

Family-owned paper to get much-needed breathing room

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The Frederick (Md.) News-Post last month said it would buy a new press and postpress equipment to anchor a \$44 million production facility

The family-owned newspaper (daily, 40,209, Sunday, 38,264) has long outgrown its current 25,600-square-foot downtown site and according to editor and publisher Myron W. Randall Jr., it's time to expand.

When the new building is complete in two years, the 120,080-square-foot facility will house The News-Post as well as the Randall Family LLC's additional properties, Web design company Mirame Interactive and printing service The Job Shop.

Construction will begin this summer.

"Right now we're spread out at three different facilities, three different locations," Randall said. "This will put everything under one roof"

Randall said the company has earmarked \$36 million to buy a new press and associated postpress equipment. The paper is currently produced on a 1967-vintage Goss Urbanite press with limited color capabilities and a capacity of just 17,000 copies per hour.

"We have an RIP that's in the middle of its activity for the new press and additional equipment," Randall said.

"We've stacked some units to get some additional color capacity but that's about as much as we can do with our current space," he said. "We're looking for a press that has color on lots more pages (in order) to be a little more flexible with what we can produce."

Randall said he expects the new press to be able to produce 70,000 copies per hour and help the company increase its commercial printing.

Dario Designs Inc. will oversee the project, which will sit on a 44-acre site in south Frederick that the family purchased for \$7.6 million.

Randall said there are no immediate plans for The News-Post's current facility but he hopes to eventually sell the building.



The Frederick News-Post's current building (left) and an initial illustration from architect Dario Designs of the future building (above). Preliminary plans for the new site envision a two-story, brick building similar to others in downtown Frederick.

A dream fulfilled

Randall, who succeeded his brother George Randall as News-Post editor and publisher after George Randall's death last spring, said the new building is a project his brother was eager to complete.

For the past 36 years, The News-Post's offices and presses have been housed in separate buildings across the street from one another because there is simply no room to put everything in one facility.

In addition to housing all newspaper operations and the operations of the two other Randall companies, the new building will provide plenty of room for expansion. The site is also surrounded by several roads, thereby allowing for good distribution of the paper.

"Frederick County is arguably the largest county in Maryland in terms of land mass," Randall said, making access to subscribers key.

Preliminary plans for the new building envision a two-story brick building similar to others in downtown Frederick. The new facility marks the end of a two-year search by the newspaper for a new site. In its 121-year history, The News-Post has moved three times.

The Randall family has been the sole owner of The News-Post, Mirame Interactive and The Job Shop since 2001. ■