

## Ground Broken for Monroe County Courthouse Expansion

After many years of planning, the Monroe County Commissioners held a ceremonial groundbreaking to mark the start of construction of an expansion to the Monroe County Courthouse in Stroudsburg. Joined by members of the Judiciary, the groundbreaking, held on June 17, 2021, represents the first phase of plans that include renovating and modernizing the Historic Courthouse and Annex. For much of the past ten years, judges, staff, and the public have been operating from facilities that are outdated and undersized for current needs.

With the groundbreaking, a plan more than a decade old to address significant security, safety and operational shortcomings of the existing courthouse, became a reality. Once completed, the new courthouse will provide a functional, safe, secure and dignified setting for the administration of justice.

The project is being developed in phases:

- Phase IA starts the construction of a new three-story, 66,000-square foot Expansion with an entry lobby,

courtrooms, judges' chambers and support areas along with service and secure vehicle access and renovations to the first floor of the Courthouse Annex.

- Phase IB will see the completion of the new three-story Expansion creating six new state-of-the-art courtrooms. Level 3 will also be renovated during this phase. The existing outdoor plaza will also be redeveloped to create a new, more accessible and usable public space providing a new entry door for the courthouse.
- Phase 2 involves completion of interior renovations to the Courthouse Annex. In addition, the interior of the Historic Courthouse will be restored including the 1893 and 1930's courtrooms, library, entry lobby and public staircase. New life safety and security systems will be installed along with renovations to support court programs. Sidewalks and retaining walls on the east side will also be removed and replaced with lawn to restore the Courthouse to its original appearance.



***Pictured: Robert Fisch (CGL), Judge Jonathan Mark, President Judge Margherita Patti-Worthington, Commissioner Sharon S. Laverdure, Commissioner John R. Moyer, Christopher Gehm (WH Lane), and Commissioner John D. Christy.***



The new courthouse will have dedicated secure spaces for detainee holding and movement and loading/un-loading. Safety and security will be enhanced by providing separate internal circulation systems for the public, staff, judges and in-custody detainee movement. Modern entry security screening will be provided at the lobby for staff and visitors with new circulation, lobby, waiting, transaction counters, office spaces, courtrooms, hearing rooms and other support spaces replacing the current inadequate and functionally obsolete areas of the courthouse.

The Courthouse Annex will be renovated in parallel with construction of the new Expansion and to the historic renovation for clerical and similar judicial offices for use by court administration, probation, custody conciliation, sheriff, prothonotary, clerk of courts, domestic relations, district attorney, and public defender.



**Aerial view of project site**

*“This is critical. When I took office almost ten years ago, it was on the middle burner. It went to the back burner for a while, and it’s been on the front burner for at least the past five years,” said John R. Moyer, Vice Chairman, Monroe County Commissioners.*



When completed, the expansion, together with the renovated and upgraded spaces in the Historic Courthouse and the Annex, will provide greatly increased space to accommodate courthouse functions. Unlike the small, cramped spaces in much of the existing courthouse, the new spaces will be substantially larger and will provide greater separation and social distancing than is currently possible in the existing buildings. This includes the entry security queuing area, the major public lobbies and waiting areas, as well as the courtrooms and hearing rooms. The new facility will include separate circulation zones for the public, in-custody defendants, judges, and staff significantly reducing the congestion and crowding currently experienced in the existing building corridors. New heating, ventilation and air-conditioning systems will also be installed ensuring that adequate and code compliant air changes are provided throughout all of the buildings.



**President Judge Margherita Patti-Worthington addresses attendees at the groundbreaking.**



*“Courthouse design, especially as it relates to safety and security and flow of people going into the building, has changed so much over the years since I think this was built in 1978. Here we are in 2021, so I think it will go a long way for the safety and security of everyone,” said President Judge Margherita Patti-Worthington.*



**Commissioner John D. Christy speaking at the groundbreaking.**

*It’s tired. It’s outlived its useful lifetime. We’d be spending millions in upgrading it. What this does is it moves the courtrooms out of that building and then allows us to put office spaces in it” said Commissioner John D. Christy.*



Also attending the groundbreaking were members of the Judiciary including (above, left to right): Judge Jonathan Mark, Judge Stephen M. Higgins, President Judge Margherita Patti-Worthington, Judge David J. Williamson, Judge Arthur L. Zulick



**Monroe County Commissioners pictured left to right: John D. Christy; John R. Moyer, Vice Chairman, and Sharon S. Laverdure, Chairman.**

## Local Firms Involved with Construction

The first priority following groundbreaking was to clear the site for construction of the new Courthouse Expansion. This involved demolition and removal of the former bank located at the corner of North 6<sup>th</sup> and Sarah streets. Crews made short work of the building, demolishing the wooden structure in one day and removing the debris.



