

Couples' dream of farmstead-themed wedding venue planned for Huntley



The eastern portion of the barn, a key component of the Lincoln Farmstead event venue in Huntley, will be renovated to include a rustic, landscaped patio, owners Barb and Chris Lincoln say. (Jeanie Mayer/The Courier-News)

By **Jeanie Mayer**

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At time in life when most people are looking toward simplifying and downsizing, Barb and Chris Lincoln are planning their dream business with a new venture that will bring a farmstead-themed wedding venue to the [McHenry](#) County area.

Having purchased a 2.75-acre parcel with a number of barns in various stages of repair in October of last year, the Lincolns have received approval from the Village of [Huntley](#) for the venture and are preparing to make some major renovations.

"Before we purchased the property we invited the mayor, the village board, the McHenry County Visitors Bureau and others to see if it would even be in favor of the idea. Everyone has been very supportive about the

project," Barb Lincoln said.

Lincoln said they began their project by renovating the residential home on the property so they could move in to it. Formerly of Woodridge, the couple renovated the rooms and created the home they have always wanted.

"The kitchen (in the home) wasn't bad, but it wasn't my dream kitchen. I decided to make it my own because I am hoping this will be our last home," Lincoln said.

The couple is applying that same level of care and planning for all of the buildings on the property, she said.

The new venture will be named Lincoln Farmstead and will include a large barn to be used for wedding receptions and special events. Plans include replacing the barn's roof, adding bathrooms, reconfiguring the entrance with easy to navigate steps and making it handicapped accessible, Lincoln said. They also plan to remove the silo, which is in disrepair, and create a new one as part of the entrance.

The other buildings on the property will be used in the venture as well. They want to build a bar with whiskey barrel tables and rustic charm in one barn and to convert the former corn crib into a groom's room with an adjacent outdoor patio.

Chris Lincoln works in the construction industry and Barb is an interior designer. Her vision for the property includes landscaping the adjacent courtyard to create an outdoor patio for the wedding party to use. She also has plans for the stable area beneath the barn as well.

"I'd like to whitewash this area to create an indoor space for weddings to take place in the event of rain," she said.

Lincoln said she is having success in finding investors interested in the project and is planning an investors meeting in the near future to firm up commitments. Her next, and possibly largest, obstacle will be to gain approval from the [Illinois Department of Transportation](#). The agency must provide approvals for all business ventures along the Route 47 corridor and may require infrastructure improvements that could impact the project, she said.

The Lincoln Farmstead business plan is developed around hosting one wedding or event per weekend at a cost of between \$8,000 and \$10,000 per event, based on a cost comparison with other area venues that offer similar accommodations. Her goal is to make the Farmstead a special place, Lincoln said.

A website for people to monitor the progress of the project is currently in the works. The web address is LincolnFarmsteadHuntley.com.

"I'm not in a hurry," Lincoln said. "I want to do it right. This is for the rest of our lives."

Jeanie Mayer is a freelance reporter for The Courier-News.

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