

Villa at Morlatton to add living units, medical offices

Greta Cuyler
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If all goes according to plan, the Villa at Morlatton could open its newest facility in Douglassville in 2012.

The retirement community plans to add a three-story building, serving 28 long-term care patients on the top floor and housing medical offices on the other floors.

Ground could be broken late this year, said James Elliott, a general partner with Hollenbach-Elliott Development Group, Boyertown.

The building would occupy two acres next to the existing facility along Route 422, also known as the Benjamin Franklin Highway.

The Amity Township zoning board recently granted a variance to developers so they could house medical offices and long-term care in the same building.

The project still requires approvals from the township planning commission and supervisors, Elliott said. He did not disclose the project cost, saying it's premature to do so because the plans aren't finalized.

The project would be the latest addition to the Villa at Morlatton, an independent living and personal care facility that opened in 2005. More than 250 people reside there.

"As people age, some lead a very healthy life, while others decline and some get to a point where they need nursing home care," Elliott said. "A lot of residents were happy living in the (existing) facility, but as their health was beginning to decline, they had to move out."

Having medical offices and long-term care in the same building would enable Villa residents who require that care to stay.

"Our goal is to accommodate the people who live in our complex," he said.

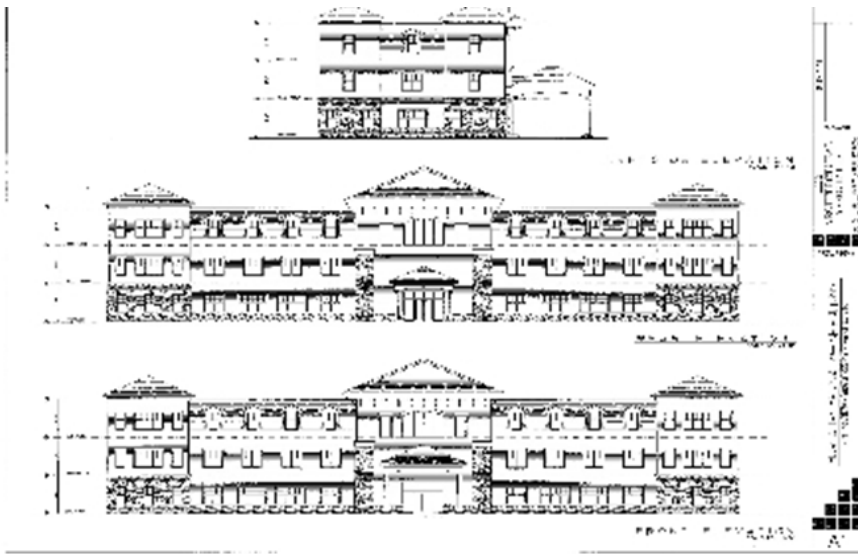
Doctors in the medical offices would serve Villa residents along with other patients in eastern Berks County.

Villa at Morlatton opened with 108 independent living apartments.

Two years later, all of the apartments were filled, so developers added 17 and a community room in 2008.

A second apartment building with 83 units opened in June.

Contact Greta Cuyler: 610-371-5042 or gcuylers@readingeagle.com.



Courtesy of Hollenbach Elliott Development Group

The front of the proposed addition to the Villa at Morlatton complex along Route 422 in Amity Township, from an architect's sketch.