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Residential development possible near St. John's academy

Developer Hendricks still deciding plans for purchase

By Kelly Smith
Special to The Freeman

DELAFIELD — Hendricks Commercial Properties — the largest landlord in the downtown Delafield business district — has yet to decide when or how it will develop some of the land it recently purchased from the St. John's Northwestern Academies, but the company president says it may be a single-family residential development rather than commercial buildings.

The Beloit-based development company purchased the 112-acre military school campus on Jan. 6 for \$7.7 million, according to academy officials.

However, because of a leaseback agreement between the company and the academy, most of the land — including 35 acres of campus buildings and the sports venues and practice fields surrounding those buildings — will remain under the academy's control as it continues to operate on the campus.

Street south of the campus, single-family homes owned by the academy north of the campus, and the 9-hole golf course south, west and north of the campus, are available for redevelopment, said Rob Gerbitz, president and chief executive officer of Hendricks Commercial Properties.

"We haven't really had a chance to put a pencil to paper yet," Gerbitz said about future development plans.

"We know what the market is looking for. The market is looking for residential rather than commercial," he told The Freeman in an exclusive interview.

According to Gerbitz, there is local and regional demand for single-family residential properties where homeowners can conveniently live, work and play without having to commute.

Because the available St. John's parcels are located within walking distance of downtown, there will be a natural "connectivity" between single-family



An aerial photo showcases the St. John's Northwestern Academies campus in Delafield.

homeowners in a future subdivision and downtown offices, entertainment, and retail establishments, Gerbitz said.

During the past five years, Hendricks Commercial Properties has acquired most of the commercial and retail buildings in downtown Delafield, many of them constructed between

the 1980s and early 2000s by local developer Bob Lang when his greeting card and calendar company was enjoying a nationwide business boom.

Gerbitz was a top aide to Lang before joining Hendricks Commercial Properties in 2009.

The development company is owned by a holding

company that includes ABC Supply, one the country's largest wholesale supplier of roofing, siding and windows, according to Forbes Magazine.

ABC Supply was founded in 1982 by the late Ken Hendricks and his wife Diane, who resides near Beloit.

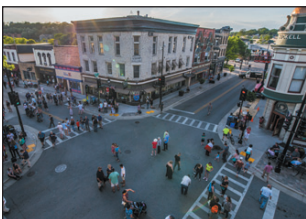
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Pewaukee creates transportation utility fee

Quarterly charge estimated at under \$7 for homeowners; wouldn't be billed until fall

By **Cara Spoto**
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PEWAUKEE — Hoping to find the money they need to repair battered village roadways, the Village Board on Tuesday voted to create a transportation utility district along with a quarterly fee that will be charged to all properties in the village. Revenue generated by the fee will only be used for street and sidewalk repair maintenance, as well as traffic control infrastructure maintenance and construction. All developed properties, including property-tax-exempt ones like churches and schools, will be assessed a fee.

Homeowner impact

The fees will be set forth and adjusted by the Village Board on an annual basis, based on the amount of money the village needs to maintain its roads. For 2021 the fees the village plans to charge property owners will be based on a road maintenance budget of \$220,000, Village Administrator Scott Gosse said, making the fee for the owner of a single-family home \$6.96 per quarter or around \$27.83 per year. The fee would not start being assessed until the

third quarter of the year. That means residents would not see the additional charge on their utility bills until sometime after September.

How it works

Under the ordinance, the fee each property owner pays will be calculated using a “base fee” paid by all users, and a “usage fee” based on the number of trips that property is expected to generate. The number of “trips” assigned to each property will be determined using a “trip generation manual” developed by the Institute of Transportation Engineers. Trustees voted 6-0 to approve the ordinance creating the transportation utility. The resolution to create the fee itself passed 6-1, with Trustee Heather Gergen voting “no.” Trustee Kevin Yonke was excused from the meeting and not present for either vote. In a presentation to the board, Jeff Mazanec, a senior consultant with municipal engineering firm R.A. Smith, noted that with the transportation utility the average homeowner should shoulder about 38 percent of the village’s road maintenance costs, as opposed to 76 percent under the current property tax allocation system.

