



RTC developers share progress

By Heather Rule
Daily Journal

To a standing-room-only crowd, Historic Kirkbride developer Ray Willey on Monday assured council members and residents that the proposed \$41.4 million redevelopment of the Regional Treatment Center is still alive.

Willey and his Historic Kirkbride associate, Bill Brown, said they have spent the past few days in town meeting with city officials and local supporters of the project. On Monday, he provided details on a plan that would include apartments, a luxury hotel and restaurants.

The city and Historic Kirkbride entered into a letter of intent in July. They are still working toward a developer's agreement. Historic Kirkbride officials hope to have funding sources in place by August.

Willey said he and Brown have looked at some aspects of the project that might "appear mundane," in regard to the overall infrastructure of the RTC and a plan for streets, curbing, gutters, the water supply, underground utilities and sewer.



Willey

Once the project would hit the construction phase, it would be completed in three sequences, from the apartments, to restaurants to the hotel, taking one section (approximately 31,000 square-feet) at a time, according to Willey.

The overall plan for market-rate apartments, a hotel with amenities and some restaurants "essentially remains the same" since Historic Kirkbride presented its plan in June, Willey said.

"We've done some tweaking," he said.

That includes the possibility of turning the fourth-floor apartments in the west wing into artist lofts with shared artist work spaces, called Makerspace. Willey cited one of these existing spaces, in Somerset, Mass., called the Artisan's Asylum.

"It's a cool concept, and we're hoping to develop that," Willey said.

Historic Kirkbride is looking at two or three of these common areas where both tenants and the public can come together and make things, like pottery or woodworking pieces, for example.

Another housing floor at the RTC might be geared toward a tech crowd to attract younger folks to the building, Willey said.

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City grants golf course money

By Heather Rule
Daily Journal

The Fergus Falls City Council Monday approved 2014 rates and a budget request of more than \$30,000 for the Pebble Lake Golf Course.

With the approval, the course will receive \$33,750 from the general fund of the city of Fergus Falls to

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Heather Rule/Daily Journal

Kirk Williams worked at the Fergus Falls Regional Treatment Center and never realized the building inspired his artwork. At The Spot last week he showed an ink painting, "After Hours," which he made in 1982.

Inspired memories

Fergus Falls artist finds RTC reflected in his work

By Heather Rule
Daily Journal

Local artist Kirk Williams started creating artwork years ago, from pastels to ink prints to drawings. He didn't realize until it was pointed out to him recently that his pieces reflected the Fergus Falls Regional Treatment Center, where he worked for 20 years as a human service technician.

His artwork was done without even

the slightest thought of the hospital in mind.

"I got these ideas," Williams said. "The hospital was really influential, and I didn't know it. I absolutely loved the architecture of the old buildings."

For part of his time working at the RTC, Williams was in a separate building on the campus. It gave him a great view of the main RTC building.

"I was mesmerized by it," he said.

Any chance he got on his work breaks, Williams walked around campus and studied the architecture. He realized that it was all handmade,

and the brick work was incredible, he said. It was a place that inspired him, he said.

"I was in love with the hospital," Williams said. "You could never do enough exploring there."

He had six pieces up at the art exhibit at The Spot. The artwork in the exhibit, all inspired by the Kirkbride, was up in February. Springboard for the Arts, the Otter Tail County Historical Society and the Friends of the Kirkbride curated the exhibit.

Some of Williams' work there was

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Duo gets 20 years probation, jail time for burglary charge

By Heather Rule
Daily Journal

Two Fergus Falls residents charged in the case where they left a friend's home after she'd overdosed and then returned to steal drugs in September 2012 were sentenced to jail and probation time Monday in Otter Tail County District Court.

Melissa Ann Qualley, 32, and Travis Charles Simon, 34, were each sentenced to 27 months in prison, to be stayed for 20 years, 20 years of supervised probation and 180 days in jail for felony first-degree burglary.

