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News Release

For Immediate Release

Zoo Breaks Ground on Tortoise Exhibit Building

The Springfield-Greene County Park Board will host a groundbreaking at 10 a.m., Wednesday, Aug. 3 for the Tortoise Exhibit Building at Dickerson Park Zoo, 3043 N. Fort Avenue.

The approximately 1,070-square foot building will house the four Aldabra Tortoises and allow visitor viewing of the animals through glass windows while the tortoises are housed inside the facility during winter months.

The exhibit rooms will have water pools and a sand pit for potential egg-laying by the females. The floors will be covered by a special rubber cushioned flooring for the comfort and health of the animals. A structural pyramidal skylight will provide more natural lighting in the tortoise exhibit and enhance the appearance of the building itself. The building will connect to the tortoise exhibit yard.

The project is a part of Dickerson Park Zoo's last and newest master plan. The architectural firm of H-Design Group prepared the plans and specifications for the project. Masonry Structures, Inc. is the general contractor. The approximately \$300,000 project is part of the 2006 voter-approved 1/4-cent Countywide Parks Sales Tax.

Aldabra Tortoises, along with the different types of Galapagos Tortoises, are the world's largest land turtles. The Zoo's two larger tortoises are males and weigh more than 500 pounds each.

For more information, media contact: Melinda Arnold, Friends of the Zoo Public Relations and Marketing Director, 417-833-1570.