

Overview of Ilsley Public Library Renovation/Expansion Planning

2007	Library Trustees form study committee which recommends possible solutions for space crunch. Plan not pursued due to limited funds and the logistics of building onto a historically significant structure.
2013 December	Library Trustees request that the plans for the new town offices include space for a children's library, as a way to manage space constraints.
2014 April	Select Board and Ilsley Trustees jointly create a seven-person Library Building Committee to assess Ilsley Public Library's space needs and obtain preliminary design options and cost estimates for necessary renovations and/or additions.
2014-2017	Building Committee holds meetings to study the future of libraries, identify challenges and needs of Ilsley's building, and to work with architects and engineers on library design considerations.
2016-2017	Building Committee holds two well-attended meetings for members of the public to tour the facility, listen to architect's findings, and give input into perceived needs
2017 March 21	Building Committee presents the Library Building Committee's recommended plan to the Select Board.
2017 June 27	Gossens Bachman architects present final draft of its feasibility report and design concepts to Library Building Committee.
2017 July 25	Select Board approves the Trustees' recommendation to award a contract for a capital campaign feasibility study.
2017 July	Library Director Kevin Unrath resigns. Library Trustees turn efforts towards hiring new Director.
2017 September	Library Trustees hold a public meeting to describe progress. Selectboard is updated.
2017 October	Library Building Committee disbands. Selectboard votes to approve the building renovation proposal, encourages Trustees to proceed, but does not commit to funding the project.
2018 January	Dana Hart is hired as Library Director
2018 January 18	Consultant Christine Graham discourages Trustees from pursuing a fundraising feasibility study until the town is better educated about the plan and public sentiment is more positive.

2018 June-October	Library Director Dana Hart and Barbara Doyle-Wilch conduct <i>Tell Me Tour</i> focus groups of 12 meetings with more than 100 individuals to assess public sentiment and gauge community needs and desires.
2019 January	Results of Tell Me Tours shared at public meeting.
2019 April 27	Trustees consider possible options for decision: a) move forward with the proposed \$10 million dollar project b) pursue a mid-range plan, or c) take a strategic pause while construction downtown is underway.
2019 Spring/Summer	Trustees seek to gather information needed to make their decision, especially information on the community's needs and appetite for a library renovation.
2019 July	Trustees meet with Ruth Hagerman, President of the Pierson Library Board of Shelburne, to learn how the Pierson expansion was accomplished using a small team of town and library staff.
2019 November	Trustees actively participate in downtown master planning process
2019 December	Board President Catherine Nichols, Library Director Dana Hart, and board member Joe McVeigh meet with Select Board Chair Brian Carpenter and Town Manager Kathleen Ramsay to discuss restarting the project, possibly through creation of a new town/library committee.
2020 February	Trustees vote in favor of considering alternatives to the plan presented in the Gossens Bachman feasibility report and recommended by the 2014-2017 Library Building Committee.
2020 March	COVID-19 shuts down face-to-face meetings. Library closes to public.
2020 May	Library staff develop a plan for phased reopening depending on local Covid conditions. Library reopens with curbside service. At board retreat, focus is on responding to COVID-19 realities rather than pursuing renovation.
2020 June-August	Downtown traffic patterns and access limited by rail/bridge/tunnel project.
2020 August	Final version of Downtown Master Plan is released.
2020 September	Trustees revisit key building needs from 2017 building feasibility study and create initial priority list.
2020 October	Town Infrastructure Committee postpones \$600,000 bond vote on needed Ilsley HVAC system to March 2022.
2021 February	Trustees vote to proceed with a revised vision statement for the renovation/expansion project. Library Director, Dana Hart, on leave for a four-month period.

2021 May	Library fully reopens to public while observing social distancing and masking recommendations.
2021 June-August	Trustees, with help of facilitator John Barstow, develop proposed vision plan for renovation/expansion project along with draft charge for a new design team.
2021 September	Trustees appeal to Selectboard to create a new design team to reengage with the renovation/expansion project.

APPENDIX 1

Selected Issues and Challenges with the Current Ilsley Library Building as developed by 2014-2017 Library Building Committee.

In the **HVAC systems**, the two failing heating systems (steam and hot water) need to be replaced. They do not heat or cool the building evenly. They both rely on fossil fuel. There is no mechanical ventilating system which results in poor indoor air quality. The 10 unreliable AC units are 15 years old. Many of the windows cannot be opened.