Qualley pleaded guilty Nov. 18. In exchange for the plea, additional counts of felony second-degree manslaughter, felony theft and gross misdemeanor interference with a dead body-concealing evidence were dismissed.

Simon pleaded guilty Jan. 16. In exchange for the plea, additional counts of felony theft and gross misdemeanor interference with a dead body-concealing evidence were dismissed. A felony second-degree manslaughter count was dismissed Nov. 4.

According to the criminal complaint, Qualley and Simon were doing drugs with a friend at her residence, in the 700 block of South Oak Street in Fergus Falls, on the evening of Sept. 17, 2012.

Qualley reportedly saw her friend use at least 20 methadone pills before the friend passed out. The victim died of an overdose due to toxic levels of amitriptyline-hydrochloride, according to autopsy results. Qualley thought the victim was sleeping, and she and Simon left, the report says.

They reportedly returned to the residence at 3 a.m. and stole the victim's narcotics including methadone, vicodin and oxycodone.

Qualley later told police that they decided to wait until the next morning to report the death, when they wouldn't be so high, according to the report.

Qualley and Simon reportedly returned to the victim's residence later on Sept. 18 and Qualley called 911 at 12:51 p.m., saying she found her friend passed out, unresponsive and cold to the touch.

During testimony last November, Qualley said the victim was a friend who had given Qualley a key to the residence, which she could use in case she needed a place to stay.



Chris Reinos/Daily Journal

Craig Haukebo and Bill Michaud were two of the many Battle Lake residents who advocated for bringing natural gas to the city. Construction on the gas route is set to begin later this year.

Natural gas route set for Battle Lake

City Council voted to move project forward

By Chris Reinos
Daily Journal

After months of advocating for bringing natural gas to Battle Lake, Craig Haukebo said his work, along with the work of the other Network Battle Lake members who campaigned on the project, is largely done.

"The ball is in the city council's court now," Haukebo said.

That's because the Battle Lake City Council voted last week to move the project forward. Construction on a natural gas route is set to begin later this year, and Haukebo said all work is scheduled to be completed by the be-

ON THE ROAD

ginning of next winter.

Before approving the next step of the project, the city council wanted to see a demand in the area for natural gas. Network Battle Lake sent out commitment contracts to households along the proposed route, asking them to sign and return the forms if they were interested in using natural gas.

Although Haukebo was unsure of how many people in Battle Lake and surrounding areas would return the contracts, he was very pleased with the outcome: more than 400 signed forms.

But this wasn't the first step. Last year, Bill Michaud gathered

opinions to identify the demand for natural gas. Leading up to last week's city council vote, they also formed phone bank groups in an effort to reach as many people as possible.

But Michaud said getting as many contracts as they did also required good timing.

"No one on the project figured we would have such a spike in LP prices," he said. "Before that, there was not enough of a discrepancy between prices. When (the prices) got like they did, that changed. You have to give people credit for being knowledgeable."

Haukebo, Michaud and other volunteers who advocated for natural gas believe it will be cheaper

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MAILING LABEL

TOMORROW:



HIGH: 24 LOW: 18

SUNRISE TOMORROW: 6:56 a.m.
SUNSET TOMORROW: 6:16 p.m.

YESTERDAY:

HIGH: 9 LOW: -11
PRECIPITATION: .02

OBITUARIES

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- Bernard Hoppe, 85, formerly of Fergus Falls
- George Marotteck, 87, Fergus Falls
- John Savoy, 95, Fergus Falls
- Karl Simison, 71, Detroit Lakes
- Elizabeth Eastman, 69, Battle Lake
- Eldor Hagen, 92, Henning
- Julius Moberatan, 83, Fergus Falls
- Irene Moske, 93, Fergus Falls
- Grant Torgerson, 70, Woodburn, Ore.



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YOUTH HOCKEY TEAM PHOTOS INSIDE