

Phase II of WIU-QC construction scheduled to begin in the fall

By Dawn Neuses

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MOLINE – Construction of Phase II of the Western Illinois University-Quad Cities Riverfront Campus is expected to start about Labor Day and be done by January 2014.

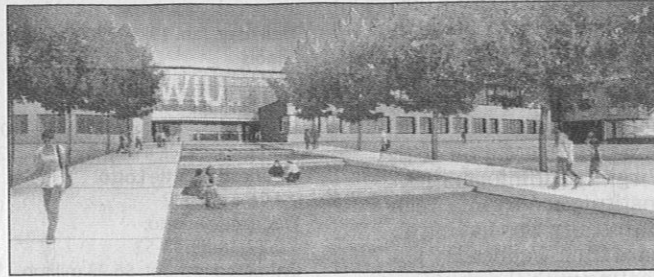
On Wednesday, community leaders and economic development officials were asked for feedback on Phase II plans a day after the state released \$39 million for construction. Renew Moline held the visioning strategy session in the Phase I building that opened Tuesday with Gov. Pat Quinn announcing Phase II funding was available.

Dr. Joseph Rives, vice president of WIU-Quad Cities, on Wednesday said groundbreaking for Phase II should be about Labor Day. He expects construction of the five buildings to take about 14 months, with a January 2014 opening.

The buildings will house the colleges of Arts and Sciences, Education and Human Services, Fine Arts and Communications, and WQPT public television and the Graduate Study Center, he said.

Rusty Walker, an associate for Phase II architect Holabird & Root, Chicago, said the goal is to create the sense of a campus. So, he said, they divided the 100,000 square feet of space needed for Phase II into five interconnected buildings to create a quad.

Three buildings will



Submitted

This is a rendering of what a portion of Phase II of the WIU-Quad Cities Riverfront Campus could look like. The rendering shows the skywalk connecting two classroom buildings that will face River Drive, and a landscaped area that will lead to the river. The rendering, created by the design and architectural firm Holabird & Root, Chicago, was presented Wednesday during a visioning strategy session held on campus by Renew Moline.

be built at the front of the campus, facing the river. One will be the library, which will be connected to a classroom building, which will be connected to a second classroom building by a skywalk, he said.

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Behind them will be two more connected buildings — a student union with a curved glass atrium to mimic the Phase I building and an administration building. Mr. Walker said

this will become the “front door” to the campus, facing RiverTech Boulevard, which will be built this year behind the campus.

A walkway is planned between the two classroom buildings, leading to River Drive and the Mississippi River. Plans also call for a large clock tower, he said.

The plans were met with applause at Wednesday’s meeting.

Dr. Rives also said plans still include moving the former train depot on River Drive, a building now owned by the city, to the campus.

The landmarked structure is in the path of the planned new Interstate 74 bridge and the Illinois Department of Transportation has agreed to move it. Moline city administrator Lew Steinbrecher said IDOT has yet to appraise the land where the depot sits and do an analysis on moving it to the campus.