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Serving the Lake Region & Pike County

Pike Library Explains Design Theory

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MILFORD — The Pike County Public Library made its case for choosing a somewhat controversial design for a new main branch in Milford's historic business district Tuesday night and managed to win some converts to a design supporters say adds to the complicated and interest architectural history of the town.

More than 100 people attended the public information session at the Pike County Courthouse main courtroom Tuesday to hear Building Task Force Chair Maleyne Syracuse and Architect Frederic Schwartz talk about why the county and the area need a new library and just how Schwartz arrived at his competition designs.

Syracuse said the need to build a new Main Branch becomes abundantly clear when looking at the growth figures. Pike County may be growing fastest in Pennsylvania, but the demand for Library services is outpacing that by a significant margin. She noted the county has seen a

27 percent increase in population between 2000 and 2006, but the number of registered patrons jumped 73 percent, library visits increased 48 percent and total circulation is up 50 percent in that same period of time.

The Pike County Library has also fallen behind the progress of its peers, ranking last among the 21 counties with populations between 40,700 and 76,700 and nine in population. The county ranks 20th in the number of periodicals and public access computers. Where libraries across the country average nearly three pieces of print materials per person, Pike County has just over one per person among counties with similar populations.

A significant part of the problem, according to Syracuse, is the diminutive size of its main branch facilities, now located in the Community House at the corner of Broad and East Harford Street. The Pike Library moved into the 2,500-square-foot building, which was originally built as a home, in 1901 when the county contained about 9,000 people, she

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Discuss New Milford Library

Architect Frederic Schwartz, right, talks with Milford resident Wendy Reading, left, whose home is located next to the Pike County Public Library's proposed main branch on East Harford Street. Schwartz said he will personally be meeting with adjoining property owners to discuss there concerns and review the preliminary designs. More than 100 people attended a public information session to learn more about the design of the new facility to be built on the old Coach Inn property. The 18,000 square foot building

would include a small auditorium, children's and teen rooms and collections, naturally lighted reading areas and a cafe. Additional public sessions will be scheduled in the future to help people understand the reasoning behind the modern design set in the historic Milford business district. Looking on is Tracey Hummer, director of communications at Frederic Schwartz Architects of New York City.

(News Eagle — Uzupes)

