

# The Daily Iberian

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 3, 2006

## EDITORIAL

---

# Housing project rates a big 'Wow!'

**S**outhern Mutual Help Association conducted a series of charettes last week, getting input from government leaders, people involved in real estate, people from the community and others interested in the Teche Ridge development proposed in the area of Emile Verret and the Old Jeanerette roads.

"Wow" was a comment frequently expressed by many who attended one of the presentations. Certainly "wow" was in order at the final charrette Thursday where an overview of the project was revealed, incorporating many of the suggestions heard at similar gatherings during the week.

Architect Steve Oubre, who was involved with hot River Ranch development in Lafayette, is heading up the design effort for Teche Ridge, described by some as a downscale River Ridge.

The development may not have the high prices associated with River Ranch, but if it's close to the design shown at Thursday's charrette, it will be a top-notch neighborhood and a real asset for the community, and those who live nearby.

SMHA is describing it as a "model community" and indeed many of the concepts proposed for Teche Ridge are ones after which other developments in the community would do well to model themselves.

Some residents of the areas near Teche Ridge were nervous that SMHA's association with the project meant it would be some sort of subsidized housing, that might lessen property values for those who lived nearby.

It appears instead that Teche Ridge will offer housing opportunities to a mix of people in the middle of the market, with smaller residences starting at \$140,000, certainly not cheap, but relatively affordable in today's housing market.

More housing in the community creates more opportunity for everyone.

Lourna Bourg, SMHA president, said about Teche Ridge, "We want to keep Acadiana unique. We need to do this before we end up like Houston or L.A."

You can bet the whole community will be watching with great interest as this project is developed.



**WILL CHAPMAN**  
PUBLISHER