Another tax

Transportation utility districts are still relatively new, but they have been gaining popularity as Wisconsin municipalities struggle to find ways to maintain their roadways in the face of levy caps that only permit them to raise taxes for operations if they see a sizable increase in development. Village officials see the fees as a more equitable way to pay for road maintenance. Residents who took part in a virtual public hearing on the proposal had a different take. “This is just another tax. The only ones who are going to be paying for this are the people who live in the village,” Paul Evert said. Ella Ozier asked why the village would implement such a fee when its taxes were already so much higher than the City of Pewaukee’s. Trustees said they understood the residents’ concerns, but noted that under the transportation utility system, they would actually shoulder less of the annual road maintenance cost than they do now. “If you don’t take care of the roads you have today it will cost more tomorrow. Our levy revenue is not going to go up. It’s just not,” Trustee Craig Roberts said.

LOOKING BACK IN HISTORY



From the Freeman negatives at the Waukesha County Museum
Revelers participate in an “iceball” tournament during the Lake Country Winter Carnival held on Pewaukee Lake in this photo that appeared Feb. 14, 1983. The event also included snowmobiling, ice skating and more.

No progress on I-94, Highway C development

DELAFIELD — Delafield officials have not heard from the developers of the proposed hotel and medical treatment center off Indian Springs Road near Highway C and Interstate 94, Mayor Kent Attwell said. “The applicant is still interested, but the project was put on hold due to COVID and we’re waiting for their client to tell them that they want to proceed once again,” Attwell said. “It’s the same information we had for at least nine months.” The project was first discussed in 2019 when the improvement and reconstruction of the intersection of Indian Springs Road and Highway C was on the table as part of the possible development. In early 2020, city officials had planned a meeting regarding the development — which would have a hotel in addition to a 27-acre medical service and senior living campus — in February but decided not to hold the public hearing regarding the issue. Attwell said the city just has to wait on the applicant to come back for any progress to be made and he doesn’t know when that will be.

Plum named new Kettle Moraine superintendent

WALES — The Kettle Moraine School Board has announced the selection of Stephen Plum as the district’s next superintendent. Plum is the director of two charter schools within the district: the High School of Health Sciences and KM Explore Elementary. He has 27 years of experience in education, the last 15 as an educator and administrator with Kettle Moraine. Plum holds several degrees and is expected to complete his doctorate in educational admin-



Plum

istration from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee in 2021. “Steve brings a wealth of experience and innovation as an educator and has been an integral part of the Laser family since 2005. We’re excited to begin collaborating with him in the coming months to start the next chapter of KM leadership,” said KMSD Board President Gary Vose in a statement. Plum succeeds Dr. Patricia Deklotz, the current superintendent, who is retiring. “I am humbled and incredibly grateful for this opportunity,” Plum said. “Following in Dr. Deklotz’s footsteps is an honor. I look forward to leading our esteemed district and providing the most relevant education for our students, preparing them for a future where anything and everything is possible.”

St. John’s

From Page 1

Now a billionaire businesswoman, Hendricks owns the holding company and is ranked by Forbes Magazine as one of the wealthiest women in the nation. Hendricks Commercial Properties has gained a reputation for redeveloping former urban industrial sites into mixed used commercial, retail and entertainment developments. Gerbitz acknowledged investing in residential real estate is a departure from the company’s business model. “We won’t be building the houses. We will partner with someone who is in homebuilding,” he explained. Gerbitz said the company’s decision to acquire the St. John’s Northwestern Academies campus followed a series of discussions between he and former academy president Thomas D. Stocks III.

