

Coatesville RDA seeking deal for train station

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COATESVILLE -- The city Redevelopment Authority is going to begin negotiations with Amtrak to obtain the current city train station.

Authority Chairman Joseph "Zeke" Disciullo said the railroad company will likely not sell the current station on Fleetwood Avenue until the new station is completed. The new station is proposed for just up the street from the current station.

The move is required because the current station is situated on a segment of track that is not straight, and straight track is required to build larger platforms that comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

"We are going to get an opportunity in the future to buy (the current station) for a buck," Disciullo said at Monday's authority meeting.

Disciullo said Amtrak will likely sell the station for \$1, because it will no longer be of any use to the company and the authority will be best situated to redevelop the property into some other use. He said there have been multiple conversations between members of the authority and Amtrak officials and Amtrak has expressed an interest to sell it for \$1.

The authority has already obtained a grant of \$1.3 million to renovate the train station for an alternative use, according to Disciullo.

The current station is two stories with minimal parking, Disciullo said. Authority member Jack Burkholder estimated the building is more than 2,000 square feet in size.

PennDOT officials have estimated that the new station will be completed by 2015. Disciullo said the authority wants to begin negotiations with Amtrak early, because there are always delays when dealing with a large organization.

The authority has had recent delays in negotiations with Amtrak while attempting to obtain a small parcel of land on the site known as the Flats for the proposed Velodrome project. While the two groups have agreed on a price of \$13,500 for the property, which is just under two acres, months have been spent working out the legalities of an agreement of sale for that parcel.

On Monday, authority Solicitor Vincent Mancini said the negotiations are still moving forward, but some language in the contract still needed to be cleaned up.

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