

Plan to convert Riverside School to senior housing qualifies for tax breaks

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GRAND RAPIDS, MI – A \$7 million plan to convert Riverside Elementary School into a 55-unit licensed senior care facility took a step forward on Thursday, May 2, when the city's Brownfield Redevelopment Authority approved a series of tax breaks for the project.



A rendering shows how the interior of the former Riverside Elementary School will be remodeled. *Courtesy rendering*

Architect Mark E. Post said the project at 2420 Coit Ave. NE will demolish the school's gymnasium and administrative offices and create a new dining area and kitchen. He said the 59-year-old building will be rebuilt in a "Craftsman and Frank Lloyd Wright design."

Developer G.A. Haan, of Harbor Springs, has created similar developments around the country, Post said. Some of the 7.5-acre playground on the site may be donated to the city for parkland, he said.

Haan **purchased the property from Grand Rapids Public Schools for \$510,000 last year** after it was closed in 2010. The project is eligible for \$1.1 million in tax breaks to help fund the demolition, asbestos abatement and site preparation activities.

The Riverside property is one of several the school board has closed and sold in the past year.

The tax credits approved Thursday now go to the full City Commission for approval.

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