

## Roers going big with senior housing building and mixed-income apartments

BY MATT M. JOHNSON

Minnetonka-based Roers Cos. is adding to its project roster in the northwest metro by proposing its biggest-yet senior housing building, and mixed-income apartments slated for an opportunity zone.

In September, Roers plans to start construction of its Havenwood senior housing facility at 7228 County Road 101 in Maple Grove, its sixth location in the Twin Cities. The \$30 million project is the second Havenwood and its second-ever project proposal for the northwest Minneapolis suburbs, following an 84-unit facility approved this spring for construction in Buffalo.

Roers completed its first Havenwood in Richfield in 2018. Since completing that 88-unit building, the company has been designing larger facilities to help keep rents affordable, said Jeff Koch, a Roers partner and co-owner. Staffing costs are growing due to a shortage of people working in the senior care field, he said in a Tuesday interview.

“The cost of skilled labor is going up, so we’re trying to offset that by making larger communities as we go forward,” he said.

The Maple Grove facility will also be joined with a 10,000-square-foot day care to be built on an outlot at the 4.47-acre property. The site, which is in the southeast



Roers Cos. plans to build a Havenwood senior housing building at 7228 County Road 101 in Maple Grove with 150 units, which is more than it has included in previous Havenwoods.

quadrant of Brockton Lane North and Bass Lake Road, is also adjacent to where a Hy-Vee grocery store is under construction.

Senior housing is a good bet in Maple Grove, Koch said. A market report Roers completed for the Havenwood proposal shows that the city’s population of residents over the age of 64 increased 170 percent between 2000 and 2010 to 4,304.

In Brooklyn Park, Roers is pursuing a 150-unit apartment project on city-owned land at 7601 Brooklyn Blvd. The city’s Economic Development Authority discussed the proposal on Monday, said Kimberly Berggren, the city’s community development director. The \$26.9 million proposal, which would include 30

apartments affordable to tenants earning 60 percent of the area median income, is not yet a home run for the city.

The EDA purchased the property, which was originally part of the Village North Shopping Center parking lot, in 2003. The property has since been included in an opportunity zone.

“We are still in the exploratory phase with our council what we want to see in our opportunity zone,” Berggren said in a Tuesday interview.

Roers has made an initial request for tax increment financing funds for the project, according to a city staff report. The EDA would likely consider approving a development agreement for

the property in October. If all goes according to plan, construction could start in early 2020.

Monthly rents in the building would range from \$1,050 for a studio designated as affordable, to \$1,700 for a market-rate, three-bedroom unit.

Brooklyn Park’s apartment vacancy rate is 2.7% according to the most recent Apartment Trends report from Minneapolis-based Marquette Advisors.

Both of the new Roers projects add to a long list of work already in progress. The company is currently building 890 rental units in Minnesota and Wisconsin and has 410 units in development, including the Brooklyn Park apartments.