

NORTH SHORE JOURNAL

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Christine Mallory, Editor

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Lake County Plans New Highway Facility

By Kitty Mayo

After Lake County's highway facility in Two Harbors was lost in an accidental fire last year, plans are moving ahead to build a replacement. According to Matt Huddleston, Lake County Administrator, tentative plans would lead to construction starting next summer.

The proposed plan, still in the early planning stages, has a projected cost of \$7 million and would include expanded square footage, a community meeting room, office space for engineering staff, and a truck wash.

While the fire caught the county by surprise, the circumstances are being seen as an opportunity to replace and improve a facility that the board had begun to make a ten year plan for.

"The county had an idea of the type of space we needed for a new facility and had been talking about a plan to make that change, it was on the horizon," Huddleston said.

The former building, built in

1964, was too small for adequate storage, requiring some snow plows to be dismantled before being stored.

According to Lake County's Highway Engineer, Krysten Foster, there were other concerns with the old facility that will now be addressed, updating power, drainage, and bringing the work environment up to safety standards.

"The new building is going to offer us the opportunity to improve safety overall for the organization, as well as allowing the crews to do their work more efficiently," stated Foster, adding that the old HVAC system for heating and cooling did not meet modern standards.

Changes for the new building include a truck wash area dedicated to just that function, which will contain humidity, an enclosed welding space will have appropriate ventilation, and an additional work bay will be added to accommodate four vehicles in the mechanic shop.

CBS Squared, Inc. is the architect firm that has been selected, and their Vice President, Bob Sworski, is amped up about introducing precast concrete into the project design. Longer lasting than a traditional metal building, precast concrete offers the advantage of insulated wall panels that are much more energy efficient.

"The precast walls avoid what I call a thermal nose bleed because they extend all the way to the footing and keep heating and cooling costs way down," said Sworski. Only five percent more expensive, Sworski says cost is recouped in short order, with another advantage of avoiding wall damage from falling snow from the roof, rusting from high humidity, or damage from plows.

Mike Dosan, Project Manager for Kraus-Anderson Construction Co., says they are pleased to be brought on as construction manager for the project. Kraus-Anderson will be helping develop the plan from the beginning and working cost estimating from project

start to end.

Being part of preconstruction, Dosan says, is how they will be able to add the most value to the project. "It's more efficient, and we have more personal investment in the process that helps avoid delays and apply value management," said Dosan.

Huddleston says three different funding sources are being pursued to pay for the new highway facility. The insurance settlement with MCIT (Minnesota Counties Inter-governmental Trust) will total close to \$1.35 million, around \$2.5 million in state aid funds are being pursued, and the remainder would be attained through a bonding process.

The levy approved by the county board at the end of 2017 took into consideration issuing a bond that would be paid in part in 2018, and in full in 2019. "We've taken that into account with our 2018 levy for potentially levying a bond with maybe a two percent impact on our levy," Huddleston stated.

McQuade's Pub & Grill Coming to Two Harbors

By Kitty Mayo

Coming back to Two Harbors has been quite a homecoming for Frank McQuade, who has announced his newest venture of opening a new restaurant in historic downtown.

Opening McQuade's Herbs, Spices and More about a year and a half ago was his first entrepreneurial adventure in his hometown, and with a solid base of support from locals, he's branching out.

Now, at the other end of the block on 1st Avenue, McQuade's Pub and Grill sign is slated to be hung any day.

All new kitchen equipment has been installed ("our biggest hurdle," says McQuade), a fresh coat of paint, and newly sanded hardwood floors will all come together nicely to set off the original vintage stamped metal ceiling.

Planning to accommodate about 45 seats, the full bar and restaurant will be open for lunch and dinner. However, if interest is there, McQuade is not ruling out the possibility of adding a breakfast menu eventually.

The burning question for everyone in town is, of course, When will you open?, and to that McQuade can only say, "Soon!". With frustrating last minute changes outside of his control, such as an inspector on vacation

holding up permitting, that exact hour and date remains elusive for the moment.

Meanwhile, McQuade can hardly contain his excitement about a nimble menu of about 25 items being developed.

The lunch menu will be mostly burgers, sandwiches and wraps, with dinners switching over to full entrees like steak and pastas.

"I'm most excited about our mushroom and Swiss burger, because we are going to have wild seasonal mushrooms that no one is used to, like chanterelles and lobster mushrooms,"

On the dinner menu McQuade is partial to the green peppercorn steak, so much so, that he keeps making it for his own dinner! Another exciting addition will be the apple-brie pork tenderloin, grilled after marinating in apple juice and topped with a brie-cream cheese sauce.

Priced in the affordable mid-range, he plans frequent specials, and regular happy hour pricing for drinks. Themed dinners built around beer, wine and whiskey pairings, along with reservation nights are also in the works.

While McQuade wants to expand the taste horizons of the region, he says that the most unusual

item on the menu really just has an exotic name. "Chicken Saltimbocca" is a dish with an Italian pedigree that means "jumps in your mouth", and with prosciutto and fresh herbs involved McQuade says it's "good enough to blow your mind"!

Years ago along the shore McQuade's first kitchen experiences were humble and gave him the wisdom that comes from having worked across the spectrum from dishwasher, to prep and cooking. When he lived in Kentucky McQuade says the game was stepped up, working in a full bar, event center and restaurant. "That's when I realized, I could really do this, I could handle it," said McQuade.

The tone of McQuade's Pub & Grill is that of a restaurant that also serves alcohol. While maintaining a kid and family friendly demeanor is important to McQuade, he also wanted to honor his predecessor at that location in the name.

"I wanted to keep 'Pub' in the name because Matt worked so hard and did a super job, I didn't know him personally, but I wanted to keep a little remembrance of him," said McQuade.

Matt Davitt owned "The Pub" in that location and passed away in 2015.

While the bar is not the primary focus of the place, true to his style, McQuade sees it as another area to be innovative, all the while weaving in tradition. Planning handcrafted drinks with hand squeezed juices and scratch syrups will compliment the lineup of craft beers on tap.

Featuring prohibition era style cocktails like Tom Collins (gin), Negroni (gin), and Sazerac (rye whiskey), McQuade will be pulling from his Kentucky experience, where he fell in love with an old timey speakeasy vibe. "I want to show people here how good of a job they do building this alcohol. It takes time and just a little bit of flavor added instead of covering it up with Coke can really pull those flavors out," said McQuade.

None of this would be possible without the overwhelmingly positive support of the people who live here, says McQuade. "Not only do we really rely on locals for the winter months, year-round the majority of our business for the spice shop is from people who live here. It's unreal, I thought it would be mostly tourists, but the local support has been insanely awesome," said McQuade.

Look for updates and the pending grand opening date on facebook at McQuade's Pub and Grill.