

MIDDLETOWN

Design concern delays bidding process

If bids are awarded next week, work on the new public works building could start in February or March, an architect estimated.

By CHRIS ENGLISH COURIER TIMES

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Awarding bids for a new Middletown public works complex was delayed Tuesday night so officials could check out a township supervisor's concern about where a small room should be located.

Supervisors Robert McMonagle, John J. Kelly III, Lisa Pflaumer and Jasper Caro voted 4-0 to table the bid awarding until the Dec. 18 meeting. McMonagle felt a data closet, a small room where electrical and other cables converge, should probably be located on the first floor of the new public works building instead of the second floor, where it's now marked on the plans.

"I want it clarified so we don't end up having to tear out drywall or something like that and get into an expensive change order," said McMonagle. "I don't think one week is going to hurt because no one is anxious to break ground on the frozen tundra that's out there now anyway."

The plan is to construct a new two-story public works building of slightly more than 10,000 square feet at the spot where the old police building used to stand on Veterans Highway [Route 413] near Trenton Road. The new building will have offices, a carpentry and sign shop, repair bays and other features. The existing public works building on the same property will continue to be used.

Bids for the new building are scheduled to be awarded as follows: general contractor, Magnum Inc. of Warminster, \$1,789,000; mechanical contractor, TMI Commercial Inc. of Honey Brook, \$232,323; electrical contractor, MJF Electrical Contracting of Trevoze, \$196,000; plumbing contractor, Apex Plumbing and Heating Inc. of Philadelphia, \$272,500.

If the data closet issue is resolved and those bids are awarded Dec. 18, the Philadelphia architect working on the project, Chuck McGuffin, estimated ground would be broken in February or March. The project will take about 15 months to complete once it starts, he added.

Professional fees of \$254,000 and estimated costs for telephone and testing services of \$45,000 bring the project's total cost to \$2,789,000, or about \$284,000 below the budgeted amount of \$3,074,000. The cushion should leave room for unexpected change orders and also cover the cost of shop equipment and furnishings, said township Manager Richard Gestrich.