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Plans leave out Living Center site

Redesign of St. John's campus shows no space for nursing home.

By Kelsey Dayton

Two preliminary plans for changing the St. John's Medical Center campus do not include the Living Center on the grounds.

The St. John's Medical Center Board of Trustees saw a presentation from Denver-based Davis Partners Architects at its Oct. 24 meeting. In both designs for a revamped hospital campus, a new outpatient surgery center replaces the Living Center, currently housed near the National Elk Refuge on the northern part of the hospital property.

Hospital officials have said a home for the elderly will be a part of St. John's in

the future, but the 28,000-square-foot facility, which can house 60 patients, may be moved off the east Jackson property. Hospital spokeswoman Karen Connelly wrote in an e-mail that St. John's has not identified an alternative location for a nursing home.

St. John's CEO Jim Schuessler wrote in an e-mail that, for now, it seems preferable to continue operating the Living Center at the current location. But the feasibility of a new, modernized nursing facility, with space for additional elder-care services at a location off campus, is being explored.

Because the Living Center is outdated, it is reasonable to consider rebuilding and relocating it, Schuessler wrote. A hospital strategic planning committee, which looked at facilities in the past year, realized there are

See **LIVING CENTER** on 40A

A resident's friend, developer's foe?

Save Historic Jackson Hole challenges growth.

By Cara Froedge

Second in a series - Eds.

"No more upzones." Brian Grubb stood before 100 people at Colter Elementary School, alluding to a phrase that his five bosses - the board of Save Historic Jackson Hole - have taken as their unofficial motto.

"When you ask for an upzone, everything comes to the table," Grubb told the crowd, gathered to hear the group's take on a proposed 500-home development called Teton Meadows Ranch. "Increased

density means increased money to the developer. The community benefit has to be out there."

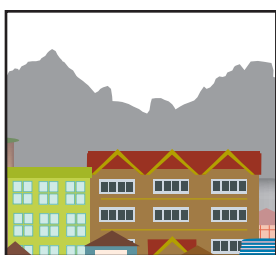
When asked what should be allowed on the 288-acre parcel instead of the affordable housing development, Grubb said simply: "Save Historic Jackson would be confident supporting existing development rights."

That means about 50 homes.

While statements like these used to draw ire, the turnout for Thursday's meeting indicates, at least to some, that Save Historic Jackson has evolved into a voice for valley residents but a hurdle for developers.

Today, after four years of fighting development

See **FRIEND, FOE** on 38A



A DEVELOPMENT PICTURE - II

► POSE OF PRIVILEGE



NEWS&GUIDE PHOTO / JOHANNA LOVE

Mayor Mark Barron, right, meets 78-year-old Buddhist monk Sheng Zhong on Oct. 23 at the Shu Xiang Temple on Mt. Wutai Shan in Shanxi Province, China. The monk joined the monastery at age 4 and is so revered, he usually only poses for photos with famous people.

Wide-eyed in China

Delegation learns of Buddhist lore, exotic food, envisions ski resorts, airports in rural town.

By Johanna Love

First of two parts - Eds.

TAIHUAI, CHINA - From the moment we met him, most of our Wyoming delegation dubbed Ruijiang Zhao the "Happy Buddha." Always grinning, giggling or gesturing, Zhao did everything with gusto.

The vice-director of the marketing section in the Shanxi Provincial Tourism Administration, Zhao was one of four Chinese hosts who spent a week with the 18 members of our group, guiding us around their province of the People's Republic of China. He gave us chopstick lessons, encouraged us to *gam bei* our wine - empty the glass - and played charades to communicate when translators were busy.

At Shu Xiang Temple, Zhao even introduced us to his "close personal friend," a 78-year-old Buddhist monk named Sheng Zhong. The monk normally only allows photographs with famous people, but submitted to a lengthy snapshot session for Zhao's Wyoming guests.

The trip, organized by the Jackson Hole Center for Global Affairs, was a 10-day goodwill mission to the north-central Shanxi Province to consider how a tourism exchange could be mutually beneficial. This was the sixth in a series of visits between Shanxi and Jackson Hole residents that began in November 2004.

As our luxury bus rolled through countryside from Shanxi's capital city, Taiyuan, to the small mountain town at the base of Mt. Wutai Shan, Taihuai, pollution limited the sunny day's visibility to just a mile or so. Our hosts pointed out coal-fired electricity plants with pride, but acknowledged that they are degrading air and that pollution is China's main challenge.

