

Westchester News Online

WESTCHESTER CHILDREN'S MUSEUM INCHES CLOSER TO REALITY

Several hundred parents, teachers and caregivers were on hand at the bathhouses at Playland Amusement Park in Rye Sunday for the Westchester Children's Museum's annual "Museum Without Walls Event"--a sort of preview of their planned museum with walls that organizers are hoping will soon become a reality.

The Westchester County Board of Legislators has drafted legislation, that's expected to be considered in the next few weeks, that would enable the County to enter into a lease with the Children's Museum and allow it to use the space to build a 22,000 square foot structure at the bathhouse site. The Museum has been in the planning stages since 2001. Museum President Corinne Zola says she's hopeful legislators will approve the measure so the Museum Board can move forward with the next step, which is to finalize the museum's design and begin construction.



Organizers have raised 7 million dollars to date and Zola says they're hoping to raise another 7 million dollars.

Her goal, she says, is to have the museum completed and open to the public by mid-2011. Zola says the Museum will not be funded by taxpayer dollars, but will rather help bring in revenue for the County as the

Museum draws in visitors from not only Westchester, but also Fairfield, Rockland, the Bronx and beyond.

Zola says what makes the site of the Bathhouses at Playland such a natural fit to become a children's museum is its accessibility via public transportation and its proximity to major roadways; its location on the Sound which will impact programming and content, and the opportunity revitalize an architectural landmark.

According to Zola, the museum will feature hands on exhibits featuring nature, science, waterplay and a giant climbing structure.