

# i play museum looks at options

James Cullum

2007 has been a year of networking for Jane Zatkowsky, and 2008 will begin her push to raise between \$5 million and \$10 million, and to convince a potential landlord to provide her with donated, rent-free space for the first few years while Springfield's i play Children's Museum gets off the ground.

It has been a tough year for children's museums in the region. The National Children's Museum, which closed in 2004, has had its opening at the National Harbor pushed back to 2012.

It seemed last year that the Children's Museum of Northern Virginia had a home in Loudoun County for its previously scheduled 2008 opening, but that museum's Web site now says, "We need a home!" and "We are in talks with developers in Fairfax, Reston and Loudoun and are getting excited about the prospects in all of those areas. However, if you know of a great place that you would like to see the museum, e-mail us at [info@cmnova.org](mailto:info@cmnova.org)."

With no space for the i play museum, fund-raising has not yet begun, Zatkowsky said.

"You can't get big money until you get a space," she said, "And I'm way too ethical to ask for money from people until I have an endgame. I don't want people to commit without something concrete in the future."

But Zatkowsky does have multiple properties in mind, the most promising being a multimillion dollar development in the works at Springfield Mall.

With a civic component in its plan, the revamp of the mall will need to draw children and parents to the area, Zatkowsky said, and is optimistic since the mall owner recently gave i play \$10,000 to create an arts festival for Mother's Day weekend.

"It's a good investment," Zatkowsky said of the space that would have to be donated. "It brings students into a mall that people have not frequented in a while."