



FAR WEST
enterprises

Your
Public Relations
Navigator



MYSTERY CLOAKED IN ENIGMA; PROVIDENCE FARMS PROJECT MOVES FORWARD (Published in the August 27, 2005, Columbia Business Times) - 8/27/2005

August 19, 2005
About 500 words

Contact: Jim Muench
President
Far West Enterprises
(573) 499-4897

MYSTERY CLOAKED IN ENIGMA; PROVIDENCE FARMS PROJECT MOVES FORWARD

COLUMBIA, Mo. – Surrounded by more mystery than a cloak-and-dagger whodunit, the Providence Farms project appears to be rolling along, with several deals being made for acreage south of Columbia.

Providence Farms LLC, a development organization affiliated with Forum Development Group has been making offers and purchasing land for a secret project. However, Joel and Jay Lindner of Forum Development Group refuse to comment about their project and refuse to say when they might be able to comment.

The Lindners appear to be aiming to purchase at least 1,200 acres of land. "Twelve-hundred plus acres and stuff; that's gargantuan in Columbia," said John Pekkala, a local realtor. "Twelve hundred is just wild. That would be way bigger than all that Vanderveen stuff north of town."

Several farms already have sold to the group, as well as the 800-acre W. B. Smith Feed Mill property, according to Jim Sheffer, a Smith company employee. Management has told employees the mill will close by the end of December, he said.

However, owner Bill Smith said he would not confirm the sale until he gets approval from the Lindner family, which owns Forum Development Group. "We don't want a story out yet; in other words, when you get ready to do one, I want you to coordinate it with Jose Lindner," Smith said. "You can just talk to them; let it be gossip."

While the Lindners keep mum about the project, local realtors and neighbors are speculating that the land is best suited to houses. The feed mill's closure would lend credence to that theory because the feed mill's especially fragrant odors have been an impediment to housing in the area for years. Closing the feed mill would eliminate the smell and facilitate other development.

Although rumors about the project include such wild ideas as a group farm for followers of the Reverend Sun Myung Moon and a nudist hideout for wealthy Californians, perhaps the most credible rumor of the project's purpose among the neighbors appears to be at least a 1,200-acre

subdivision of high-end homes, selling in the \$750,000 to \$1 million range, perhaps including a golf course.

"Golly, how many of those kind of homes can we absorb?" Pekkala said. "I think it would have to be [homes]. I can't see that there would be a big demand for anything else down there."

Rumors have also linked the secret development to the possible revival of the historic town of Providence that once existed in the area near what is now Cooper's Landing and the Katy Trail.

"I can't substantiate any of the rumors or comment on it at this point," Jay Lindner said.

Karen Stephens, who owns a half-acre of land on Smith Hatchery Road, said she owns her home outright with no mortgage. When realtor Larry Oetting asked her to sell, she said she offered her property for \$200,000. She said Oetting angered her with an offer to trade her for five acres and a trailer instead.

Oetting refused to comment on the Providence Farms project or the proposed Stephens transaction.

