

Ram Cat Alley park aims to create welcoming

BY LADONNA BEEKER
THE JOURNAL

SENECA — Plans are organized and a contractor was chosen Monday to build the Ram Cat Alley park and parking lot.

During Monday's Seneca City Council meeting, council members unanimously approved to fund no more than \$179,000 from the Hotel Accommodations Tax fund for the new courtyard to be constructed behind businesses between Ram Cat Alley and E. N. First Street. Hutch-N-Son Construction was awarded the project.

A paved walkway will start beside City Pool Room on Ram Cat Alley and lead back to a paved

parking lot off of E. N. First Street. The concrete parking lot will replace a current gravel lot used between downtown buildings on E. N. First Street and will hold about 15 parking spaces, according to design plans.

The courtyard will also have a three-tier fountain located in the center of the park. The current gate that has a door and two windows will be taken down and rebuilt to make the door functional with the new raised flooring approved in the park's plans.

City Manager Greg Dietterick said a storm drain pipe will run under the courtyard to eliminate flooding issues in that particular area downtown.

"It's a very tough job and tight job," Dietterick said, "but it should be a massive improvement for all those businesses (surrounding Ram Cat Alley)."

Business owners have expressed an interest in putting signs for their businesses on the back of their buildings for patrons entering the courtyard from E.N. First Street, which will be OK, according to city Planning Director Ed Halbig.

Dietterick explained to council that the funds for the Ram Cat Alley park and parking lot will come from the HAT funds, and the city will "pay itself back" monthly.

SEE PARK, PAGE A5

shopping atmosphere



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A sign sits at the entrance to the future home of the Ram Cat Alley courtyard starting beside City Pool Room on Ram Cat Alley and going back toward E. N. First Street. The brick wall seen in the background will be taken down and reconstructed to fit the new courtyard design.

PARK:

'It's a very tough job and tight job'

FROM PAGE A1

Council agreed for the city to pay back no less than \$5,000 and no more than \$10,000 a month to the HAT fund to replace the money used for the park's construction. Mayor Dan Alexander left the room during the discussion and vote because of a conflict of interest in surrounding property.

Absent from Monday's meeting were council members Ernest Riley and Andrea Alawine