

Making Plans

• Developers hope to secure SLIB funds for proposed Woodland Park Subdivision

By Bill E. Wambeke

Staff reporter

Plans for a proposed subdivision south of Sheridan would include roads to a new Woodland Park Elementary School.

Sheridan County School District 2 is considering replacing Woodland Park School with a new building that would be located northeast of its current location.

District 2 CER Professional Consultants, Whitney Benefits and developers Floyd and Phyllis Fleming spoke with Sheridan County commissioners Monday about getting a State Loan and Investment Board coal-bed methane impact loan to help pay for roads into the Flemings' proposed Woodland Park Subdivision about one mile south of Sheridan and to the east of the current Woodland Park Elementary School location.

The proposed subdivision has not gone before the Sheridan County Planning and Zoning Commission for approval.

CER estimated the cost of two access roads to the subdivision to be \$1.9 million.

The Flemings are applying for a \$964,032 SLIB grant through the county.

An escrow account will be set up between Whitney Benefits, which owns the land proposed for the new school site, and the Flemings, to cover the remaining costs.

The subdivision is being proposed by the Flemings on 50 acres of their land that would have 200 home sites on which they would like to build affordable housing. The new school is being proposed on 10 acres of land owned by Whitney Benefits bordering the northwest corner of Flemings' land.

District 2 Superintendent Craig Dougherty said the school and Whitney Benefits have come to an agreement of a land swap for the location of the new school.

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The exact specifications of the swap have not been worked out, Dougherty said, other than it has been agreed to swap land.

Dougherty said the state has appropriated \$550,000 to the district to cover architecture and site work for the proposed school which would cost an estimated \$6.7 million and would hold around 250 students.

If approved, the school would be opened in the fall of 2008. Dougherty said the old school would probably be sold.

Because the school borders the subdivision, access roads to the

school would be provided by the subdivision. The state does not allocate funds to build infrastructure to schools beyond the property line of the district.

State Sen. John Schiffer (R-Johnson/Sheridan County) said he believed the request for SLIB funds to build the roads would withstand a constitutional challenge regarding the school being a recipient of the road, because the road leads to a subdivision the school happens to be adjacent to.

"Yes, it's a road to a school, but it's also a road to affordable housing and a new development," Schiffer said.

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