



# News Release

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**CONTACT:** Lindsey Ransdell

(270) 977-9194

LindseyR@FelixMartinFoundation.org

## **Muhlenberg County Public Library Board and Felix E. Martin, Jr. Foundation to Explore Building New Muhlenberg County Public Library**

(Greenville, KY) The Felix E. Martin, Jr. Foundation and the Muhlenberg County Public Library Board are exploring the possibility of constructing a new county library on the property the Foundation owns at the intersection of East Main Cross Street and Martin Street in downtown Greenville. The Foundation approached the Library with the proposal and both parties agreed that the first step was to hire an architect to develop plans that would be appropriate for the site. If the Foundation and Library Board determine the project is feasible, construction could begin by summer 2011.

Rod Tompkins, Chairman of the Board of Directors for the Foundation said, "When Mr. Martin (1927-2007) left the bulk of his estate to form the basis of a charitable foundation, he stated that the funds would be for the benefit of education, civic, and cultural needs of the residents of the county. The Foundation Board believes a new library will advance all three of Mr. Martin's objectives in a single project. The library project will offer educational and cultural resources to citizens of all ages and demographics with state of the art technology and expanded access to literacy. We are extremely excited about the Library project and the potential benefit to the community, as the county pursues invigorated economic development by retention of present businesses and pursues new industries considering locating in the County."

- **Timeline and Final Decision**

The project committee plans to meet regularly from September through December of 2010 on the development of design plans for the new facility. The goal is for construction plan documents to be ready for bidding the project in the spring of 2011. The preliminary estimated cost of the project is \$4 million. Assuming the bid cost of construction is acceptable to the project committee, construction will commence in early summer 2011 for completion in the summer of 2012. A final construction decision will be made jointly by both Boards.

- **Funding**

In addition to providing the real estate for the new library, the Foundation plans to make a generous grant to help fund construction, as well as provide a low-interest bearing loan in excess of \$1 million to the Library. The Library project

will not impact the Foundation’s current grant commitments to its Task Force or ongoing grants program in the County.

- **Facility Design & Amenities**

The final library design must be considered adequate and appropriate in size and services as determined by the Kentucky Department for Libraries & Archives. It is also important that the Library provide an inviting and flexible environment with adequate space for quiet study and implementation of new programs. The project committee consists of the Library Board and the Foundation Board with staff members from both the Library and the Foundation participating in the process.

Tompkins said, “It is very important to the Foundation that this building be a source of great pride for county citizens. Parents should feel comfortable sitting on the floor and reading to their children, while students should feel at ease in the quiet study rooms or on a computer. The new facility will have more books, multi media material, and access to more computers than presently available. Community meeting rooms, adequate space for children, youth, teens, and adult programs will be available. There will be ample parking and significant green space.”

- **Property and Buildings**

If both parties agree to move forward with construction, the Library will receive ownership of the Foundation’s real estate of approximately 5 acres. The Foundation will receive ownership of the Main Street building currently housing the Muhlenberg County Public Library Genealogy Annex, and the Genealogy Annex will move into the existing Harbin Library Building. The Central City Library location will continue as it presently serves the county. The Foundation plans to offer the building currently housing the Muhlenberg County Public Library Genealogy Annex to a non-profit entity.

- **Architect**

After reviewing a dozen architectural firm proposals, the committee recently chose the Lexington-based firm of Brandstetter-Carroll to develop the new Library plans. This firm is familiar with the County and specializes in the construction of libraries. The firm designed the Muhlenberg County Judicial Center, the Veterans Plaza next to the Courthouse and the Greenville City Pool, among other projects in the county.

- **Public Input**

A public meeting is planned at 6:30 on Thursday October 28 at a location to be determined. In addition, an online survey will be released later this month on both the Foundation and Library’s websites.

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