

Remodeler hired for Home for Generations project

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by Peter Bodley
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A contractor has been hired by the Coon Rapids Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) to remodel the fifth home acquired by the city as part of its Home for Generations program.



This rambler at 11635 Xavis St. N.W., Coon Rapids, is the latest vacant/foreclosed home to be purchased for remodeling and sale by the Coon Rapids Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) through the Home for Generations program. There will be a pre-construction open house Sunday, Feb. 19, noon to 3 p.m. Courtesy of city of Coon Rapids

The Home for Generations program was launched in 2009 to purchase vacant/foreclosed, older, different-style single-family homes in the community, rehabilitate them and then sell them to recover the

HRA's costs, not to make a profit.

The purpose has also been to demonstrate to residents owning older homes in the city how remodeling projects can update their home to modern standards.

Since then four older homes have been purchased, remodeled and sold.

The fifth home is a 1960 rambler at 11635 Xavis St. N.W., which was vacant and foreclosed when purchased by the HRA for \$86,000 last year.

Legacy Homes Inc. will do the remodeling, but before the company starts work, a pre-construction open house has been scheduled for Sunday, Feb. 19, noon to 3 p.m.

At that residents can see the condition of the home before remodeling takes place.

Another open house will take place midway through the remodeling process,.

Then once remodeling is complete, a series of open houses will be scheduled when the city puts the remodeled home on the market.

According to Kristin DeGrande, city neighborhood coordinator, the goal is to have the remodeling complete by May 1.

Requests for proposal for the remodeling work were sent to some 180 area contractors.

The contractors were required to attend one of three open houses that city staff hosted at the Xavis Street home before their proposal could be considered, DeGrande said.

"The purpose was for contractors to see what the home looks like and get ideas for remodeling before submitting a proposal," she said.

Eight proposals were sent to the city by the deadline and four contractors with the highest scores were interviewed, DeGrande said.





“Contractors were asked to develop a proposal that places a high priority on curb appeal and creating a highly functional floor plan, all the while paying careful attention to budget,” she said.

The finished home is to have three bedrooms and two bathrooms with a maximum budget of \$40,000, according to DeGrande.

“Creative remodeling ideas and methods to get those done affordably were encouraged,” DeGrande said.

In screening the proposals staff considered the proposed plan for plan ideas and budget for the exterior, kitchen/living room, bedrooms/bathrooms, basement, overall value and past performance in building inspections, she said.

Legacy Homes, whose office is in Andover, has strong roots in Coon Rapids having built homes in the Wexford development and also has extensive remodeling experience, DeGrande said.

What set Legacy’s proposal apart was attention to detail, thorough understanding of the program’s goals, professionalism and “innovative remodeling ideas that will appeal to the typical Coon Rapids homeowner,” DeGrande said.

Legacy’s proposal “offered a unique scope of work that does not resemble any of the past Home for Generations projects,” she said.

Specifically, the remodeling will comprise a series of smaller projects, rather than one large projects, that residents planning to remodel their own homes, could do in stages as money became available rather than all at once, DeGrande said.

According to Darrell Olson, owner of Legacy Homes, he plans to improve the overall curb appeal, create a more open floor plan, increase storage space, make the main living room more functional and inviting, update the kitchen and add a walk-in pantry and move the laundry room to the main floor and make it more accessible.

In addition, the size of the master bedroom will be increased, a proper downstairs bedroom will be created, both bathrooms will be made more functional and a multi-functional space will be created downstairs to accommodate a variety of activities with separate family room, game area and home office/study area, Olson wrote in his proposal to the city.

As well, Olson plans to Sheetrock the ceiling in the basement; paint and spray all ceilings knockdown style; repaint all walls with up-to-date colors; recarpet all bedrooms and family room; sand and recoat wood floors in the living room, laundry room and hallway; install Pergo-type floors in the kitchen, pantry and dinette; install ceramic tile in both bathrooms and entryway; replace all lights and add a ceiling fan to the master bedroom; and enamel all woodwork except cabinetry.

Last year, the HRA, which comprises the seven members of the Coon Rapids City Council, declined to pass a resolution giving staff the power to purchase up to two vacant/foreclosed homes for Home for Generations remodeling projects.

At that time, three of the homes that had been purchased had not been sold, but over the summer of 2011 all of them were purchased, according to DeGrande.

After discussion about the future of the Home for Generations program at a work session in October, the council directed staff to bring potential Home for Generations purchases of vacant/foreclosed houses to the HRA on a case-by-case basis for approval.

Last year, the HRA did give staff the green light to develop a plan for a second phase of the Home for Generations program – offering city incentives for existing homeowners in older Coon Rapids

homes to remodel and modernize them.

DeGrande hopes to bring a plan to implement this program to the HRA in March, she said.

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