

Larson Design Group becomes first WestRidge tenant



Ron Rittenhouse/The Dominion Post photo

Westridge in Westover looking north towards bridge and ball park.

BY NEEL MADHAVAN
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The new WestRidge Business and Retail Park, off Interstate 79 and across the highway from University Town Centre, is beginning to take shape.

The development is comprised of about 1,000 acres of land that will stretch from Morgantown Mall to Chaplin Hill Road once completed.

“Over the past year, the primary progress has been moving dirt and lots of it, in order to get the pads ready,” said Holly Childs, the director of business development and external relations for WestRidge Inc.

Even with WestRidge’s land plots still in the early stages of being divvied up for various businesses and companies, the first tenant of the new development opened its doors on March 5.

Larson Design Group (LDG) relocated from its previous office in Cranberry Square near Cheat Lake

to its new office within the new WestRidge Commerce Centre adjacent to Morgantown Commons.

“If you’d seen our old space, you would quickly realize that it was not very functional for us and it didn’t really lend itself to allowing our design teams to collaborate very well,” said Richard Rogers, director of LDG’s Morgantown office. “We didn’t have a lot of lay down area, we didn’t have a lot of meeting space, and this allows us to be able to do that a lot better. It also allows us to use our office as a showcase and really be proud and excited to bring our clients into our office. We didn’t really have that at all before.”

LDG is an emerging architectural, engineering and surveying firm with 10 offices in four states that originally arrived in Morgantown in 2012.

“Just by looking over the hill here at (WestRidge Business and Retail Park), it’s a pretty exciting area to be a part of,” said Rogers.



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At Larson Design Group, left to right Dave Shannon, project designer-survey, Colin McCardle, designer-energy, Richard Rogers, director, Matthew Baird, project planner, look over a print in the conference room.

The company works with a variety of oil, gas, development and municipal clients in a multitude of areas such as civil design, environmental and geotechnical engineering and construction inspection.

For example, LDG recently completed a landslide remediation project for the city of Morgantown and BOPARC. A landslide had occurred at Dorsey’s Knob, so Rogers said they assessed the situation, provided a solution, developed the construction documents and oversaw the construction.

LDG also recently did geotechnical, environmental and civil design for a land-development project called the Mon-Fayette Commons, which is a commerce park -type project near Cheat Lake.

With its new office in the heart of all the construction and activity within WestRidge, Mark Miner, LDG’s director of corporate communications, says LDG is hoping to use this opportunity to expand and hire more employees for its Morgantown office.

“We’re at 10 people now, and we’re looking to get to 20 in the next five years,” Miner said. “We want to hire West Virginia people.”

The Dominion Post previously reported that the WestRidge development would be divided into five “neighborhoods,” called WestRidge Crossing, WestRidge Commons, WestRidge Commerce Centre, WestRidge Corporate Park and WestRidge Business Park.

Along with LDG, a new FedEx distribution facility has been constructed within the WestRidge Commerce Centre.

“We’ve focused on this area, the commerce center, because FedEx was built and then we started looking at what to do with these other pads,” Childs said.

The building that LDG is housed in is 15,000 square feet, which are divided up evenly amongst three tenants, with LDG being the only tenant so far.

“We’ll be doing two other buildings that will be 12,000 square feet each on the other side, and that will start this spring,” Childs said. “We’re seeing a number of these types of (flexindustrial) buildings because there’s a really high demand for this type of product.”

Childs said her development company will begin releasing some of the names of the other businesses and companies that will be tenants of WestRidge later this spring.

Overall, she says the full WestRidge development will take about three to five years to complete all construction.