



Drawing by Lee Geiger of Geiger Architecture

This conceptual drawing shows a two-story addition on the left end of the library that extends the second story over the parking lot. A new entrance would be in the addition (left of the trees) and the existing entrance would become an atrium for reading.

# First of forums on growth of library hears varied ideas

By Diane Rietman  
Journal Staff Writer 12-16

Eric Abrahamson moved to Rapid City a year ago and likes the quality of services at the Rapid City Public Library. He was concerned, however, that all the facilities were crammed into a small space.

"I think it's important that you have the additional space to accommodate what is a good library," Abrahamson said. "It's important, but I have to wonder if you're being ambitious enough when there's so much talk about the anticipated growth here in the next 30 years."

Abrahamson's comments were made Tuesday, at the first in a series of forums about expanding the library. The forums are an opportunity for the community to ask questions and express ideas about plans to double the space at the library.

Library officials will incorporate the comments into the library's proposal for Vision 2012 funding from the city.

Additional forums are planned over the next six weeks. A fund-raising campaign also is planned to sup-

plement 2012 funding.

Vision 2012 dollars are generated by a special half-cent sales tax and reserved only for capital improvements. The fund generates approximately \$6 million annually.

A two-story addition is proposed next to the existing building up to the parking lot. The second floor would be extended over most of the existing city parking.

The expansion would add 21,000 square feet to the existing 28,400-square-foot building.

Jim Kuehn, who served on the library building committee when the current building was built in 1972, asked Tuesday if there was an attempt to combine efforts with the Dahl Arts Center expansion. The Dahl sits right across Seventh Street from the library.

Greta Chapman, public library director, said architects for the two projects had worked together and there had been some discussion of creating a cultural complex.

Some ideas include building a walkway between the two buildings or building across the street and turning that block of Seventh Street into a pedestrian mall.

Library officials also were asked

whether a branch library would better serve the needs of the community.

Roy Burr, a Rapid City Public Library trustee, said there had been discussions with Stevens High School for a branch library, but the Rapid City Council considered expanding hours at the current library a priority.

There have been discussions about building a branch at the new fire station on Highway 16, Burr said.

That site is also under consideration for a combined indoor recreation and wellness center by the city and Rapid City Regional Hospital.

"We need to look at the services that you'll be providing 20 years from now," said Harry Richardson. "The other thing, it appears the city council already baptized that (fire station land) for a wellness-center location."

Kuehn added, "I'm concerned about the competition for 2012 dollars. My worst fear for you is the parking problem and how that may impact your project."

Among possible 2012 proposals are the fire station, recreation/wellness center, Dahl Arts Center expansion and the library.