Officials to talk Seneca library funding

BY CARLOS GALARZA
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WALHALLA — The fate of plans to build a new Oconee County Public Library branch in Seneca could hinge on a key meeting next week between library officials and U.S. Department of Agriculture representatives.

The two sides are meeting for the first time since Oconee's application for a federal loan and grant failed to make the cut in September.

Library officials had sought a $2.9 million grant packaged with a low-interest loan for $5.6 million from the USDA.

The setback put funding of the proposed $8.9 million library project back to square one.

John Adams, who chairs OCPL's Capital Projects Committee, said OCPL board members hope to learn from USDA officials what kind of financial help is available when the two sides meet at 10:30 a.m. Wednesday at the Seneca library branch.



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This rendering shows how the proposed library branch would look adjacent to the Blue Ridge Elementary School in Seneca.

Adams said any new proposal would have to be brought before County Council for approval. Council signed off on the previous grant/loan application that did not get funded.

Adams said he has invited council members and County Administrator Scott Moulder to the meeting.

Adams has said in the past that some kind of USDA funding package represents the best chance of getting the project financed in the current economic climate.

The School District of Oconee County donated five acres adjacent to Blue Ridge Elementary School for the proposed library.

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