

January 26, 2017

Phase 1 Feasibility Study Meeting #4 –Ilsley Public Library (IPL)

Present:

Library Staff: Kevin Unrath – Library Director, Chris Kirby – Adult Services Librarian, Tricia Allen – Youth Services Librarian

Library Building Committee: John Freidin, Victor Nuovo, Barbara Doyle Wilch, Ken Perine, Nancy Malcolm, Catherine Nichols, Chris Watters, Kathleen Ramsey, Dennis O'Brien, Bob Champlin, John Barstow

GBA: Diantha Korzun, Gregg Gossens, Tom Bachman

OLD BUSINESS:

- 1.5 Location and feel of entrance to the library is critical in whatever scheme is pursued. The entrance should “give you a hug” once in - it should be gracious and inviting. If possible there should be one entrance and exit used by all.
- 1.8 Because it is uncertain how libraries will function in 20 years space flexibility is critical in any redesign of IPL. The existing building is “cell like”, very hard to use efficiently and hard to reconfigure. An ideal design will not be constrained by lots of walls, fixed shelves, and low ceilings and will allow multiple uses in the same space.
- 1.9 Kevin indicates that the Essex Junction Library, which has all stacks on casters, allows a lot of flexibility as to how spaces are used. Shelves can be rolled to the outer walls leaving a large open space in the center used for different activities. The Hanover library also functions well and is designed for multi-use. Manchester library is a nice model for their Young Adults area – it has nicely arranged “hang-out” spaces that can be used a number of ways.
- 1.10 Youth Services does not have adequate and accessible shelving. More display and merchandising of books is needed. The areas designated for use by Youth Services should be a neutral design that allows “colonization”. Number of collections associated with Youth Services is stable and won't be increased.
- 1.11 Adult Services has an adequate amount of shelving but shelves are both too high and too low for contemporary library usage. 4' high shelves are ideal for viewing over. Number of collections associated with Adult Services is stable and won't be increased.
- 1.12 The basement meeting room (where meeting was held) is used daily and averages 12,000 users per year. Meeting spaces should be accessible for after hours use by the community and need access to restrooms and a kitchenette while maintaining library security.
- 1.13 Collaboration spaces should be located near the entry or adjacent to other noisy areas. Quiet work areas should be at the ends or edges of the library.
- 1.14 Chris indicates that the current Reference Room could be used more efficiently or differently.
- 1.15 Youth Services area often has 2-3 kids working on one computer so future computer areas should be able to accommodate this.
- 1.16 Kevin does not anticipate that IPL will make laptops available to the public. PC's will be standard. There are currently approximately 20 public PC's and that seems to be an adequate number.
- 1.17 Pre-literacy areas are typically aimed at 0-5 year olds. Their space is used for playing and learning. This area should accommodate up to 12 kids and 12 adults. One of Ilsley's goals is to get more pre-literate kids into the library. The space should be comfortable and inviting for young users and parents.
- 1.18 Preliminary additional space needs articulated include:
 - Additional spaces for quiet and collaborative users
 - Additional spaces for public computers
 - Additional dedicated spaces for teens and tweens
 - Additional spaces for pre-literacy programs (assumes for use by up to 12 kids and 12 adults)

- Additional storage spaces specific to Youth Services
 - Additional dedicated maker space (assumes for use by 4-5 people at one time).
 - Additional public and staff space specific to Youth Services
 - Additional large meeting space (larger than the one we meet in) with higher ceilings
 - Additional meeting spaces of varying sizes
 - Scattered reading spaces with comfortable easy chairs and tables.
 - Additional storage, maintenance and janitorial spaces
- 1.19 The Vermont Room should be acoustically separate from adjacent spaces, possibly with glass.
- 1.20 Comfortable and useable outdoor spaces are important to IPL that can be used for story time, casual reading or just relaxing. IPL users have indicated that they like having green space adjacent to the building.
Kathleen indicates that there might be an opportunity for the library to use the plaza in front of the town offices if that seemed appropriate.
- 1.21 John liked the creativity of H3 Hardy architects library projects and wants to encourage gbA to “think outside of the box”. IPL is looking for a design much more sophisticated and eye catching than a typical Vermont Vernacular approach. The design should captivate the imagination of all and draw people in.
- 1.24 All presented designs/approaches will incorporate green building technology, resourcefulness, and thoughtful material selection.
- 1.26 To the best of Kevin’s knowledge there has not been any testing done for hazardous materials on site. This work may need to be done in order to carry accurate budget figures to address hazardous materials= (asbestos, lead paint etc), if any.
- 2.2 Nick expects that there will be natural gas as a heating source in downtown Middlebury available by next year.
More than likely, any new mechanical system will use natural gas in lieu of oil and that is also the recommendation of the mechanical engineer. Solar, cold weather air-source heat pumps will be explored, also.
- 2.7 Draft structural report indicates that there are no obvious structural issues apparent in the building but if renovation dictated that shelving be moved to different locations those floors might need to be reinforced. Once a design direction is determined additional structural consultation will be needed to determine best way to attach an addition to the existing. Draft mechanical report indicates that there is probably little if any equipment that can be reused. Boilers have reached the end of their life, AC units are not properly functioning and there is no ventilation system in the building. Plumbing, electrical and tech wiring systems also need major rework.
- 3.1 Preliminary programming, with staff input, indicates that approximately 6600SF additional space is needed to be added to the existing 18,240SF. The preliminary 6600SF will change as design progresses. If parts of the building are removed or not used that amount of space will need to be added to this preliminary 6600SF number.

