



## FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

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## PRESS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### Commissioners Approve Revised Plan for Administrative Offices and Archives Building

May 24, 2018 – Chambersburg, PA – The Franklin County Commissioners approved a revised plan for a portion of the Court Facility Improvement Project at their meeting this morning. The Court Facility Improvement Project consists of construction of a new court house, renovations to the current Court House Annex and historic 'Old Court House,' as well as improvements to administration and archives facilities.

The original Administration and Archives facilities plan included renovating the existing Administration Annex at 218 N 2<sup>nd</sup> Street and constructing an archives building on the south corner of Grant and N 2<sup>nd</sup> Street on the county-owned, former Sheetz property. The recent availability of the property across the street at 340 N Grant Street led to a new facility plan proposal which consists of renovating the Grant Street property into an Archives Building and constructing a new Administration Building where the Sheetz building currently sits. The approved revision to the Administration and Archives facilities plan is expected to offer better long-term benefits to be completed at or below the original plan cost.

Stuart Christenson from Noelker and Hull Architects and John Boozer from Franklin Advisory, LLC attended last week's presentation to the Board. They recommended new construction of an administration building due to structural issues and its overall inefficient floor plan. The consultants also noted that renovations to the property on Grant Street would be cost-effective, given that the building structure is well suited for future use as an archives building. The new plan configuration will also add approximately 30 additional parking stalls which helps to address the County's need for parking.

"This is a better plan and it should save us money in the long run," said Commissioner Chairman Dave Keller.

The original plan for improvements to administrative offices and archives storage were to:

- Construct a 14,000 square foot Archives Building on the site of the former Sheetz convenience store
- Renovate approximately 35,000 square feet of the existing Administration Annex building and add 10,000 more square feet for additional offices for the Commissioners, Treasurer, Voter Registration, and Tax Assessment & Tax Claim

The revised plan approved today is to:

- Renovate approximately 16,000 square feet of the Grant Street property located at 340 N. Second Street for Archives Building

- Construct a 30,000 square foot Administration Building on the site of the former Sheetz convenience store

Prior to being remodeled for archives purposes, the Commissioners Office and related functions will temporarily reside at the Grant Street property. Earlier this month the county finalized a 10-year lease for this property with an option to buy when the lease ends.

“I appreciate this proposal for several reasons. The cost is less, buildings are more efficient, there is more parking and the need for transitional space required for renovation in the original plan will be virtually eliminated,” said Commissioner Bob Thomas. “This is the reason we measure twice and cut once.”

When asked to comment about the revised facilities plan, Franklin County Controller Harold Wissinger said, “I agree that this new plan is a much better option. Transitional space during the construction was going to be costly and problematic under the previous plan.” Mr. Wissinger encouraged the Commissioners to explore options for constructing the proposed administration building in a way that allows for future consolidation of county operations and properties.

The original plan for construction of archives and renovation/expansion of administrative offices was estimated to cost \$15 million. The revised plan is expected to maintain the original budget and is also likely to greatly reduce the expense of transitional office space and lessen disruption of court and county operations during construction of the new courthouse and renovations to the Old Courthouse and Courthouse Annex. The cost of the recommended improvements for administrative offices and archives is included in the overall Court Facility Improvement Project budget of \$67.7 million.

The plans for the new courthouse remain unchanged and the project is on track for construction to begin in early 2019. Demolition of the existing Commissioners Complex at 14 N. Main Street is expected to begin in late 2018 to make room for the new court house.

The Administration Building and Archives facilities project is part of the Court Facilities Improvement Project. A project webpage is located on the County’s website. For more information, please visit [www.franklincountypa.gov](http://www.franklincountypa.gov) or email [facilityprojectinfo@franklincountypa.gov](mailto:facilityprojectinfo@franklincountypa.gov).

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