

Custom, 'net-zero' homes to be built at Gold Hill

Gold Hill Mesa has added a customizer to its stable of home builders.

G.J. Gardner, a three-state company that's represented in Colorado Springs by Wayne Intermill, specializes in homes that use geothermal and solar panel technology that can allow homeowners to have no costs for electricity and gas – a status known as “net zero.”

The first example of Gardner construction was viewable this past week off Gold Hill Mesa Drive and Merrimac Street. The 3,900-square-foot, four-bedroom house is still being framed, and a drilling rig was work-



A drilling rig was creating three 340-foot holes this week to allow the geothermal service in the new G.J. Gardner model home being built at Gold Hill Mesa.

Westside Pioneer photo

ing on the three 340-foot-holes needed for its geothermal pipe loops. When the roof is finished, it will have a solar panel on the south-facing side. With the geothermal providing a consistent air temperature – as is the case at the Westside's Holmes and Buena Vista schools – and the solar “handling all the energy needs,” residents at times (depending on their uses)

could have excess energy to sell back to the city, Intermill pointed out.

Willard has been looking for a builder that could provide such energy efficiencies at sales price points less than \$500,000. “It's hard to find,” he said, but likes what's he's seen from Intermill/Gardner. “I think we're breaking new ground,” he said. “There's no question we'll have

learning curves, but he's trying to make it work and make money on it.”

For his part, Intermill said most large developers don't like working with custom builders, but with Gold Hill Mesa, “I walked out the door smiling. They are team players, they're flexible, and they want to see the goal achieved [affordable net-zero homes].”

For now, the current

house is the only one Gardner has in the works at Gold Hill. But Willard said others will be made available, especially on the larger-size lots that Intermill prefers. The current house is scheduled to be done in time for this August's annual Parade of Homes, for which the 210-acre Westside development will be a “hub site” for the second year, offering three or four model homes in all, Willard said.

At last year's Parade of Homes, an Intermill/Gardner home in the Red Rock Canyon Estates development won all nine possible Parade awards in the category of homes priced at \$1 million or more.

Other builders at Gold Hill Mesa are J.M. Weston Town Homes, Challenger Homes, and Creekstone Homes.

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