

Butler Eagle

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Theater plans Walk of Fame Sidewalk to list names of donors

ZELIENOPLE — The Strand Theater will have its own Walk of Fame in front of the building to honor those who contribute to its restoration.

The borough council Monday night approved the modified sidewalk honoring charitable donors.

Ron Carter of the Strand Theater Initiative, the group working to restore the theater on Main Street, said initially the Walk of Fame will cover the two sidewalk sections that had to be removed during construction to make water and natural gas line improvements.

The design will be a stamped-template into the concrete in a star design to mimic Hollywood's Walk of Fame.

Carter hopes later to extend the Walk of Fame along the entire sidewalk in front of the theater.

Although council members were united in approving the sidewalk change, they questioned their solicitor Matt Racunas about future requests by downtown merchants for modifications of sidewalks.

Racunas said borough ordinances spell out the technical requirements such as size and required materials, but not aesthetic items such as color of pavement or design.

However, any business would have to apply for a permit, just as the Strand Theater did, before making a sidewalk modification. And that change would have to be brought before the council for approval, he said.

The Strand restoration project has been a vision of Carter's to turn the theater into an arts and cultural center.

The theater's marquee and facade already have been replaced since Carter and the Initiative started working to renovate the theater in 2002.

When completed, the theater is expected to host films, speaking events and performances for small groups.

The building's interior is being gutted, with new seating and wiring installed.

Carter's goal is to replace almost everything inside the theater except the stage, allowing it to hold events for the first time since the theater closed in the mid-1980s.

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