

## ***Tour de Essex Park*** Madhaus, Valparaiso, IN

World Class. Everybody knows what the term means. Simply put, it means “nobody does it better” - like the Tour De France, the world’s largest and most prestigious bicycle race – a 23-day, 21-stage test of the finest bicyclists in the world.

*World Class*, not a word that would normally be used to describe a residential neighborhood here, in Valparaiso, IN. And yet, this weekend, there is a *World Class* neighborhood located on the south side of Valpo that is showcasing all of the elements that make up one of the most unique communities ever developed in Northwest Indiana, and most don’t even know it’s here!

It’s not 23 days, it’s just two – but it is 21 stages. This Friday and Saturday, July 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup>, you can come to Essex Park and participate in the “***Tour de Essex Park.***” Experience the many features (all 21 of them) that make this close-in neighborhood so special.

Included in the “*Tour*” are 8 homes – the Coolman Communities Model home, and seven other homes of Essex Park residents, who are ***opening their homes*** to the public. You can not only experience the neighborhood, but also the extraordinary variety and character of the homes of Essex Park. Each home is a different model type, and the homes range from 1575 sq. ft. to nearly 3000 sq. ft, with an amazing variety of options and amenities. Imagine that – the residents of this neighborhood are so convinced of the special nature of their community that they invite YOU to come and tour their homes!

Essex Park is known as a TND or *Traditional Neighborhood Development*. This sort of *new urbanism* is happening nationwide, and it’s practically considered the best development universally today. From *Watercolor* near Destin, Florida to *New St. Charles* near St. Louis; *the Kentlands* in Gaithersburg, Maryland to the *Stapleton* in Denver and *West Clay* in Indianapolis. These types of communities have weathered the current housing downturn extraordinarily well and are one of the few bright spots in what is an otherwise bleak housing market.

So if others are doing it, what makes Essex Park so unique? The difference is price. Visit any of those other neighborhoods, and you’ll discover single family homes that START at nearly \$1 million. Not the case in Essex Park. Take the “*Tour*” and you’ll discover that home prices in Essex Park start at under \$190,000. And even if we were to duplicate the largest house on the “*Tour*” at today’s prices, it would still be priced well under \$300,000. This includes house, the home site, options, amenities and upgrades.

While you’re on the “*Tour*”, you’ll experience several other features that make Essex Park such a special place:

- Homes with front porches (stage 1). Every house in Essex Park has a real, honest-to-goodness front porch.

- House dominance vs. garage dominance (stage 2). PEOPLE live here – not cars. Every garage is pulled back from the front of the house.
- Rambles (stage 3)– Nearly every house in Essex Park backs up to some type of Open Space. In fact, nearly 40% of the neighborhood is open space, and the most interesting are the “Rambles” – kids’ play spaces just beyond your own back yard.
- Pocket Parks (stage 4, 5, & 6). Landscaped focal points within the neighborhood that provide character.
- Traffic Calming (stage 7). If you haven’t learned about this one, you should. We invite you to Essex Park to see for yourself the benefits of:
  - Shortened block lengths
  - Reduced sight lines
  - Street Trees
  - Sidewalks
  - Reduced road-widths
  - On-street parking
  - Weird traffic patterns (that slow traffic)

You can’t drive through the neighborhood at more than about 20 mph. This is as close as we can get to designing kid-safe streets. In fact, Bruce Berner, retired VU Law Professor and Chairman of the Valparaiso City Planning Commission said “you can stand out on the street and actually see how these things work – and they do work.” Berner made this comment after visiting friends in Essex Park last year.

When you couple all of the features mentioned and add the proposed County Park (stage 8) right next door, pedestrian and/or bicycle accessibility to the many services and conveniences through Fairfield Greens/Southpoint (stage 9) - less than 2 miles from downtown Valpo, and a 90-acre wetland/nature preserve right next door (stage 10), you begin to realize why this little south side Valpo neighborhood is *World-Class*.

So you may be thinking, surely with all those amenities, the homes of Essex Park are *World Class*. Well, there’s more:

- Every Essex Park Home is “Energy-Star” rated @ 5 stars plus
- Every Essex Park Home is designed to provide maximum livability.
- Every Essex Park Home will be “Certified Green Built” (to date, an Indiana first).
- Every Essex Park home is radon mitigated.
- Every Essex Park Home carries a 10 year structural warranty.
- Every Essex Park Home provides for huge amounts of storage.

And you can tour 8 of these homes (stages 11-18).

The only thing that’s not *World Class* are the prices – unless you think that a home has to be “extraordinarily high-priced” in order to be “extraordinary.” If that’s the case, don’t bother to come take the “Tour.” But if you’re into Honda Automobiles, Dell Computers, Sony Electronics, Craftsman Tools and Cracker Barrel Restaurants, and you understand

*World Class* to mean *World Class VALUE*, then the “***Tour de Essex Park***” is where you want to be this weekend.

Come join us this Saturday and Sunday from 1pm to 4pm in Essex Park, just 1.5 miles south U.S. 30 off of In Hwy. 2. Take the “*Tour*” - stop at all 21 stages (stages 19-21 are some of the best lots in Essex Park. It’s not that we saved them for last – it just happened that way. See ramble lots, daylight basement lots, or greenbelt lots.) You can walk over, bike over or drive over and find out what a *World Class* community is all about!!!