

Pleasant Hills combines innovation, current best practice for safe, gracious living option

“We are so excited. It’s so rewarding to have people come through and say ‘wow this is so comfortable, so graciously done’. We are proud of our finished project,” Jalane White, Pleasant View Home administrator said recently about Pleasant View’s latest project, Pleasant Hills.

The recently completed building located on the north edge of Hutchinson, is the first unit in a 30-acre planned development designed to be a comfortable home for aging seniors at all levels of care. An extension of the highly regarded Pleasant View Home campus in Inman, the new facility incorporates innovative design features into the industry’s best practice standards for person-centered care.

When Pleasant View Home CEO Kevin Reimer, White and their board began talking about opening a facility in Reno County, one of their first steps was forming a design-build team to bring their vision to fruition. After undertaking several major building projects on the Inman campus over the past decade, they knew what they needed and sought out Fuqua Construction and Landmark Architects of Hutchinson as members of that team.

“We have had so much past success with Fuqua Construction, they are our first choice, if possible. Their reputation is very good and we have high confidence in their work,” Reimer said. “We also have had very good experience with Landmark’s staff.”

With team in place and budget parameters roughed out, plans were developed for not only the first unit of the development, but the layout for potentially 18 addi-

PROJECT FILE Pleasant Hills



Owner: Pleasant View Home
Location: Hutchinson, Kansas
Completed: December 2014
Project Scope: New Adult Care Homes on a 30-acre campus

Project Type: New Facilities & Land Development
Square footage: 10,204 sq. ft. per unit
Design Build Team: Fuqua Construction
Sarah Sipe, Landmark Architects



tional units on the property.

The challenge, Reimer said, was “where do you start?” working in concert, the team mapped out the entire property while considering the requirements for each individual unit. The new facility is designed to feel like a home -- not an institution - while still pro-



The common areas of Pleasant Hills provide the comforts of home in a cozy living area, efficient kitchen and open dining space.

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viding needed assistive and nursing care. Max Fuqua and his staff's experience with building elder care facilities provided valuable contributions to both the design and construction phases of the project, according to Reimer.

"Max has a lot of experience with us and other builds. He has a wonderful understanding of person-centered care within culture change and how services should flow through a building. He knows exactly what we are talking about when we are trying to build a household model," Reimer said. "We don't have to educate him on what we want to accomplish."

Fuqua Construction's experience throughout the organization, including superintendents and crew members, sets projects up for success, Landmark Architect Sarah Sipe said.

"(Landmark's) experience with a Fuqua project is that they go smoothly from the beginning. They have excellent communication with us and the owners. It's nice going into a meeting knowing that Max will have a proposed solution if there is a question. He has a great staff and pays attention to detail," Sipe said.

That attention to detail and creative problem solving all came into play during the design and construction process.

The facility design is based on the community home model, which features bedrooms clustered around common living areas. Pleasant Hills, however, takes it one step further by clustering bedrooms around an activity area -- a wellness room with a variety of exercise equipment, a media center and a coffee shop-style gathering place. The facility has a spa room with whirlpool tub, other amenities and doubles as the facility's safe room. There is also an outdoor patio area. The effect is almost a village feel, providing residents options and places to go for leisure time and socialization.

"The baby boom generation is used to making choices and will be expecting that as they begin entering care facilities," Reimer said. "Max understands that resident choice is huge, and he brought that to the design -- whether that choice is which social area their room opens onto or which view they have from their window."

Bedrooms are large, decorated to look like "home" and feature walk-in closets and private bathrooms designed to be easily accessed by those using wheelchairs.

The entire facility is designed for comfort from the open kitchen with its granite countertops and home-style appliances to the welcoming chairs and fireplace in the living room and open dining area. It is also designed to be technology friendly as more elders now bring computers, tablets and cell phones with them. The office and nurses' station are designed to be in the background. Interior designer on the project was Kristi King, who worked along with the design/build team to create a comfortable living space.

The Fuqua team's goal is to ensure the owners are pleased with the final product, Sipe said. Citing an instance where the shipped stone for the fireplace wasn't what the owners had envisioned, Fuqua's superintendent searched for an ac-

The coffee shop is just one of the social gathering spaces in the facility.



Bedrooms are decorated to feel like a private home and feature walk-in closets and private baths.

ceptable alternative and had the original stone removed and replaced. When the ADA-approved bathroom doors weren't as big as hoped, Max and crew came up with a solution using modifications to make a larger door work in the space. Customer service is very important to Fuqua construction, Sipe said.

"Max's knowledge base was really applicable to this project," White said. "His experience with working with the fire marshall and regulators and his understanding of the details of the project, ensuring that the water temperatures were set correctly, for example, and so many other things, was why we passed inspections with flying colors."

White and Reimer both said that attention to detail also kept the project on budget. When there were changes, there was always communication and checks and balances so that if savings were achieved on one feature, they knew they could upgrade somewhere else. Fuqua planned meetings of the design/build team monthly, more often if needed.

"There were no surprises," White said. "If things come up, they problem solve as they go. We are so thankful for the expertise they brought to the job."

"Max and his crew's experience building in long-term care, their knowledge of regulations and their creativity are invaluable," Reimer said. "You will never regret using them as your builder when you get the keys. And, their follow-up is very good after the project."

written by Cindy Baldwin, Baldwin Creative Services