**Demolition of the former bank building – site of the new Courthouse Expansion.**

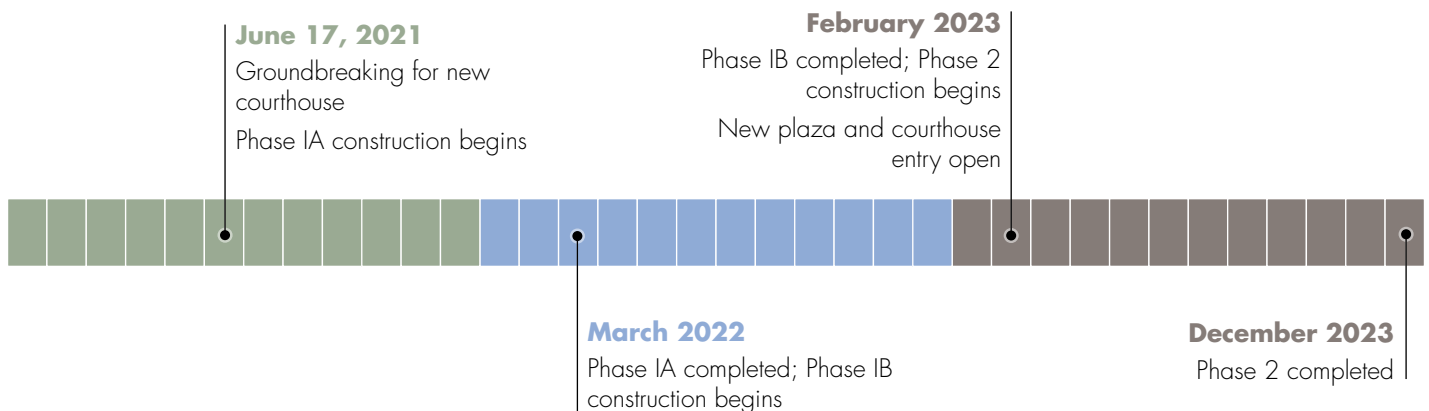
With the building removed and the site substantially cleared, construction contractors could begin work. Construction of the approximately \$50 million project involves multiple prime contractors firms hired by Monroe County including:

- Lobar, Inc. – Dillsburg, PA.
- Gunn Mowery, LLC – Camp Hill, PA.
- Marx Mechanical, Inc./Marx HVAC Building Service, Wilkes-Barre, PA
- Wind Gap Electric, Inc. – Wind Gap, PA
- Otis Elevator Company – Farmington, CT

Rounding out the team are CGL Companies which designed the new addition and the renovations to the Annex and Historic Courthouse and William H. Lane, Inc. which will oversee and manage construction on behalf of Monroe County.

## Construction Schedule Updated

With work underway, the schedule for starting and completing each phase of construction has been updated (below):







*Renderings of New Monroe County Courthouse Expansion, Stroudsburg, PA.*

## Upcoming Activities

The Monroe County Courthouse project is moving forward with these activities expected in the months ahead:

- Continue construction of new Courthouse Expansion with foundation excavation.
- Continue engaging stakeholders and public during courthouse construction.
- Look to the Monroe County Courthouse website for information, announcements, and progress in constructing the new Courthouse Expansion (<http://www.monroecountypa.gov/Dept/CourthouseProject/Pages/default.aspx>).

## Join the Courthouse Email List

Add your name to the Courthouse email list to directly receive announcements, newsletters, and other project-related materials by sending your name, affiliation (if any), and email address to: [robert.nardi@wsp.com](mailto:robert.nardi@wsp.com).

## Interested in Learning More?

For additional information visit [www.monroecountypa.gov/Dept/CourthouseProject](http://www.monroecountypa.gov/Dept/CourthouseProject) or contact:

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