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TO SPEND $150,000 ON MEDIA COURT HOUSE – County Commissioners Have Approved Plans from New York – Contract Was Made

The Commissioners of Delaware County yesterday from among the competitive plans submitted by a number of architects, accepted the designs prepared by Brazier and Robb of New York for the rearrangement and enlargement of the Court House of Media. The designs they approved contemplate an outlay of $150,000 in the improvement and additions to the present buildings. The plans were thought out and critically examined by the Commissioners and after several important changes were mutually agreed upon to be made, the county officials formally entered into a contract with the architects to supervise the erection of the structure, which, it is thought, will require about a year to complete.

The junior partner of this firm of architects, E. Donald Robb, is well-known in this city; a graduate of the Chester High School. It is a matter of congratulation both to Mr. Robb and the county at large, that the accepted design for the new Court House has been awarded to a Delaware County boy, who in New York, the city of his adoption, has been steadily forging to the front in his occupation in which his talent peculiarly fitted him to succeed.

The work is expected to begin about the first of July. County Commissioners George W. Allen, Jesse D. Pierson and Thomas Feeley yesterday engaged firm architects to prepare the plans and specifications and to supervise the work of construction, which will be done by contract after competitive bids are received.

Since the first of the year, the Commissioners have been considering plans submitted by different architects and have been carefully taking up the work – preliminary to enlarging the Court House. The architects submitted their drawings without charge and from the architects who consulted the Commissioners the latter selected the firm with whom it was decided to make an agreement. The Commissioners by a unanimous vote made a contract with the firm of Brazier and Robb of New York City. The members of the firm have been associated with Delaware County, having relatives living here.

The drawings made by Brazier and Robb were believed by the Commissioners to be the most satisfactory. The three Commissioners signed the contract and the stamp of the approval of the Court was given by Judge William B. Broomall, who on a number of occasions had been consulted in regard to the plans. The architects will receive the usual commission of six percent and will be required to supervise all the work of making the changes to the building. They have already begun the work of preparing the plans and specifications, which are expected to be completed within a month. The plans will then have to be approved by the Commissioners after which bids for making the additions will be advertised for and the contract awarded.

Besides the firm with whom an agreement was made yesterday, the architects who submitted drawings were, Magaziner & Potter, Heacock & Hockanson, Robert G. Holland, Lockman & Murphy, Edward H. Hazelhurst, Francis A. Gugert, Y.S. Adams and Walter Price. The drawings contained the ideas of the architects as to the construction of the additions. The contract for the building work will be given to only one bidder and there are to be no subcontracts let by the Commissioners.

The improvements to the Court House will be extensive ones. The first proposal for changes came about two years ago when William I. Schaffer, a leading attorney proposed at a banquet of Delaware County Bar Association, held in a Philadelphia hotel,

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that a new Court House be erected. The proposal first met with favor and one Grand Jury recommended that a new structure be built. The next Grand Jury declined to make such a recommendation, so the project for a new building fell through. Two successive Grand Juries and others since recommended alterations and additions and the reports were confirmed by the Court and given to the County Commissioners. The Commissioners have consulted with the Court in regard to the project. It had been argued for some years that the present structure is too small for the growing legal business of the county and that the Court House has been crowded.

PROPOSED CHANGES – The changes will allow three times as much floor space for the offices. Three court rooms will be provided and corridors will be arranged so that it will not be necessary for persons to pass through one court room to reach another. At present there is one large court room and a small one. Oftimes the larger court room is crowded and when a busy court is in session there is not room in the small courtroom to accommodate the people interested in the cases on trial.

The county officials have complained that the offices are too cramped for the proper transaction of public business. A new Grand Jury room will be provided and new jury rooms. An office will be provided for the Superintendent of Public Schools. At present the Court pays rent for the office of the Superintendent, which is located in Gleave Hall. An entire new front will be made and the building will be extended thirty feet on each side. A room will be apportioned for the County Auditors, who are now obliged in work in whatever room or office they find vacant.

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