



This is an artist's rendering of the proposed Littlestown YMCA branch.

Bids for new YMCA as low as \$797,000

By CHRISTINE CRUMPTON
Evening Sun Reporter

LITTLESTOWN — Bids received recently indicate that a complete YMCA facility could be built in Littlestown for anywhere between \$797,000 and \$911,000.

An initial phase, including the building shell, most of the first floor rooms, and a gym with a concrete floor, could be constructed for \$624,000, according to base bids received.

So far, the Littlestown Activity Center Foundation, the non-profit group conducting the fund raising campaign to build a YMCA, has raised \$580,000.

While current donations could cover most of the costs of the base bid, the Foundation is hoping to raise enough money to complete the project now.

Completing the building in one step will allow the Foundation to take advantage of low construction costs and interest rates, according to Vern Leese, chairman of the campaign.

"We feel the community is going to get the best deal for the money now," Leese said. "Our greatest challenge is to go out and find a few more contributors."

To date, 300 contributors have donated.

Dwight Strevig, major gifts chair for the capital campaign, said he believes more people will contribute as they see that the YMCA is no longer an abstract dream.

"There has been a lot of people waiting to see if it comes closer to reality before they donate," Strevig said.

Volunteers can explain the project to anyone interested in contributing. This can be arranged by contacting Barry Newton, branch director, at 359-9733.

From the outset, the Foundation has vowed to build only what the fund raising campaign can pay for rather than owe money.

To adhere to this goal, the campaign executive committee will meet Monday to review the bids and evaluate how to proceed given the money raised. Contractors for the project will be selected next week, Leese said.

If more donations are not received, the committee may have to consider cutting options from the \$624,000 base bid.

The base bid includes a 15,000 square foot shell, locker rooms, a teen room, offices, and a gymnasium with a concrete floor and a partial indoor running track.

The bid prices received are applicable for 60 days, according to Barry Newton, director of the campaign.

"We have that time frame to raise the additional dollars," Newton said. "We're trying to go out and raise more money to meet that base bid."

The completed project calls for a wood floor and track in the gym, a large multipurpose room, a cardiovascular room, Nautilus equipment, a whirlpool, and a sauna.

The Foundation hopes to break ground on the facility at the end of February and be in operation in September.

The Littlestown branch of the Hanover Area Family YMCA will provide programs for teens, families, and senior citizens. Currently, the branch operates from rented space on North Queen Street.

The Littlestown Borough Authority has agreed to support the project so that the Foundation can receive a tax free loan. Because the First Federal Savings Bank does not have to pay federal taxes on the interest, the bank can pass on the savings to the Foundation, Leese said.

The Authority is not responsible for paying the loan.