

Work on schedule at former library

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Published: Thursday, May 13, 2010 11:59 AM CDT

Corporate Contractors Inc. have been laying down carpeting and polishing floors this week at the former home of the Beloit Public Library.

The \$4 million project is on schedule to be completed by July 2, according to project manager Brad Siegworth.

"We've had really good subcontractors on this site," he said.

Corporate Contractors, Inc. (CCI) began the project in December. Workers have raised ceilings and torn off portions of the roof. On Wednesday, crews were putting the finishing touches on the south ends of the first and second floors.

About 20 to 25 workers are on site daily and a few other workers are brought in each weekend.

The 48,000-square-foot structure, located on the corner of Grand Avenue and Pleasant Street, is a gift to Beloit College from Beloit business leader Diane Hendricks and her late husband and Beloit College trustee Ken Hendricks. Beloit College will open the former library as an educational facility for the arts this fall.

The new facility, which will house the college's music and dance programs and other campus educational activities, became available when the Hendricks Group assumed sole ownership of the former Beloit Mall and began to transform it into a community resource, renaming it the Eclipse Center.

The city was able to purchase the former J.C. Penney's department store at the south end of the Eclipse Center, and move the Beloit Public Library to the renovated and enlarged location. As part of the arrangement, the city transferred ownership of the original downtown library to the Hendricks family. In turn, the family gave it to the college as a completed new facility. The gift to the college includes the structure and renovations.

Siegworth said the cement and marble floors will be polished, and features from its history as a post office will be included in the renovations. Siegworth explained how the project has been challenging because the original construction wasn't square. Columns, for example, weren't exactly straight.

"Everything is a little bit off. We've been busy making corrections," Siegworth said.



CCI worker Trent Austin polishes the floor at the former Beloit Library. The building renovations will be completed by July 2.
Staff photo by Hillary Gavan