

# LAUREL PARK VENTURES, INC.



DEVIN RUTKOWSKI, CGP

Look at a new home from Laurel Park Ventures, Inc. and you may feel transported to the quiet streets of the 1920s era, your old, small-town neighborhood or quite possibly your dream home. Paying tribute to the quality, craftsmanship and simplistic perfection of American classical architecture is the core of this company, which specializes in fine new urban living. "I personally believe in the classic American design, turn of the century, before post-industrial revolution where we mechanized everything and basically eliminated the craftsmanship that came over here from Europe," says Devin Rutkowski, president. "I don't think you can mass produce these, and I'm very careful to never to mass produce them because you start to lose that craftsmanship and that quality."

Many of the homes built by Laurel Park Ventures, Inc. look like they should carry a historic home designation, thanks to the combination of old-style quality, craftsmanship and character. But what sets them apart from their historic elders is modern-day green building practices, including energy conservation, insulated windows, recycled woods and materials and other innovative products. "I try to incorporate the concept into a new modern box with all of the modern, up-to-date conveniences we expect, but within an envelope that you would think has been around for more than a year," Rutkowski explains.

Rutkowski's own downtown Sarasota office reflects his love of the product he provides. He remodeled the old 1920s-era "stucco" bungalow, adding arts and crafts wallpaper, a chair rail and recessed lighting and sanding the original heart pine flooring. The walls are adorned with his bungalow and Mediterranean-revival home designs—a kind of picture in a picture.

***"I would argue for us not to get all twisted around on the global warming debate, but rather, just do the right thing by using energy more efficiently throughout our everyday lives, including the big ones—our homes, factories, offices, schools, churches—the built environment."***

**LAUREL PARK VENTURES, INC.**  
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New products and services are being introduced weekly. It's on the radar screen and it's now becoming commonplace. Energy conservation for others will be important. We just finished a 2,600-square-foot home, and we're hoping to see a \$125 electric bill.

## HOW DOES THE GREEN TREND PERTAIN TO YOUR BUSINESS?

As a builder of homes, I have the ability to impact the environment; I can be pro, con or neutral. I have the ability to affect the environment in a positive way by building high performance houses and offering green as a standard and not as upgrades. The homeowner will ultimately benefit and the environment will as well, but it seems to me to just be the right thing to do as a builder.

Laurel Park Ventures, Inc. is a design, build and development company where we like to be involved in the design. We believe in a design philosophy of smaller, not bigger—infill over "greenfield" (taking a beautiful virgin piece

east of the interstate and creating a new subdivision out of it)—building within the already established areas, redeveloping—more sustainable practices. Once we get down to the individual sites and homes, we include as many energy-efficient, site-design-efficient layouts, uses and materials as possi-

ble into the actual homes or buildings. So you can take it from the big picture all the way down to the paint on your walls. Right now it's a matter of doing the most you can in the most cost-effective way.

It seems to me that whether you believe in global warming or not is irrelevant. We currently have technologies to use energy more efficiently and that in and of itself is positive and good for the environment. So I would argue for us not to get all twisted around on the global warming debate, but rather, just do the right thing by using energy more efficiently throughout our everyday lives, including the big ones—our homes, factories, offices, schools, churches—the built environment.

**LPV**  
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