See **CHINA** on 41A

CHINA

Continued from cover

A dog wandered into our lane of travel, and I let out an involuntary squeal. Our driver slammed on the brakes. I wondered aloud if I hadn't vocalized my distress whether our bus would have even slowed.

We passed men wielding straw brooms on the roadsides. The street sweepers demonstrated just how cheap labor is in the world's most populous nation, with 1.3 billion pairs of hands at its disposal.

As we traveled near Wutai Mountain, Jackson Hole residents had visions for the future of tourism there.

"I see ski lifts," quipped Derek Goodson, CFO of Spring Creek Resort, looking at hillsides.

"This is a place that desperately needs an airport," said Mike Gireau, director of JH Air Improvement Resources. If there were an airport near Mt. Wutai, visitors would be spared the bumpy 150-mile bus ride from Taiyuan.

In the Beijing airport, at roadside pit stops and in some of the hotels, we were introduced to the Asian squat toilet. They varied greatly in sophistication, from a rectangular hole that drained outside onto the ground to fancy auto-flush style. At first we cursed them and a couple of us wet our jeans. But by the end of our visit, we were pondering how not sitting on a toilet seat might be more sanitary, and the squatting posture could be more conducive to complete bowel movements.

On Oct. 21 at a Han Buddhist women's monastery, called Pu Shou Si, Taiwan-born translator Ruth Pin-Chi Shi led us into their worship hall and asked us to "find your place" at a cushion. She then taught the group the proper sequence of a kowtow, kneeling and touching the forehead to the ground to show respect for Buddha.

Many of our group discussed how spiritual the shrines made us feel, as if we were finding our bearings in the world.

We wandered among dozens of temples in incense-scented air. There are about 90 temples today in the central cluster near Taihuai; in its most popular era of the Tang Dynasty, 1,100 to 1,400 years ago, there were about 300.

At Longquan Temple, we walked up 108 steps that represent 108 difficulties a Buddhist will face in his lifetime. A white carved marble dagoba featured the monk Puji on four sides. According to Buddhist lore, Puji claimed to be the incarnation of Laughing Buddha, but we all were secretly comparing him to Zhou.

"Happiness makes people live longer," said Tian Xizhao, the deputy director general of the foreign affairs committee of Shanxi Provincial Tourism Administration and arguably our most knowledgeable guide.

On Oct. 24, we traveled to the Yingxian Wooden Pagoda, which at 950 years old is perhaps the oldest intact wooden structure of its size in the world. At lunch that day near the pagoda, we marveled at the precision of a tea master who wielded a kettle with a four-foot-long spout. She aimed it at each cup without spilling a drop.

Exhausting the senses

Chefs carved elaborate vegetable sculptures to decorate the banquet tables: a fish, cobra, sandhill crane. One of our group members suggested that Derek Goodson send his Granary chefs to China to learn those skills, but at Jackson labor prices, Goodson said each crane could cost \$50.

On Thursday, the chefs' noodle-making demonstration at Datong Hotel ranked "high on the cool-ometer," Goodson said. One man whipped and twisted dough into vermicelli-sized strands at a frenetic pace, while another sliced briskly at a dough ball with a knife, each sliver landing in boiling water. Noodles are the province's signature food, always served with a small dish of vinegar. They were served next to braised sea cucumbers, pumpkin dumplings stuffed with sweet bean paste, sauteed lotus roots, among other items that by turns delighted and



NEWS&GUIDE PHOTO / JOHANNA LOVE

Wyoming residents visited the Hanging Temple on Oct. 24 near Datong in Shanxi Province, China. Built about 1,400 years ago into the side of a cliff, the temple pays homage to Buddhism, Confucianism and Taoism.

frightened us.

We were chauffeured to the Hanging Temple, perched on a cliff side above the Hunhe River. It was built 1,400 years ago during the Northern Wei dynasty. Our delegation beat back acrophobia while clambering through its narrow stairwells to peer at statues devoted to Buddhism, Taoism and Confucianism.

Outside each temple, vendors pushed their wares: prayer beads, toys, jade charms, scrolls, postcards, brass Buddhas and other bric-a-brac. Outside the Hanging Temple, several people tried to sell me a necklace-strung fake Omega clock with the inscription "Made in Swit Zerland." We bought dozens of souvenirs, bargaining their prices down. But most of us felt badly about pushing vendors too far; this is their livelihood.

