

Good Afternoon, Mes Amis!

Preview: Hamid Circus Royale comes to Houma. **1D** **SPORTS:** Terrebonne set to meet Bolton in playoffs. **1C**

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Thursday

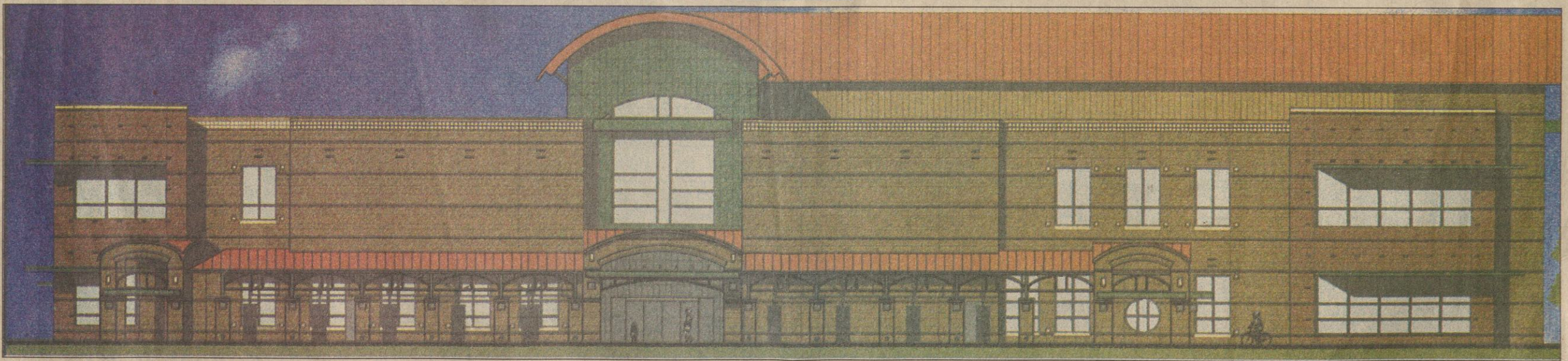
Weather

Tonight: Showers and thunderstorms. Lows 50 to 55.

Friday: Cloudy. Patchy light rain. Highs mostly in the 50s.

Friday night: Cloudy with a chance of rain. Lows in the 40s south.

Details on page 2A.



This drawing by Cheremie/Whitney architects shows the main entrance to the proposed Terrebonne Parish Main Library. The south-facing, two-story building will be built next to the Houma-Terrebonne Civic Center. It is expected to open in late 2002.

Parish details plans for new Terrebonne Parish library

By **PATRICK THOMAS**

The Courier

Plans for the \$12 million Terrebonne Parish Main Library were unveiled Wednesday at the Parish Council's regular meeting.

"This is going to be a landmark," said Parish President Bobby Bergeron.

The two-story, 70,000-square-foot brick and glass structure is expected to be open in late 2002.

"This parish will have a main library to be proud of," said Mary Cosper LeBoeuf, director of the parish library system. "It

will be a cornerstone for public libraries throughout the state and country. In the design, you will see technological advances and services that will help expand the library's role in the community."

Architect Maureen Arndt, representing the Dallas firm of Phillips Swager Associates, presented some of the details of the design - the vehicular drop-off areas, covered walkways, a 150-person meeting room, a curved sunroom for adult readers and a children's section with seats like boats.

"We're anticipating having documents

ready for contractors' bids in March," architect Tom Whitney of the Houma-based Cheremie Whitney Associates said before the meeting. "Hopefully, the ground-breaking will be in May."

Whitney said construction is expected to take about 18 months.

The project probably avoided some serious delays when the administration took the advice of Councilman Alvin Tillman and others to examine the construction site for unmarked graves.

Southdown Cemetery adjoins the construction site, and the parish government hired Earth Search Inc. of Baton Rouge

to conduct a thermal imaging survey of the area.

Some 12 unmarked graves were found by the survey, and the architects redrew plans for the library parking lot to provide at least five feet of space.

Not everyone was satisfied with the revised plans.

Local forensics consultant Lucretia McBride said Monday that the thermal imaging study was not complete and that the parish should probe the grounds manually before beginning construction.

Tillman responded he had been with the thermal imaging survey team to

make sure it was covering the correct grounds.

At Wednesday night's meeting, McBride toned down her criticism and asked the council to consider having an "archeological recovery plan" in place because of the "possibility of human remains sites being discovered."

Later, 91-year-old Etta Welch, whose parents are buried at Southdown, told the council, "Don't worry the dead folks in the cemetery."

Rosadel Brown said, "Everybody at Southdown is related to me. The graveyard has been there free. Why should we

have to pay to be buried there?"

Tillman called rumors that bodies will be disturbed or that the parish will charge for burial plots are "propaganda."

"Nobody's moving anybody," he said. "What's been conveyed to you is wrong."

Tillman said, "Don't be alarmed by what these freelance opportunists are trying to do to you." He said the cemetery would actually benefit from its proximity to the new library complex.

Parish President Bobby Bergeron and Council Vice Chairman Ray Boudreaux reassured the audience that the parish had not and would not sell plots.