

Kapco addition will double plant size

Written by MARK JAEGER

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Expansion project will be financed primarily by \$8.5 million bond sale

These are heady times for Kapco Inc.

The Grafton-based metal stamping company has announced plans to construct a 76,850-square-foot addition to its main manufacturing plant and headquarters at 1000 Badger Cir., essentially doubling its usable space.

The company is seeking \$8.5 million in industrial revenue bonds through the Grafton Village Board.

The bond agreement would not obligate the village financially, but allows Kapco to take advantage of the municipality's federal tax-exempt status.

Action on the revenue bonds was tabled by the Village Board on Monday, allowing for time to review wording.

Once secured, the money will also be used to make renovations at the company's existing plant and to pay off old debt.

Kapco secured \$2.9 million in industrial revenue bonds in 1997 to finance the construction of its headquarters.

Village Administrator Darrell Hofland said that, if approved, the \$8.5 million will be the largest revenue bond ever issued by the village.

"It is good news. Kapco is an important business for many reasons. They are a great community partner and have a large employee base," Hofland said.

The addition will be on the north side of the existing 82,010-square-foot facility, which was built in 1997.

According to the company, the addition will allow it to add 100 jobs over the next three years.

The firm has repeatedly been named one of the area's fastest-growing companies by the Milwaukee Business Journal. It currently has more than 400 employees.

Just last month, the village's Plan Commission approved a conditional-use permit allowing Kapco to use the former MPI Coin building, 983 Badger Cir., for additional metal-stamping operations.

Company officials said about 12,000 square feet of that 24,271-square-foot building would be used for manufacturing, with the balance used for administrative and management staff.

In the conditional-use permit request, the company said it would have 30 to 70 employees

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working Sundays through Fridays at the former MPI Coin site.

Kapco specializes in metal stamping, welding and fabrication for lawn and garden, military, electrical motor, heavy industrial, medical, recreational vehicle and other manufacturing applications.

According to documents provided by the company, the two-story main plant expansion will include manufacturing space, storage, an employee break room and restrooms.

Company officials noted the primary building was constructed with the idea of accommodating future expansion.

The village's Architectural Review Board is scheduled to consider the proposed building plans Thursday, Aug. 21. The Plan Commission is scheduled to review the plans at its meeting on Tuesday, Aug. 26.

A special meeting of the Village Board will be held just prior to the commission meeting to consider the revenue bond request.

Although those reviews are pending, a staff memo on the project identified few concerns by the village staff.

Staff comments on the expansion project said "the size and mass of the proposed addition is acceptable given the layout of the existing building, site design and purpose of the addition."

The addition is one way the company hopes to address a growing demand for its products, according to Vice President of Corporate Development Hani Malek.

"We have been in communication with the village all along on this project over the past three years and we don't anticipate there being any issues," Malek said.

If approvals come without a hitch, he said, the company hopes to break ground on the addition next month. Occupancy is eyed for March.

According to the company's website, it bolstered its production capabilities and efficiency earlier this year by bringing several cutting-edge machines on line.

They included a BLM Group tube laser cutter, a Bystronic electric press brake and a Trumpf fiber laser.

The company has four production facilities in Grafton, as well as sites in West Bend, Osceola and Mexico.

Kapco President Jim Kacmarcik also owns Advance Coatings and the recording studio K-Nation Entertainment.

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He is president and majority owner of the Lakeshore Chinooks amateur baseball team. The team's stadium, located on the campus of Concordia University Wisconsin in Mequon, is called Kapco Field.

Recently, Kacmarcik became a minority owner of the Milwaukee Bucks NBA basketball team.

Kapco was founded in 1972 by Tom Kacmarcik Sr., first operating out of a small facility on Hickory Street in Grafton.

Over the years, the company has grown steadily while setting a high bar for corporate community involvement.

Among the many charitable causes embraced by the company is Camp Hometown Heroes, which offers free camping experiences to children of deceased members of the military.

The Grafton Area Chamber of Commerce presented Kapco with its Outstanding Business Award in 2001 and 2010, becoming the honor's only first repeat winner of the honor.