Gerbitz said purchasing the property would enable Hendricks to



Gerbitz

“expand its footprint” in Delafield and assist the academy in establishing long-term financial stability. Hendricks will maintain ownership of the campus and lease it back to the academy. The transaction enables the academy to pay off debt and provide about \$2 million to fund future operations, according to an Academy news release. “This opportunity will allow St. John’s Northwestern to strengthen its financial position and improve our infrastructure while focusing on our primary mission of educating future leaders,” said Mike Henn, chair of the academy board of trustees.



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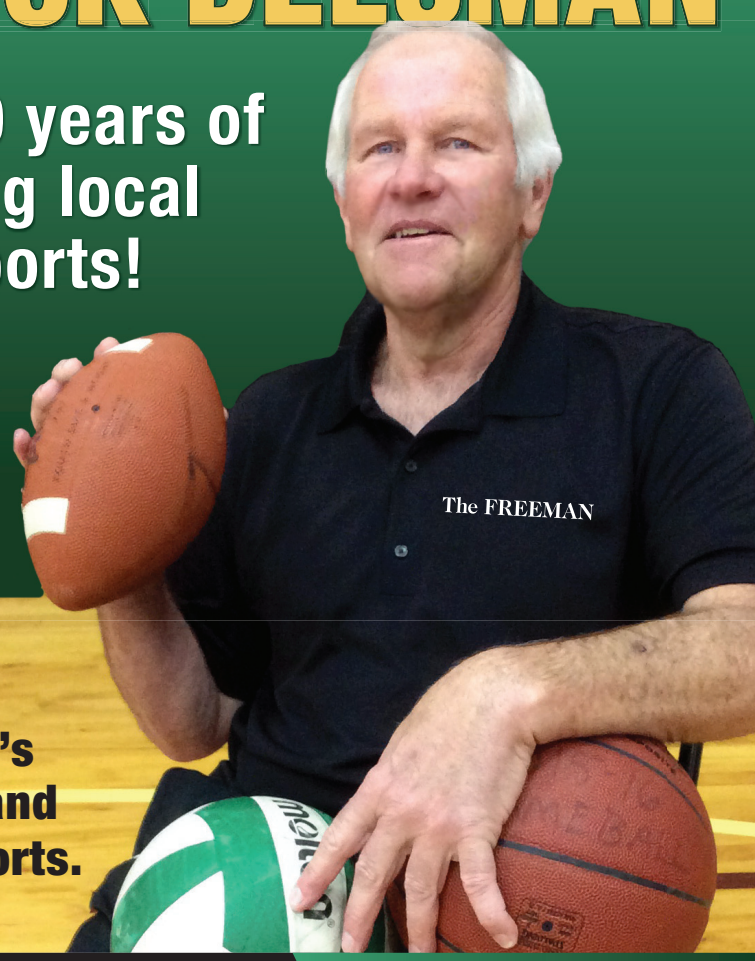
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Jake Ekdahl/Freeman Staff

Retired nurse and Lake County Free Clinic volunteer Shirley Romanowich receives her first dose of the Pfizer vaccine from Western Lakes Fire Department Paramedic Larry Fritz at one of the vaccine clinics in Waukesha County.

COVID-19 precautions still important for the vaccinated

Masks, social distancing advised

By Jake Ekdahl
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WAUKESHA — With COVID-19 vaccinations underway, those who have already received one might be wondering whether they can take off their face masks or relax other precautions, without fear of worsening the situation.

The short answer: No, according to health officials.

For a couple reasons, masks and social distancing will still be recommended for some time after people are vaccinated.

The first coronavirus vaccines require two shots; Pfizer's second dose comes three weeks after the first and Moderna's comes after four weeks. And the effects of vaccinations generally aren't immediate.

People are expected to get some level of protection within a couple of weeks after the first shot. But full protection may not occur until a couple weeks after the second shot.

It's also not yet known whether the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines protect people from infection entirely, or just from symptoms. Researchers haven't ruled out the possibility of a vaccinated person still being able to spread the virus.

