



Library sets expansion for spring

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By Harvey Austin
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MILLBROOK — A \$2.2 million expansion of the Millbrook Free Library that will double its size will likely kick off in the spring.

"We plan to prepare the bid documents over the winter and break ground in the spring," said library director Marie Verillo.

The expansion work will also include raising the facility compliant with the Federal Americans With Disabilities Act.

"We are overcrowded and shelf space is limited," said Ana Collins, president of the library's board of directors. Alex, the son, the library "needs more computers, additional seating space for patrons."

The library has been in a bond raising effort since June, Collins said. So far \$1 million has been raised toward a goal of \$2.2 million for the project, which is being designed by Galster Bauer & Best, an architectural firm based in Simsbury, Conn.

Rand-raising executive Susan Low said that money has been raised from donations as small as 15 cents from one child to as large as \$100,000 from another contributor. There have also been several \$10,000 donations and one for \$25,000.

The library has also been selling "books for the addition" of \$100 to \$1,000 each and the Millbrook High School student council bought two in memory of deceased students at \$800 each, Low said.

Much of the library's current 2,000 square feet is not open to public use, officials said. The 33,000-square-foot

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addition will give the library about 25,000 square feet of usable space.

The expansion wing will be built out toward Franklin Avenue, the village's main business thoroughfare.

Architect Norman Eiler said the main entrance will change from Friendly Lane to Franklin Avenue.

"That will be virtually the main entrance so that people driving up and down Franklin Avenue will see it," he said.

The Friendly Lane entrance will be preserved with the circulation desk in a position to watch both entrances, Eiler said.

An elevator to the lower level and handicap-accessible bathrooms will also be installed.

Verillo said the extra room will allow some of the library's historical collections, now in storage, to be brought out into a special area for public access. And the children's area will be improved with six to eight computers added and the décor updated.

Lighting will also be improved, officials said.

"The whole building needs to be improved," Verillo said. "One of the reasons we are renovating is to update its infrastructure — heating, lighting and signage."

