

Parkview Place – 2015 Climate Solution Award
Interview with Dick and Carol Bourne



Caption: Dick Bourne shows off the equipment for the entire 3-story building: 2 geo-thermal (or ground-coupled) heat pumps and their connections to the radiant heating and cooling systems and the water storage tank.

The Parkview Place development has earned the Climate Solution Award in Built Energy for the creative combination of systems that easily exceeded the goal of net-zero performance in its first year. The apartments also deserve awards for transportation, water conservation, sustainability, and innovation in senior living. Designed and built by Michael Corbett, the development is a model for high quality living with less environmental impact.

Dick and Carol Bourne have always accepted challenges. When they noticed they were biking downtown daily, they questioned whether their spacious, energy-efficient home beside West Pond, with its large yard and pool, was the best fit for their senior years. Soon, the idea for Parkview Place took off.

“We wanted a place to live for the duration. We wanted a low carbon footprint, but we also wanted comfort,” said Carol.

Dick added, “We had to move forward as we planned this energy-conscious complex.”

Dick brought all his engineering background together to provide a synergy of systems for their comfort: 2 ground-coupled (geo-thermal) heat pumps, silent radiant heating/cooling in the concrete flooring, and a back-up nightsky cooling system on summer nights. The photovoltaic system for electricity is sized for net-zero performance for the entire building, and rooftop solar thermal collectors heat most domestic water. Dick is encouraged that cooling is so easy in a hot but dry climate.

Already the four apartment owners have downsized to one car each plus bicycles. They’ve planned ahead for electric car outlets, and the downtown location encourages walking, busing and train rides.

In terms of consumerism, the move to Parkview meant giving away lots of stuff. Carol admitted, “It was tough. We haven’t given up quite enough yet.” For the record, their children did not want many of their things, but their slimmed down new home is delightfully uncluttered.

For Dick the surprise was how compelling the social aspects of the project became as the four couples met weekly to work out details of the building design and construction decisions as the building progressed. They also considered decisions about living together for the duration, and what it might look like as they moved into their senior years together.

After one year in their new home, Dick and Carol are pleased. The energy systems are applicable to single-family homes, and are decidedly replicable and economically scalable for larger complexes. They have already fielded questions from developers, and are planning more tours to share what they have learned about their systems in this climate. And they are enjoying life downtown.