

Center works to improve senior care

By Chuck Rupnow

Leader-Telegram staff

SPRING VALLEY - Big changes are in store for senior housing, assisted living and a wellness facility in Spring Valley.

Spring Valley Health Care Center will be moving west of the village as part of a three-phase, multi-million dollar effort by the non-profit Spring Valley Health Care Services to improve overall senior health care opportunities, according to Kevin Larson, center administrator.

"This is extremely exciting and long overdue," Larson said. "We've been eyeing this up for a while and waiting for the right time. This is the right time."

The plan calls for construction of an assisted living facility called Valley Villas, on a 16-acre village-owned parcel off Highway 29, on the village's west side. Construction is scheduled to begin Oct. 1.

"We've gotten great support from the village in all aspects of this," Larson said. "We have heard nothing but positive comments about the plan. It should be great for the community and the area."

Valley Villas will consist of 20 units in a 20,000-square foot building. It will have a mixture of one- and two-bedroom units, Larson said, adding that each unit is generous in size and meets the village's apartment code.

Construction is estimated to cost about \$3 million and be completed by the summer of 2009.

"Unique to ours is the affordability of the assisted living quarters," Larson said, indicating that rent likely will vary between \$400 and \$1,110 a month for residents. "It is income adjusted, meaning people of all income strata can reside there."

The second phase is construction of a new nursing home facility, followed by the third phase - a wellness facility.

The assisted living center will use an estimated 3 acres, while the replacement nursing home would utilize 5 acres and the wellness facility an additional acre with any remaining property going back to the village, Larson said.

The existing 50-bed skilled care facility is about 47 years old and in need of improvements, Larson said. The new facility also would have 50 beds but would have a "neighborhood-based structure."



Kevin Larson stood outside the Spring Valley Health Care Center where he is the administrator. The center is scheduled to be relocated to a new facility next year, according to projected building plans. The center will be part of a three-phase building project that also includes a wellness center and assisted living facility.

Staff photo by Chuck Rupnow

Each of four wings would have 10 to 12 units and be self-sufficient, including separate entrances and other amenities, Larson said. The cost of the project is about \$6.5 million.

The future of the existing facility will be decided once the new facility is operational, Larson said. He's heard options of a church, medical clinic, dance/pavilion and other possibilities locating at the site.

"It is very good property, but it is just too landlocked for us, for what we want to do," Larson said.

It is anticipated that construction of the new skilled care facility would begin in April 2009 and be completed by the fall of 2010. It is also hoped the wellness center would be completed by 2011.

The center would serve the senior care campus and Spring Valley area, Larson said.

"It's gaining a lot of community support," he said, adding that the center would be beneficial to those who now have to travel to other communities for therapy.

It is possible that six new employment positions would be needed for the assisted living facility and no new ones for the skilled care facility. The center currently has 85 employees, Larson said.

Spring Valley Administrator Rita Goveronski said there is great need for an assisted living facility in the area.

"The village has not been involved financially with the project, but is very, very supportive," Goveronski said.

"We own the building and the property that the current center is on now," she said. "Right now, there are no plans for what will happen with it. The facility they are in now has served its purpose."

Village officials are very interested in the center's future because it is second to the school district in employment, she said.

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