

Southwest Montana Veteran's Home Update #63

By Mike Lawson

Greetings once again to you, the Veterans/Communities/Counties of SW MT who are the chief organizers and supporters of the SW MT Veteran's Home. The Drum Roll Beat is getting louder for the marching of the SW Mt Veteran construction workers, in getting our Vet Home closer to completion and ready for the Grand Opening in November. The chief drummers are Site Construction Superintendent Mike Ascherman and Carpenter General Foreman John Kotka. Mike coordinating all the different sub-contractors to work in the right sequence at the right time, getting material in when it is needed and meeting timelines, has to be a nightmare. John Kotka works hand in hand with Mike, roaming the job-site and continually lining his carpenters up with the many aspects of their work as well as working with the various sub-contractors in coordinating what his guys will do to mesh with what these sub-contractors do. These transitions are what make or break the accomplishment of a particular job being done when it's supposed to be done. I also appreciate their weekly briefing about what has happened for this past week and what's expected for this week we're now in. The continual visual effects of the outside work, especially, are impressive. I'll refer to these later in this article.

Construction Updates:

Community Center; - Interior; The remainder of the cabinets and counter tops have been installed. The missing doors have arrived and are being installed. The door hardware continues to be installed. We were able to see the bathroom shelving being installed by some cabinet guys from Great Falls, as well as the paper and soap dispensers. This week or next will see the Plumbers installing sinks/toilets/urinals. One of the big things that some of John's guys were doing here, was the brushing/scrubbing/mopping of the cement floors throughout this building. This was done for the preparation of the laying of laminate and carpeted floors. The Electricians have the Electrical Breaker-Box Panels to get hooked up w/breakers installed after that. During this phase the lights will be installed. The Plumbers are continuing with the HVAC trim-out this week.

Exterior; We visited with the Siding Crew Foreman and his plan is to finish the siding on the Front Entrance/Portico area this week, which will make this building 100% sided. On the outside also, Zemljak Excavating set decorative precast cement blocks for a bench-type retaining wall around the back entrance. Inside this will be cement sidewalks. On the eastside of this building they set a Decorative Pre-Cast Wall around the Patio. This building is really coming together.

Cottage #1; - Interior; Bathroom tiling process continues. Taping and mud-work is close to being done. The painting is done in the resident wings and Collins's Painting was supposed to paint the Living and Dining areas the weekend, preceding this update. John has the Carpenters busy doing window casing trim-outs. The Electricians still have some Entry Door area work to do before the Carpenters can finish that area up. HVAC trim-out continues.

Exterior: The siders finished installing the sheetmetal roof-facia covering. This building is now 100% sided.

Cottage #2;- Interior: The Fire Sprinkler is complete in the bathrooms. The metal seismograph metal ceiling grid is getting sheet-rocked. Some taping/mud work is ongoing. The exterior door hardware was installed.

Exterior; The siding crew are close to having this building sided with the exception of the roof eave fascia covering.

Cottage #3; The Mexican crew are hanging sheetrock on the seismograph metal framed ceilings, as well as doing the mud/taping in this building. The Fire-Sprinkler rough-in is complete. The Plumbers and Sheet-metal guys continue to work on the Plumbing and Mechanical work.

Exterior; The siders have been working on the trim and wainscoting and expect to start installing the colored siding either this week or next, depending on getting the Community Center siding finished.

Cottage #4; Interior; The initial sheet-rock installation is complete. The insulators for the piping/ductwork/etc. are continuing with this work. The Controls installation is in progress, including the seismograph ceiling for the patient-lift ceiling areas. The electricians are pulling big wire into the Main Breaker Panel from the Electrical Vault Building. This is called the main run into the building.

Exterior; Nothing at this time.

Cottage #5; - Interior; Electricians and Plumbers continue doing their rough-in work. The Sheetmetal work is done in the attic and won't start again until the sheetrock gets hung.

Exterior: Roof is done. Entryway/Patio prep gravel pad-work is done and ready for forms and concrete work to move forward.

Maintenance Building: Roof and exterior soffit framing complete. John expects to get all the exterior doors hung this week.

Zemljak Excavating; They continue installing the collection boxes for the downspouts at the Community Building as well as for Cottages #2 & #3. They also installed the decorative blocks at the Monument Entry Sign site (It really looks good). Continue prepping for the curbs ahead of R&K Concrete.

R&K Concrete; continue to set up and pour curb and gutter. They have about 800 feet poured with an average of 200 ft to 400 ft poured per week.

Elk Horn Electric: Pulling main-wires (Home-Runs) from Electrical Vault Buildings to all the buildings on site.

The big push is to get curbs done, the pavement done, the sidewalks around the Community Center/Cottage #1/Cottage #2 done and Becker Landscaping on site by the middle of September. It's a big push and we the Veterans are cheering them on. I'll close this for now and wish you all a great week before this summertime disappears. Please be safe during these Covid-19 dangerous times. Take Care.