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Elgin council OKs Hindu temple

Townhomes also being built at Route 20, Galt Boulevard

By Gloria Casas
Chicago Tribune

Plans to build a Hindu temple and nearly three dozen townhomes on Route 20 at Galt Boulevard were approved by the Elgin City Council Wednesday night despite objections from neighbors concerned about increased traffic.

Umiya Mataji Sastha Chicago Midwest's mixed-use development calls for an 86,000-square-foot temple no higher than 90 feet, 33 townhouses in five buildings and an 8-acre private recreation area.

Plans for the 34-acre property at 890 Galt Blvd. were approved with a 6-3 vote after the council received no recommendation from the city's Planning and Zoning Commission, which was divided in its support for the project.

Council members Steve Thoren, Diana Alfaro and Dustin Good

voted against the request, with Alfaro citing the property's single entrance and exit and Thoren concurring with residents on traffic concerns.

"I did go over there. I drove it," Thoren said. "I tried to envision the traffic issues at those intersections. I'm hearing that IDOT even states it's a 'delicate infrastructure,' which was more than obvious to me. It's already a problem area for traffic. And I am not one to help a traffic problem get worse."

Mayor Dave Kaptain countered that the only way the Illinois



An Artist's rendering of what Umiya Mataji Sastha's 86,000-square-foot temple at Route 20 and Galt Boulevard in Elgin will look like when built.

UMIYA MATAJI SASTHA

Department of Transportation will fix a road or intersection if a problem exists, not in anticipation of problems from future development.

IDOT has been working on a plan for road improvements along Route 20 for a several years but

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Employees of the Fox River Valley Public Library District stand in front of the district's first bookmobile in 1990.

FOX RIVER VALLEY PUBLIC LIBRARY DISTRICT

Libraries planning 150th anniversary celebration

Fox River Valley District has long, storied history serving, educating communities

By Mike Danahey
The Courier News

The Fox River Valley Public Library District will offer an array of events in 2026 to celebrate 150 years of serving readers in the Dundee Township area.

"Our PR team and the entire library staff have been working on this milestone for more than a year, and I'm excited for our community to experience and enjoy the results of everyone's hard work," library district spokeswoman Corinne Vargas said.

The district's graphic designer Dan Mitchell created a 150th anniversary logo and other staff launched a history page on the library's website, www.frvpld.

info/library-history.

The latter traces the library from 1876, when it became one of the first in Illinois to support a library through local taxes, to current day, with the Dundee Library operating at 555 Barrington Ave. in East Dundee and a smaller branch open at the Randall Oaks Recreation Center, 500 N. Randall Road in West Dundee.

Vargas said that while an official founding date for a library does not exist, there is a handwritten document in its records dated Jan. 11, 1876, that the district considers its benchmark.

"While it may suggest an early milestone, we cannot confirm it as the exact founding date and therefore recognize 1876 as the library's

founding year," she said.

Staff also uncovered another letter, circa 1871, in which local residents declared their intention to form a literary society under Illinois state law. This early effort marked the beginning of a shared commitment to learning, enrichment and community values that still define the library today, Vargas said.

The library's social media coordinator, Lindsey Grugul, is using information like that as part of "Flashback Friday," a yearlong series of weekly posts and videos about the district's history.

Displays at the libraries will soon be going up to promote "Our Library's 150-Year History: A Historical Review with Phil Aleo," a program that will be held from 6

to 7 p.m. Wednesday, April 22, at the Rakow Center, 665 Barrington Ave., Carpentersville, not far from the Dundee Library.

Vargas said one of the topics Aleo will cover is how Dundee Library started with a collection of about 50 books in English and German collected through the efforts of Dr. E.F. Cleveland and Fred Haverkamp, civic leaders at the time.

Other topics will include the role alcohol played in the library's early history, the impact of the Great Chicago Fire of 1871 and the various spots where the library has had locations.

"The library has moved eight times over its 150-year history. Its

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CARPENTERSVILLE

Man faces charges in apartment blaze

Courier-News

An Indiana man has been charged with aggravated arson for his role in allegedly setting a fire that destroyed a Carpentersville apartment building and displaced 24 families, the village's interim police chief said.

The fire started about 12:30 a.m. Nov. 29 in a first-floor apartment of a building in the Meadowdale Apartments complex, 104 Meadowdale Court, with the blaze ultimately spreading to the roof, fire officials said at the time.

Carpentersville police detectives, working with the Indiana Department of Corrections and the FBI's Chicago field office, arrested Garland H. McGhee, 30, of Gary, Indiana, on Wednesday, according to a news release issued by interim Police Chief Kevin Stankowitz.

McGhee has been charged with four felonies: aggravated arson, residential arson, arson to real and personal property, and criminal damage with fire or explosives in which damage exceeded \$100,000. Aggravated arson is a class X felony.

No information on a possible motive or how investigators linked the case to McGhee has been released.



An Indiana man has been charged with aggravated arson for allegedly setting a fire that destroyed a 24-unit Meadowdale Apartments building in Carpentersville, police say. CARPENTERSVILLE FIRE DEPARTMENT

Historic blacksmith shop in Geneva to remain for now



The landmarked structure at 4 E. State St. in Geneva, seen Monday, was formerly part of the Mill Race Inn. MOLLY MORROW/THE BEACON-NEWS

Council denies appeal to demolish Mill Race structure

By Molly Morrow
Aurora Beacon-News

The landmarked structure at 4 E. State St. in Geneva — part of what was once the Mill Race Inn — will remain for now, after the Geneva City Council on Monday denied an appeal seeking its demolition.

On Monday, the City Council was tasked with whether to overturn a ruling of the city's Historic Preservation Commission in December that denied a request by Dave Patzelt, president of Geneva-based

Shodeen Group, for demolition of the building.

Following a lengthy discussion on Monday evening, the appeal that would allow for demolition failed in a 6-4 vote, with council members Martha Paschke, Mark Reinecke, Anaïs Bowring and William Malecki voting against it. A supermajority of seven or more council members would have been needed to overturn the Historic Preservation Commission's decision.

The City Council vote on Monday is the latest in what has been years of discussion about the structure, previously part of the Mill Race Inn restaurant, which operated from the 1930s until it shuttered in 2011.

Though perhaps most famously a part of the popular restaurant, the

building existed long before that. It first housed a blacksmith shop in the 1840s, but, before it became part of the longstanding Geneva restaurant, housed a number of other businesses too, such as a wagon manufacturing and blacksmithing shop, a cooperage and a carriage painting shop.

The site was later acquired by the Shodeen Group, and demolition of most of the property began in 2016. The 1840s-era limestone sections, at the time, were to be evaluated as to whether they could be considered a historic landmark or be incorporated within any future development of the property.

Since then, what remains of

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TODAY'S WEATHER



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Complete Chicagoland forecast on back page

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