

**DOWNTOWN**

Uptown's Malone Park Commons features an uncommonly social setting

By [Tom Bailey](#), Daily Memphian

Updated: February 03, 2021 6:00 AM CT | Published: February 03, 2021 4:00 AM CT

An old-style walkable and highly social kind of residential development has been revived in Uptown, and the first phase is nearly complete.

Not even the increasingly common, mixed-use developments of the past decade look like Malone Park Commons.

Welcoming the first residents on March 1 will be 11 cottages aligned in two, 160-foot-long rows that face each other.



Malone Park Commons developers Curtis Jones (left), and his brother Andrew Jones (right), with niece Taquita Jones, job site supervisor. (Tom Bailey/Daily Memphian)

A narrow, 30-foot-wide courtyard, or commons, separates the five cottages on the east side from the six on the west.

The linear middle ground is designed for people, not vehicles. A permeable surface of crushed limestone will cover the area.

Each cottage, ranging from 330 to 1,100 square feet, will have space in back for a car.



The 30-foot-wide courtyard, or commons, will be covered with crushed limestone and have seating areas. (Tom Bailey/Daily Memphian)

Fronting each cottage is a prominent porch, big enough for tables and chairs.

All of which - the porches, the commons, the close proximity - mean that residents will have every opportunity for a rich social life with their neighbors.

Cottage community slated for Uptown in Memphis

Whether called a “cottage court” or a “pocket neighborhood,” Malone Park Commons is the kind of development built before World War II and before vehicles came to dominate neighborhoods, said Andre Jones.

He and his brother, Curtis Jones, are principals in Jones Urban Development, a firm that has been building houses for decades in Uptown. The district is a New Urban-style neighborhood revived with pedestrians in mind.

Their niece, Taquita Jones, is the job site supervisor for the development.

Malone Park Commons residents will be within walking distance of the Pinch District and St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital, the mixed-use Snuff District under construction, Grind City Brewery that recently opened and Bass Pro Shops at the Pyramid.

“They used to build duplexes and fourplexes, and this is a cottage court,” Andre said during a tour on Tuesday, Feb. 2.

The site is nearly seven-tenths of an acre bordered by North Second on the east, Saffarans on the north,



North Main on the west and existing homes on the south side of the block.

All the cottages' floors are red oak, which will be stained with tung oil.
(Tom Bailey/Daily Memphian)

“You’d find these in Central Gardens and Midtown prior to World War II,” Jones said of cottage courts. “Then the automobile became more common and they designed suburbs around automobiles.

Downtown sees surge in minority owners after lowering development loan costs



Architectural detailing, like wide window sills, gives the cottages character. (Tom Bailey/Daily Memphian).

and public (the courtyard).

The opportunity for neighborly, social interaction is “part of the idea” behind Malone Park Commons, Andre said.

“Normally, when you buy a house in the suburbs, the activity is oriented toward the backyard,” he said. “There are no front porches, no interaction between neighbors out in the front, which is the way historical neighborhoods used

“You didn’t get building types like this anymore. It became illegal to build fourplexes and cottage courts along with single-family homes,” he said.

The development will be a natural kind of mixed-income neighborhood. All the cottages will rent at market rate, but the different sizes will offer a wide variety of price points. Rent will range from \$600 to \$1,400 a month.

All residents will have three types of spaces: Private (inside their cottage); semi-public (on their porches);

to be built.”

The cottages will feature other amenities and architectural detailing such as large windows with deep sills, eight-foot-tall doors, extra tall baseboards, and hardwood floors of red oak that will be stained with tung oil.

In subsequent phases of Malone Park Commons, fourplexes will be built on the northeast corner of North Second and Saffarans and the northwest corner of North Main and Saffarans. Eventually, an additional 24 apartment units will be built.

The Downtown Memphis Commission (DMC) provided a tax incentive for the developers to build Malone Park Commons.

The construction “is the type of project the DMC loves to support, one built with inclusivity and equity at the core,” Brett Roler said in a prepared statement. He is the commission’s vice president of planning and development.

“This project is being built in a key Downtown neighborhood by an emerging developer who is building new housing capacity in the same neighborhood where he lives,” Roler said.

“Not everyone wants a big house or a small apartment,” he said. “Malone Park’s ‘missing middle’ housing adds variety to our market and can make Downtown more attractive to more people.”

Financial Federal Bank provided financing for the development.

Housing incentives are available for those working in the Medical District, according to a DMC statement. Employees can receive up to \$1,000 toward a new apartment lease.

For more information about Malone Park Commons, visit maloneparkcommons.com.



Porches provide space for chairs, tables and social interaction. Pier-and-beam foundations elevate the cottages and make maintenance easier. Latticework will soon cover the openings. (Tom Bailey/Daily Memphian)

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