



# Construction work begins for visitor center

**W**ork has begun on the initial stages of construction of the new gateway to the Monticello mountaintop, the

Thomas Jefferson Visitor Center and Smith History Center.

Designed to provide a wide array of new and enhanced educational, exhibition, service, dining, and shopping features in one location, the 42,000-square-foot facility will be built at the site of Monticello's existing Ticket Office and Shuttle Station.

"The Thomas Jefferson Visitor Center and Smith History Center

will create an environment of learning, discovery, and convenience that will enhance every visitor's experience," said Thomas Jefferson Foundation Vice President Kat Imhoff. "We realize there may be some inconveniences during the construction process, but we are very, very excited by what the result of this work will be."

The first step in construction was the installation of a wastewater treatment system to serve the new center. Recently completed, this system uses the latest technology to purify and dispose of wastewater using a fraction of the land needed for traditional septic systems.

In early September, upon completion of tree-protection and sediment control measures, land near the Monticello exit road was cleared and graded for new parking lots. Before the new paving was put down, dozens of 500-foot-deep



**An architect's rendering of the new center's courtyard area.**

Ayers, Saint/Gross and TF

## *This Issue's Other Stories*

-  CARETAKER
-  DAACS JAMAICA
-  EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
-  FICKLIN
-  INTERNATIONAL FELLOWS
-  JACK JOUETT
-  JEFFERSON STATUE
-  MONTALTO RAZED
-  NEVIS RESEARCH
-  NEWS & NOTES
-  PRESIDENT'S LETTER
-  TICKET RESERVATIONS
-  WEBBY AWARD

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE.

© Thomas Jefferson Foundation, Inc., 2006

Monticello



## Visitor Center

CONTINUED, PAGE **TWO**

wells were bored for the new center's ultra-efficient ground-source heating and cooling system.

The first significant change in Monticello's operations will occur in December, when ticket sales and the shuttle bus stop will be moved to temporary facilities located in the upper part of the visitor parking area, safely away from the construction area. New pedestrian paths will be created and marked, the perimeter of the construction site will be secured with wood fencing, and signs highlighting the features of the new center will be placed throughout the area. Then additional underground utilities will be installed, the shuttle station will be demolished, and excavation for the new center will begin.

Designed by Ayers/Saint/Gross, Architects + Planners of Baltimore, the Thomas Jefferson Visitor Center and Smith History Center will be composed of five pavilions organized around a central courtyard. Intended to blend into the landscape, the center will be constructed of natural materials such as fieldstone, brick and cedar, and will include "green" roofs and other environmentally sensitive elements.

The five central components of the facility will be:

- A reception pavilion, the area for visitor information and ticket sales.
- A two-story exhibition pavilion, with spaces for both permanent and changing exhibitions.
- The two-story Smith History Center, with facilities for Monticello's education programs – including three classrooms and the Griffin Discovery Room, a hands-on activity center – on the lower level and a multipurpose theater on the courtyard level.
- A café building, offering enhanced food and beverage service with indoor and outdoor seating.
- A retail pavilion, housing a museum shop and a garden shop with indoor and outdoor spaces.

The complex also will feature a freestanding education pavilion, to be situated a short distance away and connected by a woodland path. This heated and furnished building – Monticello's first all-season, indoor-outdoor educational facility – will be suitable for a wide variety of uses.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE.



## Visitor Center

CONTINUED, PAGE [THREE](#)

The center itself is scheduled to be completed by the fall of 2008. Related work, including construction of a greenway that will connect the center with Monticello's African-American burial ground, will extend into 2009.

Barton Malow Company, a national firm with an office in Charlottesville, is the building contractor on the project. The landscape architect is Michael Vergason Landscape Architects, Ltd., of Arlington.

Fund raising for the Thomas Jefferson Visitor Center and Smith History Center has begun with a goal of \$53 million, \$10 million of which is for endowment.

**COMMENTS? [newsletter@monticello.org](mailto:newsletter@monticello.org)**