

Community invited to determine future of Market Street lot

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What should be done with the city lot left vacant by the demolition of the former Meadville Club?

To help determine the future of the property at 951-955 Market St., the Arc of Crawford County and members of the Art and Environment Initiative at Allegheny College host a community meeting at the Arc at 5 p.m. Thursday.

“At this meeting we will share design concepts, project goals, and gather community feedback and input for this project,” said Amara Geffen, the Allegheny art professor leading the effort to design a community greenspace on the property now owned by the Arc.

The goal is to develop a community venue that fits the Arc’s goals and is also useful and appealing to the rest of the community as well — a place where people “can gather and form natural relationships through collaborative participation in arts, culture, and community events,” according to Geffen.

Possibilities that could be considered include uncovering part of Mill Run, which runs underneath the lot, murals that highlight aspects of Mill Run, gardens and a stage area for concerts, outdoor movies and other activities.

You can go

The Arc of Crawford County, 222 Chestnut St., Meadville, hosts a community meeting to develop plans for the location of the former Meadville Club, 951-955 Market St., at 5 p.m. Thursday. Groups or individuals with ideas for the lot or who would like to partner with the Arc in hosting events there are invited to attend.

The site is intended to create a destination for visitors while also modeling best practices in arts-based community engagement, as well as rain gardens and other stormwater enhancements with a focus on placemaking in downtown Meadville, according to Mark Weindorf, executive director of the Arc.

Work has already begun on the design concept, as Geffen and a team of six Allegheny students have been meeting with community stakeholders since January to gather ideas.

The meeting Thursday will begin with a brief presentation before moving to smaller discussion circles to brainstorm on possibilities for the space.

Work could begin at the site by the end of the month, according to Geffen, if the weather cooperates. Plans are already in the works for two pop-up events at the location this summer: a cornhole and pickle ball event and an outdoor movie. The events will also serve as test runs to provide a better understanding of what works at the site and what doesn't, Geffen said.

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