Sunflower Redevelopment planning firm dedicated to 'green design'

**Sunflower Redevelopment**

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Sunflower Redevelopment LLC has selected Design Workshop Inc. to do the master plan for future development of the former Sunflower Army Ammunition Plant.

Sunflower Redevelopment executive director Kise Randall said Design Workshop was chosen in May after a nationwide search.

"There are many, many things that argue for them," Randall said. "We had many of the top planning firms in the country that applied. We felt they were the best fit for this development.

"A number of firms specialize just in planned communities or new urbanization. They're (Design Workshop) not exclusively that. They have the ability to design mixed-use development."

Design Workshop's Web site identifies the company as an international firm with 10 offices in North and South America, with the closest being in Denver, Colo. Its online design portfolio includes urban projects, college campuses, resorts, parks and regional planning.

The Web site cites the firm's experience in brownfield projects (including the redevelopment of the closed Amoco Refinery in Sugar Creek, Mo.) and the design of new communities. Among those is the Rancho Vieg community in Santa Fe, N.M., which at 20,000 acres is twice the size of Sunflower.

The Web site also states the firm's focus is incorporating existing landforms in its planning and a dedication to "green design" and sustainability.

"Environmental concerns have always been center-stage for us. This is not an optional component of our design but essential to each project. In the course of our work, we have found innovative and economically viable solutions to even the most serious environmental challenges," the firm's Web site states.

Sunflower Redevelopment also retained Olsson Associate Consultants Engineers to help with its planning, Randall said. That national firm with two offices in Kansas City will be working with engineer Jim Godwin, the lead engineer in the redevelopment of...
Master plan to consider K-10 gateway

Stapleton Airport in Denver, the largest urban infill redevelopment in U.S. history.

“We’re trying to bring in experienced professional resources in brownfield development,” Randall said.

The master plan is to be completed in 14 months, a schedule that will allow Sunflower Redevelopment’s partners time to make several business decisions, Randall said. But De Soto residents could see some of the design team’s work before that end date.

As part of its contract, the firm will look at De Soto south of Kansas Highway 10 that is Sunflower’s gateway. There would be opportunities in the coming months for city officials and residents to view what the planners envision for De Soto’s side of the street, Randall said.

Although De Soto has no obligation to adopt part or all of any plan Design Workshop develops for the gateway, the city would be foolish not to look at what planners offer, De Soto City Administrator Pat Guilfoyle said.

“We would be interested in talking with them about whatever they are doing that impacts the city,” he said. “I applaud them in their effort to want to talk with us. I don’t think any potential issue was ever resolved without talking.”

Sunflower officials have said the master plan would answer questions about who would provide the future development with water, sewer and other utilities. Guilfoyle said that is another area of interest to the city, which owns and operates the old Sunflower well field and water treatment plant on the old plant and just completed a $9 million sewer plant.

“We would entertain discussion to see if there is mutual interest,” Guilfoyle said.

An August 2005 agreement transferred Sunflower to the partnership of Kansas City real estate developer Kessinger/Hunter and Co. and Denver-based International Risk Group for its commitment to clean up the contaminated plant and make public benefit transfers of 3,000 acres to Johnson County Parks and Recreation, Kansas and Kansas State universities, the city of De Soto, and De Soto USD 232.

It was announced last year that Prairie Center Investors LLC — an entity formed by the Overland Park-based Midland Properties Inc. — would join the original partners in Sunflower Redevelopment.
Kansas University’s School of Allied Health presented scholarships and awards to students with exceptional accomplishments during the 2006-2007 academic year.

Brian Knapp, De Soto, received the June Hull Sherrid Scholarship, based on his scholastic achievement in Clinical Laboratory Science.
More than 4,690 undergraduate students at Kansas University earned honor roll distinction for the spring 2007 semester.

Honor roll criteria vary among the university's academic units. Some schools honor the top 10 percent of students enrolled, some establish a minimum grade-point average and others raise the minimum GPA for each year students are in school. Students must complete a minimum number of credit hours to be considered for the honor roll.

De Soto students include Stacy Carter, Christie Jones, Justina Jones, Ryan Kuster, Jacob Longaker, Tyler Maniez, Robin Rahardja, Stefani Rahardja and Bryan Roddy and De Soto High School graduates Hailey Stueber, Jacqueline Clark, Kelly Kramer and Daniel Landers.
Jacob Longaker, De Soto, has been named a 2007 David L. Boren Undergraduate Scholar by the National Security Education Program. Longaker is a junior at Kansas University. He will study on a student-initiated program through the Council on International Educational Exchange to Sao Paulo, Brazil, at the Pontifica Universidade Catolica de Sao Paulo.
Three Harper Countians and Chaparral High School graduates are among the more than 4600 undergraduate students at the University of Kansas who earned honor roll distinction for the spring 2007 semester.

On the list from Harper is Junior Heather Ardery, daughter of Bob and Janet Ardery. Heather is a Liberal Arts undergraduate.

From Anthony are Keegan Miller, a Senior Business undergraduate and son of Brad and Sherri Miller of Anthony and Kelly L. McKee who is in the School of Pharmacy and the daughter of Richard and Toni McKee.
Just in time for the tuition hikes to be approved for fall, the Kansas Board of Regents released a study indicating that a state university education usually costs less in Kansas than it does in five neighboring states.

