

# The Berkshire Eagle

White Terrace apartments in Pittsfield have been boarded up and scarred by fires. Work will begin soon to renovate the complex

- By Amanda Burke, The Berkshire Eagle
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A rendering shows what the 41-unit housing development at White Terrace will look like when work is completed next year.

- ILLUSTRATION PROVIDED BY REGAN DEVELOPMENT CORP.



Renovation work is expected to begin in October at the White Terrace apartment building, shown boarded up in July 2022. EAGLE FILE PHOTO

PITTSFIELD — Work to redevelop the White Terrace buildings will begin next month, marking the start of a \$18.5 million project to convert the fire-scorched buildings into 41 units of housing.

The project will break ground around the middle of October, said Larry Regan, the developer. His firm, [Regan Development Corp.](#), pieced together financing for the project through a mix of state, federal and local housing incentives.

He said financing is expected to close in the second week of next month, then work will commence. Regan hopes the project will wrap toward the end of 2024.

"This is a great asset to have in downtown Pittsfield," Regan said. "We believe in the city and its growth, and we want to be able to help the city get rid of this blighted eyesore that's been quite an issue for this neighborhood for a while."

#### White Terrace project aims to make the old new again

The White Terrace buildings have seen their share of setbacks — from fires, intentionally set, to failed efforts to return the buildings to the tax rolls and add new housing.

Regan sees his company's project as a long-term investment in upper North Street, which city officials have long sought to redevelop. He said his firm was on the lookout for its next historic building project, and found out about White Terrace through a broker. They reached out to the city, and coordinated with the Berkshire County Regional Housing Authority, which will manage the apartments when they're ready to rent.

"They'll be boots on the ground," Regan said of the housing authority, "They're going to be doing the management and operations."

Financing includes historic tax credits, and Regan said the plan is to preserve the [Classical Revival-style](#) aesthetic of the building, which was designed by architect George E. Haynes and completed in 1906. He said his firm is here for the long term, and has no plans to resell.

"You'll see us here in 30 years; we'll still own these properties long term," he said. "We don't develop and flip; we keep and hold."

The project was buttressed by \$100,000 in block grants and \$750,000 in American Rescue Plan funding.

The ARPA funding will be used to pay for two decades of supportive services for White Terrace residents, said Deanna Ruffer, ARPA co-manager, at this month's City Council meeting. Those services will be available at the residential property, in what fellow co-manager Gina Armstrong called a "significant" aspect of the project.

Rental applications are expected to go out fall 2024. Those making up to 60 percent of the county's median income will be eligible to live there, according to Regan. Rents will be cheaper than most in Pittsfield. There will be 27 one-bedroom units that will rent for \$985 a month and 14 two-bedroom units that will rent for \$1,176 a month.

In the years since the [fires occurred](#), the White Terrace buildings have become a [gathering place](#) for Pittsfield residents, some of whom were homeless or had no other place to go. Regan took a hard line on the issue, saying he authorized the

Pittsfield Police Department to cite people for trespassing there and "to press charges to the fullest extent of the law."

"We want to make it very clear that we have a no tolerance for people who are hanging out around the building," Regan said.

The city has spent about 30 percent of its \$40.6 million ARPA money so far.

Among the other housing-based initiatives is the shelter that will soon open up in First United Methodist Church. The city directed \$354,500 of its ARPA money into the project, which officials say is slated to open this fall.

The project required extensive renovations to the church space 55 Fenn St., and when it opens, it will become the city's emergency shelter, staffed by ServiceNet.

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Cops and Courts Reporter