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FF City Council approves resolution on purchase agreement with investment group

Brian Hansel

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The Fergus Falls City Council approved a resolution Monday on a purchase agreement with Rivers Edge Investments LLC, for the sale of the city-owned lot at Lincoln Avenue and Cascade Street.

The agreement will call for the investment group to purchase what is presently a sparsely used parking lot for \$328,000. The closing date is believed to be March 1, 2021.

Rivers Edge representative Donovan Rogness spoke to the council prior to their vote on the resolution and outlined the group's plan for the property. The group is planning to erect a four-story apartment and office complex. Rogness said construction could begin as early as April 2021.



Speaking in support of Rivers Edge Investments were Greater Fergus Falls executive director Annie Deckert, realtor investor Don Hanson and Lisa Workman of the Fergus Falls Area Chamber of Commerce.

The complex would eat up most of the existing space in the lot but the Shopko building would remain in place for at least three years. The group purchased the building last spring and currently has leased its interior space to a pair of local businesses.

Rogness said the ground floor of the complex will offer 7,500 square feet of commercial and retail space. The top three floors will house 33 living units. Indoor parking will also be built.

Rogness told the council Rivers Edge has already invested more than \$1 million into the purchase of Shopko and is prepared to invest approximately another \$5 million in the new complex.

The council also passed a resolution in support of a CARES spending plan. The \$1,035,703 received by the city July 28 is earmarked to help Fergus Falls businesses in meeting COVID-19 related expenses. City finance director, Bill Sonmor said the money will be used as reimbursements.

City administrator, Andrew Bremseth presented a framework in which \$400,000 will be used to meet expenses incurred by the city of Fergus Falls, \$150,000 will be used for child care and education \$400,000 will be used to meet business and nonprofit needs and the remaining \$85,703 would be placed in a catch-all fund.

Fergus Falls Chief of Public Safety Kile Bergren proposed LED crossing signs on Cavour Avenue between Oak Street and Vine Street as an alternative to a request by Our Lady of Victory Catholic School to close Cavour during school hours OLV wants to make use of a school-owned lot on the south side of Cavour in order to provide for more social distancing space for physical education classes.

The council passed a resolution supporting the alternative.

Among the consent items approved were:

- A resolution authorizing Pedal Fergus Falls to submit a Bicycle Friendly Award application for City Hall.
- A resolution certifying delinquent miscellaneous invoices.

- A resolution authorizing project plans and specifications and authorize advertising for bids for PI 5335, Concord Street improvement project.
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Reporter