

Ilisley Library Planning Proposal

Components of planning process:

1. Education on “what we could become” or what makes an exemplary library?

To be completed from November 2014 through January 2015

- Collect readings, videos, etc. on exemplary libraries in program, community support or buildings for Board and Building Committee to study and reflect upon.
- Visit some exemplary libraries if possible.
- Create a list of attributes that are important to “great” community libraries

OUTCOME: Board, Director, Building Committee will explore the attributes of “great” libraries, reflect on what is important for Middlebury’s Ilisley Library and share a vision of “what could be” in the future of the Ilisley Library.

Kevin will identify readings. Readings and discussions will take place monthly.

2. Community Analysis:

A small committee of 3 or 4, including a staff member and Board member will meet with BDW to review Community Analysis Scan elements and determine collection of data strategy. The committee will meet weekly in Nov and Dec. to gather information. Kevin with Maria & John will appoint committee members. The first meeting should be scheduled during the week of November 16th, 2014. Subsequent meetings will be arranged as needed.

To be completed by January 23rd, 2015.

- Create profile of the community via existing information resources, survey information and interviews to include but not limited to:
 - Age, sex, ethnic and educational characteristics,
 - Birth, death and unemployment rates
 - Mix of business, agricultural, industrial and service sectors
 - Economic cycles
 - Institution, clubs. Societies, religious groups, traditions and history
 - Agencies, libraries, schools, newspapers, magazines, bookstores, radio and television stations
- Identify “gatekeepers” of community and interview them about how they get information. Names of those to be interviewed should represent diverse segments of the population including diverse ages, workplaces and socio-economic status. These “gatekeepers” should be well known to others

in their social or work group. Hopefully we will interview a group of constituents who can reflect the information gathering habits of their colleagues, friends and neighbors. I would consider church leaders, artists, business leaders, teen leaders, home schoolers, young entrepreneurs and telecommuters, just to mention a few. Kevin, Maria, John will identify the interviewers and arrange for the interviews to take place in December. BDW will develop interview questions.

- BDW will work with Kevin and others (?) during the last week in January 2015 to analyze and consolidate the collected information from interviews, community analysis scan and survey responses. The analysis will focus on identified needs of the community in terms of library service. This section may require a full day meeting.

OUTCOME: A broad picture of the Community and its members revealing community needs for library services. Identification of how their information needs are met or not; a clear understanding of the resources for the community and how they are working and an investigation of what daily habits of the constituents in terms of work, play and information gathering. Identify factors in the environment that may affect library services. A composite of the community's library needs from the "outside in".

Readings: www.lrs.org/public/ca_form.php Colorado Community Analysis Scan Form
polaris.gseis.ucla.edu/ewhitmir/sarlingandvantassel.pdf Article about community analysis in Denver Public Library System (a bit academic but interesting).

3. Library self-study

Kevin will take the lead in the self-study with assistance from the staff using a modified "Library Design Worksheet" by Rob Geisler.

To be completed by January 23, 2015.

- Self-Study would include staff perceptions of:

Building – age, condition, traffic patterns, signage, appearance, location, accessibility, parking and space use

Collections – use patterns, condition, customer requests (filled and unfilled), formats and depth and breadth of holdings

Staff – educational levels, length of service and job satisfaction, workload, need for training or continuing education, salary and benefit comparisons with other libraries

Management – efficiency and effectiveness of departments, administrative procedures, communication and networking

Budget allocation - adequacy, comparison with other libraries, analysis of allocating by service or budget category

- Observations of library use.
Random observations based on library space use during the month of December. Public spaces will be observed in terms of the question: How effectively are the spaces in Ilsley utilized by the public and staff?
Observations will follow the Sprawled (1980) “9 Dimensions of Descriptive Observation”:
 1. Space – layout of the physical setting, rooms, outdoor spaces, etc.
 2. Actors- the names and relevant details of the people involved
 3. Activities- the various activities of the actors
 4. Objects – physical elements: furniture, etc.
 5. Acts – specific individual actions
 6. Events- particular occasions, e.g. meetings
 7. Time- the sequence of events
 8. Goals – what actors are attempting to accomplish
 9. Feelings – emotions in particular contexts

After thinking more about this phase, I would like to discuss this further with you. I have some concerns about ethical study and transparency with staff and library users.

My recommendation would be to have me do the observations rather than a lot of different people. There are several reasons for this:

Staff would know the observer and they would be familiar with what is being observed and for what purpose. They should have given permission for the observation.

Given our short time frame, it would be difficult to find, orient and schedule different observers.

The observations by their nature will provide only antidotal evidence but my broad understanding of library services will provide a more objective perspective.

OUTCOME: A concise picture of library services from the “inside out”. This study will be overlaid with the community analysis for gaps and strengths and perhaps redundancies of service.

Except for the observations, this will primarily be the work of the library staff. BDW will provide overview of process to the staff, assist with collection of information and consolidation of report

To be completed by January 23rd, 2015.

BDW will work with small group to overlay reports and identify areas of strengths and weaknesses during the last week of January 2015.

4. **Strategic plan.** Identify “centers of excellence” and “centers for development”

Need to find the right nomenclature for this but points of focus in both strengths and weaknesses giving the resulting plan much flexibility in growth and development.

OUTCOME: A concise yet flexible list of focuses for programmatic maintenance, development and perhaps removal. This list should be vetted by the Library Board, and prioritized.

To be done February and March 2015

5. **Planning document prepared and published.**

To be done April 2015

6. **Plan combined with building analysis, funding needs will spark the exploration for financial support.**

Time Line Proposed:

Nov – Jan 2015

Community Analysis

Library Self Study

Education on “What comprises a “good” library

Feb– April 2015

Identify “centers of excellence”

Prioritize

Publish

May 2015 ---

Building, staffing and financial considerations vetted