According to the Waukesha

County Dashboard, 27,336 vaccine doses have been administered within the county. Waukesha County Executive Paul Farrow emphasized we are still in the early stages of the vaccination process. He said the state of Wisconsin is receiving more than 200,000 vaccine requests while only receiving about 77,000 does per week.

"We're asking people to be patient," he said, adding that precautions like masking and social distancing are "very important for us to continue."

Waukesha Schools Deputy Superintendent Joe Koch said about 115 people within the district have been able to sign up for their first shots. That includes health care workers like nurses as well as those in the 65 and older group. He said the district will continue to adhere to guidance and utilize mitigation strategies like masks and social distancing.

In Washington County, Hartford City Administrator Steve Volkert said city firefighters, police and EMTs who choose to are all receiving vaccinations. The next group will be utilities and also frontline staff who have continual face-to-face contact with the public. Volkert said the anticipated timeline for that group to begin to receive doses is March 1.

FNL, Block Party, Balloons Over Mukwonago, Summerfest plans in the works

By Nikki Brahm
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WAUKESHA — After many summer event cancellations due to the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, the hope to make a quiet summer of 2021 into a busy one is in the air. That is, of course, if the COVID-19 pandemic allows it.

Summerfest

On Feb. 2, Milwaukee World Festival, Inc. announced that Summerfest 2021 will move from its original June dates to September, giving health professionals more time to vaccinate the general public.

In a press release, it was announced Summerfest 2021 will be held Sept. 2-4, 9-11 and 16-18.

The festival will introduce three new major amenities to the public, including the new \$51.3 million American Family Insurance Amphitheater, the new Northwestern Mutual Community Park and the new Generac Power Stage. All three capital projects will be completed by June 2021 and may open prior to Summerfest in September.

Within the coming weeks, officials will provide an update on concert information as concerts are rescheduled, according to the release. Valid Summerfest 2020 and 2021 general admission tickets issued to date may be redeemed during the new September dates.

Information regarding how to get a refund on festival admission tickets, as well as information regarding concert tickets for the American Family Insurance Amphitheater, can be found at www.summerfest.com.

With safety precautions in

place, many communities throughout Waukesha County are planning their summer festivities, with dreams of a warm and safe summer outside of their home or yard and in the company of friends and family.

Waukesha events

Susie Taylor, organizer of the Friday Night Live (FNL) music festival in downtown Waukesha, is currently planning FNL for June through August, although the dates have not been set yet.

"Because it's an outdoor event and it's spread across a larger area, it can be safe and people can practice social distancing," Taylor said.

Taylor said she is hoping for a "grasp on the virus" by the time the concert series begins. It was canceled last summer due to COVID-19, which Taylor said was a hard but necessary decision to keep the community safe. "I think that by having Friday Night Live, that will sure be a perk in helping many of the small businesses," Taylor said. "Performers, they want to perform and feel safe and an outdoor venue is much safer than an indoor venue."

Although the Tribute Tuesday Concert Birthday Celebration is scheduled in celebration of the city's 125th anniversary on Aug. 10, no further information is currently available about the summer concert series, according to Joanna Adamicki, the Parks, Recreation and Forestry Department events coordinator.

"We are currently evaluating summer plans and what events may look like this year and will have that information in the coming months," she said in a statement.

Other events are scheduled to celebrate the city's anniversary, including Buchnerfest on June 12, to celebrate the grand reopening of the new Buchner Park pool, and a 4th of July Parade and Fireworks.

Delafield events

The Delafield Chamber of Commerce has scheduled its



Freeman file photo

The first night of Waukesha's Friday Night Live in 2017 kicked off with live performances and crowds.

Delafield Block Party events for July 9-10. On Friday night, Road Crew and The Now will perform and on Saturday night, Rebel Grace and The Toys will perform. The bands are local and all have performed at Block Party in the past.

