



FRANKLIN COUNTY GOVERNMENT
COURTHOUSE CONSTRUCTION PROJECT UPDATE
6/16/2020

Asbestos abatement is scheduled to be completed in early July and demolition is scheduled to begin in August as the pace continues to move forward on construction of a new 46,000 square-foot courthouse, that will be located in the center of the Benton Public Square.

Wellington Environmental, located in St. Louis, was awarded the low bid of \$213,140 to complete asbestos abatement at the 145-year-old courthouse, that has not been in use for the past five months. The work has to be completed prior to demolition. The abatement is slated to be completed by July 3.

The county board also let bids for demolition of the old courthouse on June 3. All bids must be submitted by June 18 with a time frame for razing the old structure to be completed by mid-August.

County officials, including judges, elected officials, county employees and board members are continuing to meet with project managers, architects and engineers via teleconference twice monthly going over construction plans and other intricate details in preparation for construction of the three-story courthouse that is expected to be completed in late December 2021.

A parking lot on the property that formerly housed the Benton Evening News has been completed with striping and bumper blocks installed during the last week of April. The parking lot that has the capacity for 26 cars, is located immediately east of the Campbell Building and adjacent to the parking lot near Capitol Park.

The county is also in discussion regarding other potential properties that could be used for additional parking south of the Campbell Building and is also looking to secure temporary parking for the large number of construction workers that will be involved in construction of the new courthouse.

The county board has already secured permission for the use of the part of the parking at First Baptist Church, located on South Main Street. The parking lot west of the church is being used. The board also recently sent a letter to all employees asking them to refrain from parking on the Public Square and said the part of the bid process for construction of the new courthouse will have a provision that no construction workers will be allowed to park on the public square. Additionally, the city of Benton, as a means

to help businesses, modified an ordinance that would prohibit any employee or business owner that works on the square from parking.

The county board is also in the process of securing furniture bids and also finalized the removal of the final items in the old courthouse including any antique items that will be saved and then incorporated into the new construction when it begins.

The next county board meeting is slated for Tuesday, June 16. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic the county board has been meeting for the past 12 weeks via teleconference.