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New library to be built in Bridgeville

By yourbridgeville

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Mary Weise saved the best for last at Bridgeville council's meeting on Monday evening.

Wearing a smile many years in the making, she announced Bridgeville Public Library's purchase agreement -- signed last Friday -- for 2.5 acres, which will be the future home of a new library building.

"We're very excited," she said.

The property, part of the former John White High School football field, is located behind St. George Church between Dewey Avenue and the railroad tracks.

A new building will replace the current library on Station Street. The once abandoned Penn Central Railroad Station building was purchased in 1968 and renovations began the following year. A children's wing -- the iconic B&O Railroad caboose -- was purchased in 1974.

The library currently holds more than 20,000 items.

The price to purchase the property is approximately \$250,000. Weise said a capital- fund campaign would soon be initiated with a goal of raising \$5 million.

It would fund construction and costs for utilities, maintenance and staff, all of which are expected to rise in future years.

"This way, we won't have to do any fund-raising for 10 years," she said.

Weise said library workers have been searching for a suitable place to construct a new building for the past two years, examining up to 10 different areas and structures.

She also expressed satisfaction over the environmental composition of the property, which has been

examined by experts.

"It's solid rock," she said.

Nino Petrocelli Sr., council vice president and a member of the library's board of trustees, said the new building would encompass no fewer than 10,000 square-feet with the possibility of it growing to as much as 15,000 square-feet depending on funding.

Weise said as many as 12 architects would be interviewed and a few would be invited to submit design sketches.

She would like to see ground broken next fall and construction completed sometime in 2009.

Petrocelli envisions the new Bridgeville Public Library having separate rooms for children, teen and senior citizen activities. There also would be a community room for local groups to hold meetings.

As part of the fund-raising process, he'd like to see residents and businesses pledge a certain amount of money each year so the library has a perpetual source of income.

"It's something that's going to benefit everyone in the community," he said.

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