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Schools to buy site for bus compound

By Sara Cunningham • scunningham@courier-journal.com • May 19, 2010

The tan and green buildings that sit vacant off Button Lane near the railroad tracks in La Grange could soon be home to Oldham County Schools' new bus compound and administrative annex.

School board members decided May 10 to buy the 18-acre site that was occupied by the Stock Building & Lumber Co. before it went out of business.

The site, which has been for sale for less than a year, is owned by Kenneth Bell. The buildings are less than 3 years old, he said.

The real estate deal has not been finalized, but the price tag for the property is \$3million and the district estimates it will spend an additional \$5million on renovations, said Superintendent Paul Upchurch.

A new bus compound is long overdue and the property would be ideal, Upchurch said.

The district's existing bus compound, located behind Oldham County High School in Buckner, has five bays and was built in the 1960s, when the district had about 24 buses. Now, the district has more than 200 buses that all have to be serviced every 20 days.

"It's a real infrastructure problem."

Upchurch said.

The new Button Lane property has a building that could be converted into a 19-bay facility for the buses and a second building that could be transformed into a new facility for the district's administrative departments for special education services, technology, maintenance and transportation.

The \$8million plan costs less than two other options the district has considered.

The district owns another 14-acre site off Button Lane and had considered building a bus compound there but with site work costs, the project would have cost \$10million to \$12million, Upchurch said.

Then in January, the district started looking into building a bus compound on a 15-acre property it owned off Allen Lane, but the site work alone would have been about \$8million, Upchurch said.

"That's before you even start building," he

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said. "It's just basically moving dirt around."

If the plan moves forward, the district may decide to sell the other Button Lane property and hang on to the Allen Lane property for future use, he said.

After the sale of the new property is finalized, the district could be ready to advertise for bids for renovations by this fall, said Jim Ewalt, the district's director of facilities management.

Ewalt said the district could move into the finished property as soon as summer 2011.

Reporter Sara Cunningham can be reached at (502) 582-4335.



The price tag for the 18-acre site that was occupied by the Stock Building & Lumber Co. is \$3 million. (By Sara Cunningham, The Courier-Journal)

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