

A CLOSER LOOK

EXPANSION FOCUSES ON SAFETY

DeKalb County Nursing Home project on track for September

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DeKALB – The DeKalb County Nursing Home and Rehabilitation addition and renovation project should be completed in the fall, according to county and construction officials.

“It’s going well,” said Megan Simon, project manager for Ringland-Johnson Construction. “We’re about 50% to 55% completed.”

She said closing the additions has helped construction because it means workers can continue to labor inside and gain momentum to complete the project in the third quarter of 2020.

Simon said the project should be complete by September, with the caveat that the completion date does depend on Illinois Department of Public Health’s review and acceptance of the project. Simon took over as project manager when Jeff Blanck retired from Ringland-Johnson at the end of 2019.

At a DeKalb County Public Building Commission meeting Tuesday, the commission approved three change orders for the project at 2600 N. Annie Glidden Road. Those include “topping out of existing walls,” at a cost of \$7,975, fire proofing, which cost \$1,514, and snow removal, which cost \$5,399.

During demolition of the walls and



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Work continues Tuesday on the expansion at the DeKalb County Rehab & Nursing Center on North Annie Glidden Road in DeKalb.

ceiling in the support areas behind the nurse station in Building B, it was discovered that fire-rated walls were not complete above the ceiling. A similar condition during demolition of similar areas in Building A was found behind the nurse station, according to a Ringland-Johnson Construction change order.

“Topping out existing walls is to achieve the fire rating above the ceiling where most people can’t see to the deck of the building,” Simon said. “Fireproofing is a material we put on steel to make sure it doesn’t get engulfed right away.”

The other change was when it was discovered the walls that were supposed to be rated for fire code weren’t.

“In order to get it up to code, we had to drywall and insulate it,” Simon said. She said everything is based on fire code regulations.

DeKalb County Administrator Gary Hanson said the project’s scope has changed to fix the situation.

He said the first two items – topping out of existing walls and fireproofing – have to do with the current facility and not the new addition.

“The two areas of the current facility were not originally done according to code,” Hanson said. “We now have to bring that part of the building up to code.”

Hanson said they don’t want to ignore anything that was done incorrectly in the past.

“We want to make the building as good and safe as possible by today’s standards,” he said.

As for the last item, snow removal, Simon said there wasn’t a roof, so in order for contractors to work, the snow had to be cleared out so everyone could work.

The expansion will include additional rooms, an activity center, an upgraded fire alarm system, a nursing call system, a larger chiller and a new boiler system. A 15,400-square-foot transitional care unit will add 18 rooms to the 83,000-square-foot facility.

Economic Development Committee advances 2 amendments

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SYCAMORE – The DeKalb County Economic Development Committee voted unanimously to approve two recommendations to improve future business within the county.

The committee first voted on a boundary amendment to add 500 acres south of Gurler Road and between Illinois 23 and to extend the property line east of Peace Road.

“It would be annexed to the city of DeKalb to provide for utilities and an upgrade of Gurler Road,” according to a memorandum from Paul Borek, executive director for the DeKalb County Economic Development Corp., to the DeKalb County Enterprise Zone Partners.

Borek explained the purpose of the extra acreage.

“It provides a large site for an extraordinarily large project in the enterprise zone,” he said.

Borek said DeKalb County is at a disadvantage without multiple large sites to attract those projects.

One of the projects that is in DeKalb County and the city of DeKalb’s reach is Project Hammer – a food-processing company that could develop 2.4 million square feet of new building space, 1.4 million square feet of which would be manufacturing, with room for expansion, according to the memorandum. Project Hammer would create an estimated 1,000 permanent jobs and 1,000 temporary construction jobs.



Paul Borek, executive director of the DeKalb County Economic Development Corp., talks about the benefits of the DeKalb County Economic Development Committee approving two recommendations to the DeKalb County Board.

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The other project is Project Ventus, which is proposing to invest \$800 million to develop 900,000 square feet of space during its first phase, the memorandum states. The project would buy a 500-acre site that enables development of one or more identical phases during

the next five to 15 years.

The second recommendation that the DeKalb County Economic Development Committee approved was an incentive amendment for the DeKalb Enterprise Zone Tax Abatement program.

Borek said it reduces prop-

erty tax liability for a certain amount of time, provides jobs, construction, investment and tax revenue.

Project Hammer would generate about \$69 million or more through 15 years, which would nearly match the revenue from DeKalb’s industrial base of Nestle, Panduit, 3M, Goodyear and Target during the 15-year period.

And there is a clawback measure to ensure that whatever is agreed to happens, such as about 1,000 permanent jobs, Borek said.

“We need provisions to ensure performance,” he said.

Borek said the identity of the Project Hammer company won’t be announced until the company makes an announcement.