

Remington Rand plans revealed to residents

BY PHIL DZIKIY

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— North Tonawanda residents got a first-hand look Thursday night at the proposed renovations of the city's Remington Rand building.

Lumber City Executive Director Jim Sullivan and project consultant Greg Sehr explained the \$1 million Restore New York grant the city is seeking for the project, in addition to answering other questions.

Anthony Kissling has contracted to purchase the building. Kissling owns multiple properties in Buffalo and New York City. The complete renovation of the warehouse is estimated at \$14 million. Kissling will be funding a large portion of the redevelopment project.

North Tonawanda Mayor Larry Soos asked Sehr what the timeline on the project was like.

Three or four banks are interested in financing the project, and a groundbreaking in the spring is possible, Sehr said. The city is also looking for additional state finance help from state Sen. George Maziarz, R-Newfane, and Assemblyman Robin Schimminger, D-Kenmore.

"It's going to be a major project," Sehr said. "These deals are very complex."

Sehr addressed parking issues the renovated building could cause to residents, noting there would have to be public parking. There would also be 64 indoor parking spots, he said.

Rich DeGlopper, president of the Niagara Frontier Chapter of the Antique and Classic Boat Society, presented the proposed antique boat museum in the building.

The Western New York Maritime Heritage Center would have several active exhibits, DeGlopper said. Rather than simply displaying artifacts, the museum would feature live restoration of boats for the public to observe.

The location of the building would be key to the museum's success, DeGlopper said.

"Being on the water is absolutely outstanding," DeGlopper said.

This project should not be expected to instantly change the city, North Tonawanda resident Art Pappas said. The public often perceives any new proposal as a cure-all, he said.

"I think it needs to be emphasized that this is one piece of the puzzle," Pappas said. "It sounds viable. It's in a perfect place."

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