as a traffic calmer. On-street parallel parking continues the neighborhood feel. The parking zones are offset so the streets narrow at points to create yet another traffic calming device, while shortening the crossing distance for pedestrians.

The single-family homes that will line the periphery are, by virtue of their location on the tract, both separated from the "downtown" — and connected to the downtown — through a network of sidewalks and rambling trails that serve to tie the various areas together to create a "sense of place."

"Eagle Heights will be a mix of distinct housing types," said Snyder. "And because we're working with six houses to an acre, they'll be relatively close to one another. But, with our plan, they just won't feel that close together."

Co-developer, Charles, commented, "What RGS has planned for this site captures precisely what we had envisioned. Optimal use to accommodate Manor Township's zoning, a neighborhood feel without people feeling like they are on top of one another, the integration of beautiful natural areas — it'll all be there. All on a little 50-acre piece of land."

Site construction of Eagle Heights began in the Spring of 2003. Construction is expected to be complete by year 2004.





**Land Development  
Consultants**

15 South State Street  
P.O. Box 388  
Brownstown, PA 17508-0388  
(717) 656-4077  
Fax: (717) 656-8970  
Email: info@rgsassociates.com  
www.rgsassociates.com

**A Look Inside RGS**

# Northpointe Alliance Give RGS Its Own “DOT”.

Traffic impact studies, smart roadway design, logical signage solutions, traffic signal design, speed studies, working with government, listening to the community — every land planning firm has to deal with these and many other transportation issues almost daily.

“In general,” says Dick Stauffer, “small land planning firms utilize sub-consultants for transportation planning. We always have. But I’ve been searching for a better way. We saw a need to possess this expertise inhouse for our clients...and we believe we have a solution to fill that need.” Over the past several months, RGS has been having serious discussions with Howard Dieter, whose consulting firm, Northpointe LLC, specializes in transportation planning.

According to Stauffer, Dieter



*Howard Dieter*

the way he thinks. He has the mindset of a developer, but he also understands the thought processes of municipalities, DOTs and other government entities — and citizens. Howard’s technical and ‘people’ skills are extraordinary. From the outset, it was apparent that we needed — and wanted — Howard to head up our transportation team.”

From Dieter’s point of view, the

brings an uncommon astuteness to the science and art of transportation planning. “His skills in the discipline are exceptional. But equally important is

alliance makes all the sense in the world. “The way RGS operates — but-toned-up, well-oiled, service-driven — was easily the most exciting aspect for me. Talk about teamwork, team spirit and putting the client first! I know I will love working in this dynamic, high-energy environment. And I know I will make important contributions.” Dieter noted, “With the forming of this alliance, we’ll be well positioned to expand our service offerings to clients — seamlessly. It’s all about keeping communities, municipalities and, most important, clients happy.” Of course, it helps that Howard has worked with a number of RGS staffers in the past — including six years with Dick Stauffer. RGS and Northpointe commenced their alliance on September 1st.