Road Crew and Rebel Grace are both country and the other two bands are rock or alternative, Executive Director Megan Braatz said.

"We at this point are planning to move forward and we expect to have a Block Party as we've had all of the years prior," she said. "We feel confident that by July we'll be able to move forward."

Mukwonago events

The Mukwonago Chamber of Commerce & Tourism Center is working to host all its upcoming events, including the upcoming Spring Fling on May 1, a fundraiser for the chamber with entertainment and business networking.

The chamber also partners with other organizations to host the Maxwell Street Days event, which they are planning to hold on June 12-13, July 17-18, Aug. 21-22 and Sept. 11-12.

Other events include the summer farmers market hosted Wednesday evenings May 19 through October 13;

a golf event scheduled on June 24; a summer concert series scheduled June 11, July 9, Aug. 7 and Sept. 11; the Balloons Over Mukwonago hot air balloon event July 16-18; and more.

"Pretty much anything we normally have going on is scheduled and hopefully able to happen," said April Reszka, executive director of the Mukwonago Chamber of Commerce. "We're moving forward with safe precautions in place for anything we do. We had several successful events last year during COVID by putting together plans last year that worked for us."

Pewaukee events

Positively Pewaukee events are scheduled as well, including Community Cookouts and Cars for June 4; Waterfront Wednesday June 9 and Taste of Lake Country July 30 and July 31.

"We just feel like we've just got to move forward on everything," said Elaine Kroening, executive director of Positively Pewaukee. "Obviously, if things get worse we'll re-evaluate everything, but for right now we're very hopeful that we're just going to move forward and be able to hold our events this summer."

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Wearing masks is a necessary evil for some athletes

Basketball getting more strict, wrestling more relaxed on face coverings

By Dave Radcliffe
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WAUKESHA — It beats the alternative. That’s been the general consensus for athletes who have had to deal with the inconvenience of wearing a mask during the 2020-21 school year, specifically those playing sports that take place indoors. But it has resulted in getting the chance to compete, and after a lost spring and an uncertain summer, it’s a necessary evil high school athletes are willing to accept and make the most of. “One thing we always talk about is controlling what you can control and that goes for the masks,” Pewaukee senior Jordan Berglin said. “It’s so out of our control at this point, we just have to focus on our game and what we can do with masks. You can be negative and say this sucks playing with masks, but we try to focus on the fact that at least we get to play.” Berglin is plenty used to the whole mask thing by now. A standout on the volleyball court, Berglin was the conference player of the year this fall as she helped the Pirates go unbeaten in the Woodland West for the second straight season. Volleyball was the lone fall sport that required masks to be worn at all times. That was an adjustment for Berglin after going through summer open gyms without wearing masks while on the court. “At that point there was no mask mandate, but as we got more into the fall season the mandate became more prevalent,” Berglin said. “It’s been interesting.” Now one of the top players on the Pewaukee girls basketball team, Berglin still must don a mask. It may be the same playing surface,



Kylie Bridenhagen/Special to The Freeman

Arrowhead's Jake Ganos takes on Waukesha North's Elijah Zirbel in the 160-pound first place match during the WIAA Division Regionals in Pewaukee.

but in terms of degree of difficulty? “For basketball it is a lot harder than volleyball, just because basketball is a lot more cardio intensive,” Berglin said. “But our coaches have been good with giving us mask breaks and water breaks. During the game you don’t have a mask break unless you’re away from everyone.” Berglin said Pewaukee coach Jim Reuter and his staff have done a great job at hammering home wearing masks in practice regardless of the situation, and that in turn has helped make it easier to keep them on during games. “Honestly we haven’t had a ref or an AD talk to us once because coach Reuter does a good job enforcing it in practice,” Berglin said. “Other teams you can see it wears off during the game and they’re not able to keep their masks up. You can hear the ref say, ‘Hey, make sure you’re keeping your mask up’ during free throws. So I think girls basketball has done a really nice job and there really haven’t been a lot of issues.” And to help with fatigue, the WIAA is allowing an extra 30-second timeout per half, something that was instituted in early December. “A lot of our games have been really, really close,” Berglin said. “We’ve been playing high-intensity

