

Warehouse will serve as base for distribution throughout Wisconsin

It won't be replacing Napa Valley anytime soon, but Saukville is on the verge of becoming a regional wine hub.

The Village of Saukville's Community Development Authority approved plans last week submitted by MShiraz Wines of Wisconsin to build a distribution center at the Progress Development Condominiums, 650 N. Progress Dr.

Owner Mark Schraith intends to build a 6,525-square-foot metal building that will become the central warehouse for his wine business.

Schraith said MShiraz, which is currently based in Milwaukee, specializes in Wisconsin wines from such vineyards as von Stiehl Winery in Algoma, White Winter Winery in Iron River and Seven Hawks Vineyards in Fountain City. It also distributes an extensive line of wines from South Africa and selections from X Winery in Napa, Calif.

He said the company supplies wines to liquor stores and groceries across 75% of the state. It has recently begun distributing wine to bars and restaurants, a move that is expected to double business over the next 18 months.

Condo project developer Phil Steinke told the CDA that the business owners have two priorities with their building plan — accessible storage space and security.

Because of that last concern, the preliminary building design has already been modified to eliminate eight skylights originally planned for the warehouse area.

The rooftop windows are seen as a vulnerable spot for anyone looking to break into the storage area, Steinke said.

Delivery trucks will also be parked inside the warehouse.

"There won't be much in the line of employees. There will be two or three people to load the trucks and then they will be out on their routes," Steinke said.

"Their experience in Milwaukee has been, if you load a truck with wine and leave it outside overnight, it won't be there in the morning. That's why the trucks will be parked inside."

The side of the building fronting Progress Drive will be made of split-faced masonry block, with the remaining three walls constructed of insulated, prefabricated metal frames that look like ceramic.

The exterior will have accents of red, echoing the color used on the corkscrew in the company's logo.

The CDA unanimously approved the building and site plans, which include landscaping with a mix of deciduous and evergreen trees and three dozen shrubs.

Wine dealer plan OK'd by CDA for business park

Written by Mark Jaeger

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MShiraz plans to move into its new building in November.

Progress Development Condominiums were created in 2006 to give start-up businesses a setting to launch their enterprises. With the wine distribution center, the project is 75% occupied.