NEW BUSINESS:

- 4.1 Bob C. presented information on an alternative site for a new library facility that would also function as a community center. Benefits of a new site include at grade entrance, easy reconfiguration as needs change over the years and adequate parking. The parcel is 1.5 acres and is located less than 1 mile from downtown and is currently listed for sale for \$995,000.
- 4.2 John B. also expressed interest in looking at library solutions off site. A site within walking distance of downtown is crucial.
- 4.3 GBA reviewed analysis work previously presented to the committee.
- 4.4 The following approaches were presented along with a list of pros and cons:

Option “A” Link (involves removal of 1970’s addition)

- Two level addition over existing parking.
- Provides a community reading room that links addition to existing.
- Involves 2 elevators.
- Circulation between multiple levels made mainly with ramps.
- Restroom locations will be discussed with staff.
- Concern with not using the “front door” of the Ilsley.
- One circulation desk at point of entry/exit desirable.
- Separate wing has more perimeter and therefore more costly to heat and condition.

Option “B” Link (involves removal of 1970’s addition)

- Two level addition over existing parking.
- Involves 1 elevator.
- Circulation between multiple levels made mainly with stairs.
- Two circulation desks within eyesight of each other.
- Biggest issue is lining up floors to work with existing multiple levels.
- Courtyard could be interior (with a glass roof) or exterior.

Option “A” Courtyard (involves removal of 1970’s and 1980’s additions)

- Pinwheel scheme involves multiple levels.
- If pursued should investigate main entry from Main Street.
- Roof line relationships need resolution.
- Future flexibility is seen a problematic.

Option “B” Courtyard (involves removal of 1970’s and 1980’s additions)

- 4 level addition.
- Nice to bring more attention to historic library and “celebrate” it.
- A lot of glass to pull people in is critical.
- Concern that entry on the rear side does not involve or engage all of the community.

- 4.5 Kevin indicates 70% of patrons currently use the side entrance/exit for the library. Committee would like to see a solution that gives equal weight to a Main Street entrance.
- 4.6 Some of the committee members are concerned with a 3-4 level addition to the existing building and how that might dwarf the existing.
- 4.7 Relative costs (for comparison purposes only) were given including preliminary costs for an off-site solution. The off-site solution does not factor in site, permitting and site development costs. Once a design approach is determined a more detailed cost estimate will be provided.
- 4.8 Committee consensus is to investigate further the courtyard scheme Option “B”. Both link schemes feel too much like yet another addition. Courtyard scheme Option “B” has the most potential for future flexibility and could accommodate future expansions. GBA will investigate whether this solution could be accomplished with 3 levels instead of 4.
- 4.9 It is agreed that final solution will include an adequately designed large meeting space on site. The current meeting space is used a good deal for children’s activities and it would not work to have access to an off-site location. The current meeting space is probably the most used space in the community. The meeting space needs to be designed for multi-purpose use and will not incorporate any tiered seating or sloping floors. An adequately sized space with proper ceiling heights will offer the most flexibility.
- 4.10 Flexibility is key to final solution. No one can predict how a library may function in 20 years.
- 4.11 John F. summarized this evening’s discussions as follows:
- Solution must be fully flexible both inside and out. Lack of flexibility is the major concern with existing Ilsley facility.

- Main Street entrance/presence is critical.
 - Clarity on size and separations for young peoples' areas of the library is needed.
 - Define where comfortable seating is and how it would be integrated with stacks.
 - Define how natural light will be used in the solution.
 - Good sightlines to entry/exit are critical from control desk.
 - Cantilevering building over parking in the courtyard scheme should be investigated if the space is needed.
- 4.12 Possible library expansion into adjacent Theater and Ben Franklin spaces was discussed. Concerns were expressed that include: Taking those buildings off the tax roll; Existing floors may not align well with library floors; Horizontal distance between those locations and existing Ilsley.
- 4.13 It was suggested that the town planner attend the next meeting to update the committee on status of development on the adjacent parcel below the Ilsley.
- 4.14 Next steps:
- GBA will meet with cost estimator on site to tour existing conditions.
 - GBA will meet with Kevin, Chris and Tricia to discuss programmatic relationships in courtyard scheme.
 - GBA meet with committee (tentatively late in February) to discuss direction and development of plans.

Next Meeting: Building Committee Meeting: To be scheduled in late February. Note: Due to prior commitments Gregg Gossens is not available Monday, Wednesday or Friday afternoons so future meetings on Tuesday or Thursday afternoons is preferable.

These minutes are part of the official record. If any additions or corrections need to be made, please notify Gossens Bachman immediately for inclusion in the next meeting minutes.

Copies to: Kevin for distribution