games and a lot of up-and-down games, especially against Germantown and Waukesha West, it was a lot cardio-wise. Coach Reuter ... especially when it’s the starters out there, he really tries to give us a break, especially if we’re getting down to the end of the game.” Berglin, also a sprinter and triple jumper, was devastated when she had her track and club volleyball seasons taken away, not to mention a chance to play at the state basketball tournament last March. And then her senior year was in limbo all the way up until August. “Just to come back this fall and have people say to me that I’m going to have a senior season in volleyball when I thought I was going to lose everything, there was no better feeling,” said Berglin, who will play volleyball at Flagler College in Florida. “I’m so grateful and now for basketball, too, it feels so good to be on the court and you forget about the mask when you’re playing because you’re just so happy to be out there playing.” The most important thing for Brookfield East senior Hayden Doyle is not allowing the mask to change the way he or his teammates play the game — even when being pushed to the brink of exhaustion. “Sometimes you don’t even realize you have it on and other times it’s like,



Kenny Yoo/Special to The Freeman

Pewaukee's Lia Chudzik goes in for a layup against New Berlin Eisenhower's Nikki Dienberg during a Woodland West Conference game this winter at Eisenhower.

‘Gosh, can I just take this off?’” Doyle said. “It’s kind of been the same as far as practice goes, so we’re just trying to keep it the same because you kind of need to. We don’t want to switch up what we’re doing because of the mask, so you just have to fight through it. “It’s not just you going through it. Everyone has the same problem.” And it could snowball into an even bigger problem if masks aren’t worn properly, something officials are becoming more strict in enforcing as the season progresses. “The past few games they’ve definitely cracked down on it, and our coaching staff is starting to crack down on it because I guess we’ve had some issues with it and our administration really wants us to keep playing,” Doyle said. “So they’ve been cracking down more, but probably as they should.” Doyle initially wasn’t aware of the extra timeout per half being available and said coach Joe Rux hasn’t changed the way he man-

ages a game regardless. “Maybe a timeout here and there,” Doyle said. “He can probably realize if we need it, but I haven’t noticed a huge change in how he’s approached it.” In wrestling, perhaps the most physically demanding high school sport, there are only timeouts for blood or injuries. But for the show to go on, the mask must be up. “Honestly when I first started wearing a mask it made my conditioning go down so much,” Waukesha North senior Paul Selberg said. “But now after wearing a mask the whole wrestling season, you slowly get used to it. But everyone is getting tired faster, so if you’re getting tired, than they are, too.” With the lack of breaks in the action, wrestlers have fewer opportunities to fix their masks should they inevitably slip during the heat of battle. That’s resulted in officials being more lenient with the rules, although they will halt matches should a wrestler’s mask become damaged, ripped off or slides below

his mouth. “They’re not that strict at all,” Selberg said. “If it comes down while you’re wrestling or scoring points, they’ll just tell you to put it up after. Most guys keep it below their nose so you can still breathe. It’s not something the refs really care about that much.” Should there be calls for stricter regulation, perhaps officials and wrestlers will have to adjust accordingly. But for now, everyone is doing their part to keep high school sports going. Selberg, who is leading an improved Northstar team into a new era with a new head coach, is just happy to wrestle, even if it means a lack of tournaments and a shortened season. “It’s all right if we still get to wrestle,” Selberg said. “It’s been really fun, honestly. We don’t have a ton of guys but who we have, everyone is working really hard. Everyone’s getting better. “Having to wear a mask makes it tricky because you get tired so much faster, but it’s still nice to have the opportunity.”





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Waukesha County Public Health



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