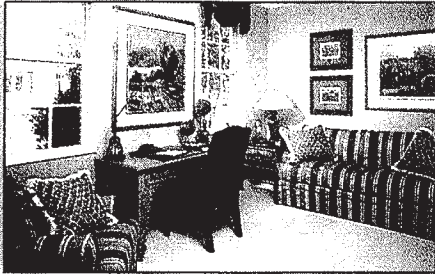


Model Home Decorating
Country cottage interior

Page 4



Dream Kitchens & Baths
Island-style kitchen featured

Page 6



Ask The Builder
Payment methods for remodeling

Page 8

REAL ESTATE WEEKEND

GUEST COLUMN

Buyers should review community's association documents

By JOHN R. MATH
 Owner, Associated Property Management of the Palm Beaches

There are many advantages to buying and living in a community that is managed by an association.

Community associations provide residents with all, or some, of the following features that ordinary unregulated subdivisions cannot offer: amenities, land planning, architectural controls, alarm systems, cable television and recreational facilities.

The maintenance and management of these facilities are all a part of community associations. When living in one of these communities, one can save money in the purchase

and maintenance of these built-in amenities, as the costs will be shared by all of the residents.

Consequently, buyers can share in a lifestyle that ordinarily would not be available or affordable to them.

Generally, new communities in South Florida are being planned and built with some type of governing entity, such as a property owners association (POA) or homeowners association (HOA), in order to provide the structure and management of amenities for the residents.

After the builder/developer sells out the community and turns over control of the association to the owners, the association is operated by the

residents, through a board of directors of their peers, who are elected.

Members of the board of directors will either manage the community by themselves (selfmanaged), hire an individual manager and staff, or enter into a management agreement with a professional management company.

All three forms of management have their advantages and disadvantages for the community, depending on the level of service that the residents want or require.

Prior to purchasing in a community, review the declaration of protective covenants and restrictions, articles of incorporation and by-laws.

These documents establish

the purpose of the association and outline the mechanics of how the association is managed as well as the lifestyle immediately outside the confines of your home.

If you do not understand the documents or their ramifications, it is wise to consult an attorney to assist you.

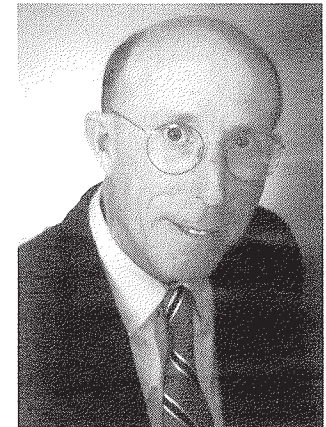
If the community has not been turned over by the builder/ developer, determine how long the developer will retain control and how the transition from developer control to owner control will take place. After the turnover, the owners may decide to change the level of management for the community.

South Florida provides an array of community lifestyles

and features.

It is in your best interests to research all available information regarding the builder/developer. Review the necessary documents and then determine whether the management system will be able to maintain the community according to the level that you require for comfortable living.

For more information, call John R Math at (561) 588-7210.



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