

Southwest Montana Veteran's Home Update #102

By Mike Lawson

Greetings once again to you, the Veterans/Counties/Communities of SW MT, who are the chief organizers and supporters of the SW MT Veteran's Home.

Excitement is rippling through the veteran ranks of Southwest Montana, who have supported and fought for so long, to make our Veteran's home to become a reality. The excitement for us is seeing that the Montana Legislature wrapped up their 2021 Regular Session on Friday and once more our Legislators came through for the Southwest Montana Veterans Home. On the very first page of the HB14 is the approved line item for the "**SWMVH Enclosed Walkways**" project. This is the greatest of news for those of us that have fought to make this home a reality. One of the original designs had connected cottages with central kitchens and common spaces but that was changed to our current model. The Cottages are beautiful but not practical for our long winters. This is why we fought for HB14 to update the design with enclosed walkways that will now connect the cottages to each other. Our Veteran Residents will now be able to easily travel between Cottages without exposure to the sometimes brutal Montana weather by walking through covered enclosed walkways, built to the same standards as the cottages. Because they are connected to the Cottages they will be heated and include fire sprinkler systems. This is another plus for our resident veterans, in that it'll make the SWMVH neighborhood a bit more neighborly by allowing them to safely travel over to the next cottage and visit their Veteran resident friends. This also makes it less costly to operate the home by sharing staff, such as those making all the delicious food. The State had a hard time getting an operations contractor because of the current design. They had two failed requests for proposals processes and the potential bidder feedback was that it was too hard to staff each individual cottage. By connecting the cottages, the operator will be legally and practically able to share some of their staff. It will be challenging to build these walkways, but the State has already begun the design process. I'll keep you up to date of the progress by them and how they plan to build them. Exciting stuff!! I received good feedback from my three go-to guys, Mark Gollinger/Mike Ascherman/John Kotka and the end of the tunnel of completing this vet home, as construction is fast approaching.

Construction Updates:

Community Center: Change Order for covering on interior columns is completed. Looks very good.

Cottage #1: RK Concrete replaced defective sections of sidewalk in front of this cottage.

Cottage #2: Under the operating contractor Eduro's control and waiting for Resident Veterans to be admitted.

Cottage #3: Just a few minor things that were finished up. A bit on the painter final punch-list. John Kotka filled/turned-on the Spa Tub with everything working well. The door lock cores will be changed from the contractors to the States lock cores as this cottage is scheduled to be turned over to the State this week. The fence between the unfinished cottages and the finished ones will be moved to be between Cottage #3 & #4.

Cottage #4: The Tile layers have their base material laid on the resident room bathroom floors in the east-wing and spa. They are now laying tile in these areas. The Carpenters are finishing

the door hanging. Doors and windows are all trimmed and cased out. They have started out the FF&E package installation (grab bars, fold down grab bars, curtain rods, soap dispensers curtain/shower rods, etc.). Cabinet Masters out of Great Falls set cabinets/tops throughout the building except for the east wing. The ovens and cook-tops in the kitchen are installed. Plumber was working in the mechanical room on domestic water.

Cottage #5: Most of sheet-rocking is completed with the mud and taping continuing. The Sheetmetal guys from Tri-County Construction continue installing the HVAC equipment. Plumbers are working on the gas and heat lines on the corridor Heat Exchangers. The Carpenters built an air chase which allows heated air to go through the soffit to the keep the fire sprinkler lines from freezing.

Becker Landscaping continues installing the irrigation lateral and curb water lines. They are also spreading/leveling top-soil.

Zemlajk continues spreading more top-soil.

RK Concrete is working on concrete site punch list.

Our sister Veteran Medical Center project to the north of our Vet Home is moving forward. White Resources poured the concrete slab floor and Wayne Paffhausen said they'll start framing this week. He got a lot of building material delivered and had Grizzly Fencing put a tall chain-link fenced area around it. With the high price of building materials, he also hired a night guard. His son Todd is the Construction Superintendent on this job. Todd was the quarterback for the Butte High Football team in the middle to late 80's. They're building the Portico footing in front of where the entrance will be and getting the drain pipelines dug and put in around the building. Once this is done, that will allow them to get the parking areas graveled to grade.

That's about a wrap for me this week. Please be safe as our Covid numbers are coming down. Being vaccinated and safe practices are making this happen. Until Next time, take care.