

“Developers, Wilco bassist, to detail vision for Redwood Motel revival.”

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At Williams College, a \$278 million building boom fuels local economy



A team of developers is aiming to transform the Redwood Motel property into a “destination lodging experience that celebrates its natural surroundings,” according to a statement released on Thursday by the group.

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NORTH ADAMS — A team of developers, including Wilco bassist John Stirratt, are betting big on the western North Adams corridor by investing in a hospitality property on the banks of the Hoosic River.

The team on Friday will unfurl plans for the redevelopment of the Redwood Motel property at 915 State Road. They have already been working with the city and state officials to formulate the long-term development plan.

“As a big fan of North Adams, I’ve seen an enormous change over the past five years,” Stirratt said. “There is incredible opportunity here and we’re thrilled to be working with Mayor (Richard) Alcombright, Representative (Gailanne) Cariddi, Senator (Benjamin) Downing, and the amazing folks in this community to make something we will all be proud of.”

According to preliminary information on file with the city, the plan aims to capitalize on recreational opportunities offered by its location on the river.

“The overarching design of the project maintains the iconic vocabulary of the original 1960s motor court while reorienting focus away from the road and back toward the river and forest,” said Ben Svenson, one of the developers.

The motel was purchased by Beyond Place LLC for \$350,000 on April 15. The development team consists of Stirratt; Ben Svenson, Eric Svenson, and Dana Nielsen of Broder Properties; Scott Stedman of Brooklyn Magazine; and local project manager Eric Kerns.

“Through a series of design and construction initiatives, we will transform a neglected, but beautifully sited

property into a destination lodging experience that celebrates its natural surroundings,” according to a statement released by the developers on Thursday.

The systems at the innkeeper’s residence will be upgraded, with part of the building renovated to include a lobby/lounge space for use by the customers. The motel has been closed since the sale.

The project will come in phases, starting this fall, with the first phase done and ready for business for the 2016 tourist season.

The first phase will include the demolition of the eight-room wing closest to the road and the garage behind the motel. The remaining 11-room wing will be completely renovated. It also calls for new construction of three buildings, increasing what is now 19 rooms to about 40 rooms.

One structure will replace the demolished wing and two others behind the existing structure will feature views of the forest and riverside.

Plans also include the installation of a pool and pool/boathouse, and expanding access to the river for guests. The riverside property will be landscaped to allow for wedding ceremonies and campsites.

“There’s a whole new generation of travelers primed to discover the Northern Berkshires and we want to create a home away from home for them in North Adams — an authentic experience that captures the incredible spirit of this community,” Stedman said.

Developers hope to have most of the work done within a year of the initial opening.

The team also is collaborating with the Hoosic River Watershed Association and Mass Fish and Wildlife to explore options for increasing recreation opportunities along the Hoosic River.

The announcement of the redevelopment of the Redwood closely follows announcements for two other nearby properties, including the construction of a multimillion dollar contemporary art museum on a parcel just around the corner from the Redwood, and the extensive redevelopment of the Greylock Mill, formerly known as the Cariddi Mill.

“What all this means is that there are some serious investors from outside our community that are taking notice of all the wonderful assets we have here,” Alcombright said. “And it is not uncommon for this kind of economic activity to lead to further investment in other nearby properties. So today, we are the place to be, not just the place to drive through.”