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Ground broken on Vintage Hills

BY AARON W. JACO • AJACO@DMREG.COM • SEPTEMBER 10, 2009

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Workers broke ground last week on a \$9.5 million senior living facility to be located within Indianola's upcoming Summercrest Hills development.

The 66-bed Vintage Hills Retirement Center, slated to open fall 2010, is the first signed tenant of the planned mixed-use development at the intersection of Hillcrest Drive and U.S. Highway 65/69.

Owned and operated by Pella-based Ewing Land Development Services, the facility is designed to feature 46 assisted living units and 20 memory care units, united by an indoor "town center" with a barber shop, single-screen movie theater and game room available to residents and their families.

"We're excited to have a community-focused project that provides services within this group's core value, which is to provide a quality of life that's sustained while a person comes of age," said Tim Walpole, principal at Three-Sixty Group in West Des Moines. "We were fortunate to find that partner right away."

Design plans show Summercrest Hills covering a 160-acre piece of land north of Indianola. The project is a partnership of Downing Construction of Indianola and Three-Sixty Group, with design work from West Des Moines-based William J. Ludwig and Associates, financing from several partners and money lending from Peoples Bank in Indianola.




Michael Rolands/Record-Herald Staff


A Sept. 2 groundbreaking ceremony marks the start of construction on the Vintage Hills Retirement Community. Vintage Hills marketing director Terri Caldwell, Ewing Land Development Services president Jeff Ewing, Downing Construction president Denis Frischmeyer and Indianola Mayor Jerry Kelley toss dirt into the air to mark the start of the project.

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"Summercrest Hills is the type of development property that makes sense for us," said Josh Cowman, project manager for Ewing Land Development Services. "It's a place where senior citizens can still be active. When Summercrest Hills is built out it'll all be right outside (residents') doors. Already, the necessities are within walking distance or a short drive."

Vintage Hills is expected to create approximately 15 full-time jobs including dietary managers, registered nurse coordinators, cooks and dietary staff members, and five part-time jobs including dietary aides and nurse's aide.

Wage and salary information is not yet available, said Terri Caldwell, Vintage Hills marketing director.

More jobs could be created with a future expansion of the facility, tentatively set to add 45 independent living units, Caldwell said.

Meanwhile, phase one is expected to reach tenant capacity within two years.

Residents of Vintage Hills will pay a flat monthly rent, based on the size of their room and level of care; Cowman said there will be no entry fee or endowment fee.

Ewing Land Development Services has built three other "continuum of care" facilities in central Iowa. The company currently manages two of the three facilities.

Vriendschap Village in Pella hosts 91 units of independent living, assisted living and memory care.

Newton Village, sold at the completion of construction, hosts 91 units of independent living, assisted living and memory care.

Legacy Pointe in Waukee features 168 units of independent living, assisted living and skilled nursing.

Vintage Hills project leaders are confident about being the first developers on-site at Summercrest Hills.

The group's Pella and Waukee locations were both "surrounded by cornfields" at the time of construction -

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and now, both are nestled among convenience stores and other amenities.
Said Cowman: "Senior housing seems to work out well as a driver of development."

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