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Three years later, Indian Trails finally moving on renovations



Renovations delayed for three years by a series of leadership at the Indian Trails Library District could finally get underway. The work is being funded by a controversial tax-hike referendum approved in 2011.

Daily Herald File Photo by Bob Chwedyk | Staff Photographer, 2013

The Wheeling-based Indian Trails Library District is moving forward with renovations funded by a controversial tax-hike referendum narrowly approved by voters three years ago.

The library board on Wednesday will discuss a proposal from Product Architecture + Design of Chicago for remodeling plans, said Library Director Brian Shepard.

"The architectural firm will come in and talk in general terms about their firm's background, nothing specific, and the process we're going to go through," Shepard said. "It will be several months before we have something more specific."

Shepard, who was named to his post in October, said changes in library directors since the 2011 vote have delayed the project. Shortly after the referendum's approval, the director who led the effort, Tom Simiele, resigned. His successor, Dave Seleb, left in April 2013 to take a similar job in Oak Park.

The referendum asked voters to keep in place a tax increase first approved in 1995 to fund library expansion. The hike generates about \$500,000 a year for the district.

Plans at the time called for using the funding to create space for quiet study areas and rooms for teens, as well as a small addition for meeting rooms.

Rob Sherman, a Buffalo Grove activist, and other district residents sued unsuccessfully to get the election results overturned, although the Illinois State Board of Elections did require the library to file amended reports about its spending related to the election.

The district serves residents of Wheeling, Buffalo Grove, Prospect Heights and Arlington Heights. The central library is at 355 S. Schoenbeck Road in Wheeling, and the district has a branch at 99 E. Palatine Road in Prospect Heights.