At the 1,500-year-old Yungang Grottoes, thousands of religious figures and decorations were carved into the cliffs in just 70 years. Cody resident Jeanne Bryant was awed.

"Every day you think it just couldn't get any more spectacular," Bryant said.

After days of witnessing exotic sights, smells and tastes, our senses were exhausted.

"Just keep taking pictures," said Olivia Meigs, director of communications for the Jackson Hole Center for Global Affairs. "You can process it later."

In the ancient walled city of Pingyao, we toured a centuries-old bank and a courthouse that contained torture instruments.

Everywhere we went, the Chinese people were helpful and ready to return smiles.

We pondered the contrasts in an old country gathering steam in its industrial revolution, hoping to develop a thriving tourism industry but hampered by pollution.

"I'm truly touched by the dichotomy of what you see going on," said Jim Auge, president of the Jackson Hole Chamber of Commerce. "You can just feel the energy and people wanting more."

Throughout the tourist destinations, signs translated to English were often a bit garbled.

We giggled at the "Safty first" message at the Hanging Temple and the "Wish you have a good journey and a good luck in the Buddhism holy land" at Pusa Ding Temple. For those of us only accustomed to English or Romance languages, Mandarin Chinese seemed impossible to comprehend and the

signs were easily understood, albeit humorous.

A sidewalk sweeper at Tayuan Temple said "Ho" to this reporter three times before it became apparent that he was trying to politely greet, not insult me. At least he was trying; after a week, the greeting and farewell *nee haio* and the grateful *shi shi* was all most of the Wyoming delegation had mastered.

Exchanging of culture

Our Chinese friends showered us with gifts: maps, books, a framed image of Mt. Wutai, a jade bracelet featuring a mythical animal, probably a bixie, that we dubbed "fairy pig" after failing to understand what its name was. We gave gifts as well: metal cowboy silhouettes, books about Wyoming, Jackson Hole caps.

At each elaborate banquet, and often at lunch, hosts poured small servings of red wine and a shot glass full of corn liquor. Our Chinese hosts made multiple toasts to their visitors from afar. Once we asked Zhao why we were drinking so much, and why we had to *gam bei* the entire glass at that.

"In China, people *gam bei* to show their friendliness and excitement," Zhao replied through a translator. Since it didn't seem acceptable to sip our wine at all, we Americans caught on and began toasting each other for inane reasons.

"To the mountains," "to Scotland," "to the free press," "to buying gifts for family members who don't have passports." We even introduced our Chinese friends to new drinking phras-



Derek and Sandra Goodson eat at one of several formal banquets that the Shanxi Provincial Tourism Administration organized in honor of the Wyoming delegation.

es: "Cheers," "Salud," "Let 'er buck."

At our final banquet on Saturday, Zhao mimicked an elk he had seen on his trip to Jackson Hole, and we promised to take him on horseback rides if he would return to see us.

By then, leaders on both sides had hammered out a memorandum of understanding on promoting tourism between Wyoming and Shanxi (see story in next week's *News&Guide*). Our group members felt that we had completed the trip of a lifetime, and hope that the other Wyoming residents will soon be able to easily do the same.

2007 Wyoming goodwill delegation to China

- Mark Barron, mayor, Town of Jackson
- Ruth-Ann Petroff, owner, Hard Drive Cafe
- Gene Bryan, chairman, Wyoming Tourism and Travel Board
- Jeanne Bryan, Cody resident
- Daniel Butcher, board member, Wyoming Global Leadership Exchange
- Kari Cooper, board member, Wyoming Tourism and Travel
- Michael Gierau, owner, Jediah's restaurant
- Derek Goodson, co-owner, Spring Creek Ranch
- Sandra Marshall-Goodson, nurse, Teton County Public Health
- Johanna Love, reporter, *Jackson Hole News&Guide*
- Olivia Meigs, director of communications, Jackson Hole Center for Global Affairs
- Meegan Moszynski, intern, Jackson Hole Center for Global Affairs
- Robert McLaurin, administrator, Town of Jackson
- Jim Auge, president, Jackson Hole Chamber of Commerce
- Ezekiel and Nathan Trautenberg, students, Jackson Hole Community School
- Daniel Wendt, trip photographer/videographer
- David Wendt, president, Jackson Hole Center for Global Affairs