

DREAM TAKES SHAPE

After years of planning bridge, park under way

Bob Folgate and Doug Dawson measure the distance that Andy Staver needs to drive the crane onto the barge Thursday afternoon in Rock Falls. The crane will float on the barge while building the pedestrian bridge on top of the upper dam between Sterling and Rock Falls.

Paul Colletti/
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STERLING — For about 16 years, officials in Sterling and Rock Falls have pushed for the construction of a \$1.3 million pedestrian bridge spanning the Rock River along Sinnissippi Dam.

For almost as long, Sterling Park District officials have imagined a park that would welcome pedestrians as they crossed the bridge into Sterling along a small peninsula near the Dillon Home museum.

Construction began locally on the bridge last week and could be completed as soon as late December, Sterling Park District Executive Director Larry Schuldt said last week; however, the park will face a small delay as officials work to renew an expired one-year permit from the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency to slightly alter the riverfront.

The land juts out into a rectangular peninsula at the Sinnissippi Dam and some of the water doesn't circulate at the base of the land, Schuldt said. The park district plans to put some permanent rock sediment to direct the flow of the river and eliminate garbage collecting at the peninsula's base.

"It should be a done deal. It's just a matter of doing all

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Projected riverfront park

The Sterling Park District released their initial sketch of the proposed riverfront park to be created this spring at Sterling's entrance to the new pedestrian bridge that will cross the Sinnissippi dam. The design is subject to change depending on how much money is available to build the park, park officials said.

