

Southwest Montana Veteran's Home Update #77

By Mike Lawson

Greeting once again to you, the Veterans/Counties/Communities of SW MT who have been and are the organizers/supporters of this, our Southwest Montana Veteran's Home.

The weather isn't cooperating very well, as far as outside work is concerned, on our Vet Home. The inside work on some of the heated Cottages and Community Center is proceeding at a good clip. The delivery "on-time" of construction material is a continued problem, due to Covid-19. The contractors, for the most part, adapt and keep things moving forward. As with any new construction, there are needed design changes/change orders that are needed to make things work properly, that weren't anticipated. This is not surprising due to the scope and complexity of this complex of buildings, that make up our SW MT Veteran's home. The final finishing work, that creates the punch-lists of things that need to be made right, according to the inspection specifications, is a quality control process. This happens before the specific building is turned over to the State of Montana (the owner). This process can be time consuming but is extremely important. The Community Center and Cottage #1 are presently going through this process and Cottage #3 will follow, in the near future. A dark cloud that has hit our Vet Home Construction Site, is that a couple of the construction workers have come down with the Covid-19 Virus. Silver Bow County is the worst in the state for Covid right now and it was inevitable that this site would probably get hit. The State of Montana is very concerned as is Cory Markovich, (Project Manager—Markovich Construction). The Silver Bow County Health Department has been alerted and is concerned. Between these three entities, a comprehensive, mandatory workplace set of guidelines, will likely be put into practice. Something like this virus has the potential of shutting the whole job down or severely curtailing the work. These are frightening times and everyone needs to respect one another and help in the battle in combating/overcoming this terrible virus. On another note, I again got briefed on the progress of our SW MT Vet home by Mike Ascheman and John Kotka, which enables me to accurately let you folks know, what has happened the week before and what is expected to happen, during the week this article is published. Liaison Mark Gollinger and I then follow this up with a walk-through of the site, which verifies and makes sense of things. I thank all three of these guys, as they care and give me the straight scoop.

Construction Updates:

Community Center—Interior: The finishing touches are well along in this building. The painters have worked through their punch-list and the paint is beautiful. They'll be done in here this week and will move on to Cottage #1. As we walked through this building, it really gave one the feeling of being completed, except for the bathroom sinks which the plumbers are waiting on parts for. There's also a small bit of tile around the Fireplace to be laid. The heating system is working beautifully. Getting the furniture moved into this building, will be the next step after the cleaning contractors do a thorough "top to bottom cleaning", of the complete building, inside.

Exterior: Finished

Cottage #1—Interior: Lots of things getting done in this end-phase of the inside construction of this building. The Plumbers are trimming out, throughout this building, concerning sinks, toilets, etc. The Electricians were wiring for the Refrigerator/ Freezer in the Pantry. On our walk-through, we could see that the Floor Layer guys, had the West Wing Resident Rooms, completely laid. The base-wall borders were glued in place, where the floor meets the walls. The main hallways/living room/library will get carpet, after the linoleum is all laid. The kitchen/dining/pantry/dining areas were all laid. The North Resident Wing Rooms floors will be laid this week and possibly into next week. The carpet areas will then be laid. This building will then be moving more into the punch-list phase, followed by getting ready for the final inspection. Once this takes place this Cottage can be turned over to the state. In the meantime, appliances have been delivered and will be installed this week. The

Carpenters are waiting on a closet door jam and a package containing the soap dispensers/hand-towel dispensers/hand sanitizers. Once this package is on site, they'll be installed. Lots of this small type of work that's important but takes time. There is also some wallpaper that needs to be hung in the Central Area of this Cottage #1.

Exterior: Rear Patio finish up work left to do at some point. Not major work but important.

Cottage #2: The Dry-Wall Tapers and the Painters are making good progress and scrambling to stay one step ahead of the carpenters. The Carpenters are installing doors and trimming out the windows/doors/hand-rail/picture-rail/etc. One resident wing is pretty well trimmed out, with the central area being worked on. The Plumbers were working on the domestic water line and the gas lines. The Electricians were pulling wire to their breaker panels. Johnson Controls (Dean) was installing conduit and pulling wire for the low voltage control systems. The Tile Guys should be moving into this Cottage in about a week.

Exterior: Rear Patio finish work for the future.

Cottage #3—Interior: I really like going through this Cottage #3, because it is biting at the heels of Cottage#1, in getting its finish work done. The Plumbers have their domestic water lines in and most importantly, they have the gas lines installed, to the point that the testing, is supposed to take place this week. That should pass, which will then have the Northwestern Gas Division, install a gas meter. Once that's in place, the heating-system can be brought online and tested. Cottage #3 can then be self-heating. This is exciting, to say the least. The Electricians are trimming out lights/switches/receptacles. The Tile Layers have the tile installed in the resident rooms, with only the grouting left to do. The tile crew were working on the spa room and were close to having it done. The grouting is left to do. John said they can do about three rooms per day, which once complete, will allow them to move into Cottage #2 and begin tiling there. Johnson Controls (Dean) was installing conduit and pulling wire for the low voltage programming/control systems. These systems control the air louvers, boilers, thermostats and other systems. The pipe insulators were insulating pipe and wrapping ductwork.

Exterior: Rear patio finish work in the future.

Cottage #4: Interior: Not a lot happening here as the focus is on the other Cottages. Some in and out work by the Plumbers and Sheet Metal guys.

Exterior: Some siding finish-up and Column/Beam work by the Carpenters.

Cottage #5—Interior: Little if anything done here, as the other Cottages are the focus.

Exterior: The siding crew have made great progress and have put quite a bit of the colored siding on. This can be seen best on the Continental Drive side of our Vet Home Complex. It's a great looking blue and is another feature of enhancement.

Receiving/Maintenance Bld: The two big garage doors are installed and give this building a finished look on the outside. The inside still needs to be finished with sheetrock, lighting, etc. Unknown when that will happen, but guessing after the Community Center and Cottage #1, are turned over to the state, once completed.

Again with cold weather and the Covid-19 surging all over the country and especially in SW MT. I would say, for the love of God, protect yourself and your loved ones, by following our Health Officials guidelines. Until next time, please take care.