That's good to know, though of limited comfort to price-sensitive wannabe students.

With the notable exception of research institutions in Colorado and Oklahoma, which charge less than comparable University of Kansas, Kansas State University and Wichita State University, resident undergraduates in states next door could end up paying from 3 percent to 68 percent more for comparable college degrees, the study said.

Such comparisons remain valid and reassuring, as they were when Kansas universities got aggressive about tuition increases early in the decade.

But they won't ease the sting many families will feel this fall from the latest proposed increases, which range from 4.9 percent at Fort Hays State University to 6.5 percent at WSU to 9.7 percent at Emporia State University.

Regents chairman Nelson Galle clearly is right that "rates at our state's universities continue to provide Kansans with an exceptional educational value."

However, the regents and the institutions they govern cannot afford to be cavalier about tuition, one of the biggest investments a family can make.

Seeing that tuition has gone up again, many potential students may decide the barrier to enrollment is impenetrable and not bother to explore the many aid options. ...

Of course, perhaps the most important factor in the tuition issue is the Legislature, which arguably has forced higher tuition on higher education by scaling back state funding of university budgets — from 49 percent in 1985 to 29 percent in 2005.

That has put more pressure on institutions to cover costs through tuition, research money and grants. ...

Even if there are good reasons for tuition increases — and there are — every hike carries the risk of pricing taxpayers out of their own universities.
On KU Honor Roll

Katherine Hieger, daughter of Mike and Mary Jo Hieger, George Shannon, son of Tammy McKean, and Mary Winter, daughter of Kent and Susan Winter, were named to the Honor Roll for the spring semester at the University of Kansas.
The spring 2007 honor rolls have been announced. Two Oxford students are listed with the schools of allied health and nursing at the medical center. They are Hyriam Fleming and Danielle Totten. Hyriam Fleming, son of Mary Fleming, in pharmacy professional, is a graduate of Winfield High School. Danielle M. Totten, daughter of Ricky and Kaffy Totten, in pharmacy professional, is a graduate of Oxford High School.
KU To Welcome New Students

New University of Kansas students and their parents will be welcomed into the KU family at the Jayhawk Generations Welcome Picnic at 6:30 p.m. Thursday, July 12 in Wellington. The picnic will be held at the Slate Creek Lodge, 411 S. West Rd. In addition to complimentary food and beverages, each new Jayhawk will also receive a free T-shirt.

Mulvane students who have been invited include Miles Anderson, Karat Carlson, Ashton Mertz, Joseph Myers and Joshua Neff.
Cancer on its way to being top killer

"You have cancer."

More likely than not, you have heard these words spoken to you, a loved one or a friend.

Cancer is on its way to being the No. 1 killer in the United States. The disease continues to make a devastating impact on our lives, especially here in the Heartland. Our death rate in Kansas is only dropping at half the rate of the national average.

Nearly 13,000 people will be diagnosed with cancer in our state this year alone, and it will cost us $1.7 billion in medical expenses and lost productivity, not to mention cancer’s destructive impact on families.

As it stands now, our cancer incidence and mortality figures will double over the next 20 years, due primarily to aging demographics. As if that weren’t enough, we are facing unprecedented federal budget cuts to the National Cancer Institute’s funding. This is unacceptable.

I believe that one death from cancer is one too many, and that is what led me back to this great state to spearhead the University of Kansas Medical Center’s quest to obtain National Cancer Institute designation as a Comprehensive Cancer Center.

Having helped the Vanderbilt-Ingram Comprehensive Cancer Center in Nashville, Tenn., obtain this designation, I have firsthand knowledge of what it will take to earn this designation at the University of Kansas. Preparing the application is a laborious process and typically takes years. But I can assure you that the gains we will reap from becoming a world-class Comprehensive Cancer Center are priceless.

Federal designation will bring access to more treatments and clinical trials for patients, and it will give researchers the support they need as they search to eliminate suffering and death from this disease. This is not a quest we can take on alone. Our only hope of obtaining this prestigious designation is through collaboration with others in our region.

It will take courage to break down traditional barriers and unselfish cooperation of cancer-care professionals, health care providers, public health practitioners, private industry and patient advocates throughout Kansas and western Missouri to make this happen. Collaboration is vital to our success — do not think for a minute that we can or should “go it alone.”

In July, we will launch the Midwest Cancer Alliance, which will create a network of oncologists, health care providers, hospitals and cancer care organizations throughout the state and region to work together and provide the best cancer care available to patients in their hometowns.

All patients and families know that receiving cutting-edge treatment close to home is a huge advantage that sadly, many Kansans have not been able to experience, if they had to travel to M.D. Anderson in Houston or the Mayo Clinic in Minnesota for cancer care.

The University of Kansas has declared obtaining this designation as its top priority. We are committed to providing the leadership needed for such an initiative, and with the help of everyone in Kansas and western Missouri, we can change the face of cancer care.

Dr. Roy Jensen, director of the University of Kansas Cancer Center at the medical center in Kansas City, is leading KU’s effort to obtain National Cancer Institute designation as a Com-
prehensive Cancer Center, allowing patients throughout Kansas to have access to more advanced care and the newest clinical trials offered through designated hospitals.