Ilsley has just two regularly available public **restrooms**, and they are in the basement, adjacent to the children's library. The fact that each accommodates only a single person leads to their being used for inappropriate purposes. Both toilets in are disrepair.

The foundation of the original 1924 building leaks, causing **water to seep into the basement**, where the children's library and community room are located. Engineers have indicated that workers need unobstructed access to the exterior of the original basement walls in order to prevent this leakage

The **elevator** is unwieldy to use, and unreliable.

The **children's library** is one of the most heavily used spaces in the building. Parents with strollers cannot access the children's library except by going down stairs or in the elevator, which is sometimes broken. The area is half below grade, suffers from dampness and mold, and has no ventilation system. Sightlines are poor for librarians to monitor children or adults. Librarians cannot see the entrance from outside. The only two regularly functioning public restrooms, often used by the general public are immediately adjacent to the children's room creating potential safety concerns.

Elderly users and individuals with children in strollers have difficulty using either of Ilsley's principal **entrances** from Main Street and opposite the municipal building. The Main Street entrance has 12 steps and a heavy door. In the winter, the front entrance is not used, because of the difficulty of keeping it clear of snow and ice. 70% of visitors use the side entrance, which is out of sight of staff, cramped, and uncomfortably close to the children's library. Library entrances and exits should always be within sight of at least one member of the Library staff so that visitors can be welcomed and monitored when they enter and when they depart.

The **community room** suffers from dampness due to leaks. Although it is often used to screen films there is insufficient height for full-sized images on the projection screen due to its low ceiling. People seated in the middle and back have difficulty seeing presentations. The space cannot be divided into smaller units to allow more than one event to happen simultaneously. The entrance to the community room is not within sight of a member of the staff.

Middlebury Community TV, located on the fourth floor has only a **single means of egress**, in violation of current building codes.

APPENDIX 2
Building Needs Prioritization by IIsley Board – September 2020

Lower numbers indicate higher priority on a 1-4 scale. Green indicates priorities voted most important.

	AVERAGE
CHILDREN’S SPACES	
Ensure that childrens' spaces have unobstructed lines of sight.	2.0
Ensure that childrens' spaced have natural light	2.3
Create four, distinct, age-appropriate, dedicated spaces for preschoolers, young children, tweens, and teens	2.7
Ensure that children’s spaces are above the basement level	3.3
ACCESSIBILITY	
Entrances are welcoming and accessible to all (including those in wheelchairs) and permit reaching main floor (i.e. circulation desk) without use of elevator	1.7
There is a grade level entrance at the rear parking area	2.0
Install an ADA-approved elevator	2.0
There is a grade level entrance at Main Street	2.5
The elevator should be centrally located	2.5
The elevator should be in sight of the circulation desk	2.5
Replace existing shelving in children’s area and adult stacks with shelving that is within easy reach of all users.	2.8
HEATING/COOLING/LIGHTING/WIRING/MOISTURE ABATEMENT	
Prevent water from seeping through the foundation into the basement and existing community room	1.5
Install an HVAC system that is reliable, cools and heats the building evenly, is efficient and environmentally benign	1.8
The HVAC system should include a building-wide mechanical ventilating system	2.2
Replace or repair existing windows that leak or do not open	2.2
Update and expand electrical and technological wiring throughout the building	2.2
Upgrade existing light fixtures with ones that provide better light and are efficient and reliable	2.3
BATHROOMS	
Create safe, modern, public bathrooms	1.2
Create 5 such bathrooms – at least one on each floor	3.0
Be sure each bathroom can serve more than one individual at a time	4.3

SPACE

Create additional work space for staff	1.7
Create more storage space	2.0
Create a building that is flexible enough to accommodate evolving programmatic developments	2.2
Enhance space for public computers	2.2
Create an assortment of small, semi-private spaces where one or two patrons can read quietly	2.3
Create a technology classroom or teaching computer / digital media lab	2.5
Create effective signage	2.7
Renovate the original 1924 building	2.7
Move MCTV out of the fourth floor so that it no longer violates state egress codes	3.0
Create a new staff kitchen	3.0
Convert current MCTV space into a meeting room	3.7
Create an additional three meeting rooms for 5-10 persons	3.7

COMMUNITY MEETING ROOM

The community meeting room should be free of moisture problems	1.5
The community meeting room should have a ceiling high enough to allow images to be projected without being cropped and able to be seen from all seats	2.2
The community meeting room should be fully wired for technology	2.2
Build a larger community meeting room	3.0
The community meeting room should be easily subdivided into three or more smaller spaces.	3.7