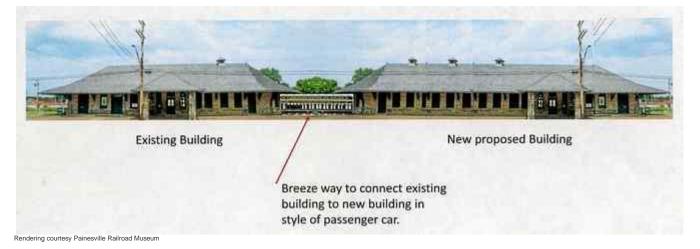
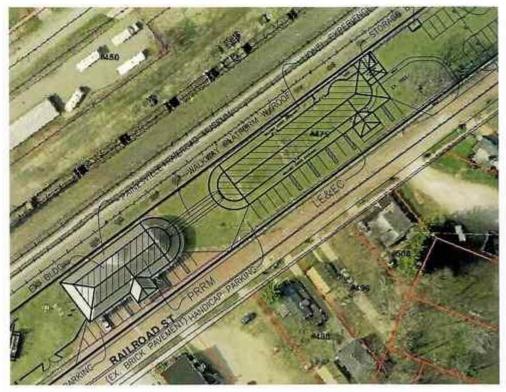
Painesville (OH) Railroad Museum to expand collection, construct new facility "The Lionel Experience"



By Tawana Roberts, The News-Herald Lake County, OH

POSTED: 07/11/18, 1:30 PM EDT | UPDATED: 4 DAYS AGO

Railroad Museum



Rendering courtesy Painesville

The Painesville Railroad Museum has laid out plans for 6,000-square-foot expansion project.

Vice-President Tom Pescha presented the plans at a recent board meeting.

"About a year ago, we were offered a **very large Lionel collection**," **Pescha said.** "**The collection we were offered has every item that Lionel made in the postwar era. At auction it would sell for about \$3 million, as the collection is worth about \$1.3 million.**"

The owner, Dennis Chandler, amassed what Lionel Corporation has deemed the **largest and most comprehensive postwar era collection (from 1945 to 1969) on the continent and perhaps in the world, according to the presentation.**

"He has every engine, car, track, transformer, manual, repair tools and scenery that was ever produced," Pescha said. "All are in new condition. His layout will also be coming to us. There are six main lines on it."

The Painesville Railroad Museum, 475 Railroad St., will be able to purchase the Lionel collection for \$650,000. Due to the size and significance of this model train collection, expansion is necessary.

Plans call for constructing an adjoining facility. There will be breezeway connecting the two and it would look like a passenger car.

"With meeting our requirements of our Historic District, the building would be a mirror image of our present station, but longer and slightly larger," he said. "The basement will have a conference room capable of seating 200 people with a full commercial kitchen, bathrooms and storage."

The proposed facility called the Lionel Experience and Event Center will cost about \$3.2 million. The total project cost consists of the building, the Lionel Train Collection; insurance on the collection until moved, moving the collection, operating costs of the new building for two years, accountants for monthly audits, the project manager, WiFi expansion to the new building, an attorney to review agreement and media advertising. Construction of a new parking lot is also included in the total project cost.

With the increased square footage of the new facility, the annual projected operating expenses will rise. However, Pescha is confident that the new center will attract more visitors and members.

The admissions, annual memberships, banquet room rental fees, special events and promotions, food and beverage vending concessions, gift shop sales, project specific grants and sponsorships will produce income streams for the museum.

"We already have \$1 million pledged," he said. The goal is to raise \$2.2 million.

Moving forward, Pescha will meet with the Lake County commissioners to discuss grants and seek additional funding sources.

"I hope to spend the next six to eight months securing funding and hopefully we can break ground next year," he said.