

Ilsley Trustees' Report to Selectboard 9/26/17

Sept. 13th meeting: excellent, thoughtful discussion; superbly moderated by Ken Perine; everyone learned something.
FPF.

From Trustees & Building Committee

- No architectural or structural change in 30 years.
- Three and half years work – 30 LBC mtgs.; 20+ Trustee's; countless hours by staff.
- Trustees developed new Mission Statement and Long-Range Plan
- Despite Internet and digitation, circulation has doubled since 1988.
- 170,000 persons/year come into Ilsley.
- First in VT among libraries with comparable budgets in visits, circulation, program attendance, computer usage.
- 2007 space study found IPL needed 5500 feet. Proposal is for 6500.
- Children's area: too small -- no dedicated space for teens or preschoolers – little natural light, no ventilation, threat of mold, 15 steel posts. 17 steps from unobserved entrance.
- Considered expanding CHILDREN'S LIBRARY into Community Room or moving it into adult stacks and reference/reading room of '88 addition but even then would be 1200' (24%) short.
- HVAC – inefficient, ineffective, due to fail, no mechanical ventilation.
- Community Room: very heavily used; too small, too low, unobserved entrance, inflexible.
- End-of-life elevator – that staff doesn't use it for fear of getting stuck between floors.
- No restrooms on 1st or 2nd floors. Two basement restrooms misused and deteriorated.
- Front stairs: inaccessible for seniors and parents with strollers; treacherous in winter, very heavy door.
- Adult stacks too high and too low for many to reach.
- Computer users must work in area where they interfere with other users.
- Hired engineers: our bldg. is sound, but structurally inflexible. HVAC, elec., technology, plumbing failing/outdated.
- Received proposal to save Garden.

- *Met with social service orgs., seniors, elem., teens, school admins..*
- *Toured five recently renovated or built libraries.*
- *Community survey – written and on-line; 300 replies. Greatest concern; children's areas.*

- *Sent RFQ to 15 architectural firms; interviewed four; selected Gossens Bachman of Montpelier.*
- *Held packed public meeting with tours, discussion, recommendations: HVAC and CHILDREN'S LIBRARY.*

From Tom Bachman

- Limitations of IPL's small lot.
- '88 addition cannot be re-configured and lacks sufficient space for CHILDREN'S LIBRARY.
- Low ceilings in '77 and '88 obstruct re-wiring, new HVAC.
- Proposal meets all needs of Trustees & LBC
- Cannot be built in incremental stages.
- Floor plan is merely an illustration of one way to accommodate all functions. No decision on where any activity will finally be placed. (E.g., children's library, reading areas, stacks, staff offices).
- Exterior –no choice of materials or design has been proposed.
- Wing designed for maximum flexibility to accommodate future changes in library services.
- So efficient that Net Zero that can readily be done.

From Audience

- Want Net Zero and solar power.
- Some said it seems to cost a lot and asked how it will affect taxes. But no one objected to removing '77 and '88 additions or to library's needs.
- Many offered support. The needs are clear and the plans look good.
- Some thought staircase "too grand" or too much open space.
- Have to do a powerful public relations campaign.
- Ilesley is not only Middlebury's library. Adults and children from surrounding towns also depend on it. IPL provides free programs and meeting spaces to all regardless of residence. IPL only charges to check out materials. [Half young people in summer program are not from Middlebury]
- Middlebury should seek input and support from the surrounding towns.
- Covered parking for bicycles.
- Create a Middlebury Welcoming Center within the library.
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- Build the ultimate library-of-the-future and get a national foundation or corporation to underwrite it.

LBC and Trustees have unanimously endorsed the goals and vision proposed in the report you received from our architects and me on August 22. Our goal is to break ground by 2023 or '24 to honor the 100th anniversary of our original building.

Now we need your support and help. It would be unrealistic and probably inappropriate to proceed without you. Either we go ahead together or put this project aside.

It matters when the Selectboard acts, because IPL is in process of recruiting a new Director, and the skills needed by that Director will be different if the project goes forward than if it does not. We hope you can make your choice soon.

If we proceed, Ilesley we will need a Director with skills, not usually called for by such a position. Among them, abilities to:

- Plan, create materials for, and lead a successful public education campaign.
- Run a major fund-raising campaign.
- Personally solicit very large private gifts.
- Lead the process of selecting and negotiating with a general contractor.
- Make countless decisions with architects, contractors, suppliers, and subcontractors.
- Enable staff to cope with major change and assume new responsibilities.
- Inspire public to accept the inconveniences of temporary reductions in services, meeting spaces, and programming.
- Advocate for voter approval of a town bond.
- Relocate collections, furnishings, and equipment; temporarily reduce library programs; and do without Community Room.
- Move back into library and determine how best to utilize staff.

- **On the other hand, if Middlebury prefers not to go forward at this time, the Trustees can select a new Director who has only the usual skills for such a position.** We'll all have a lot more free time... but we'll be taking **SOME RISKS:**

- Inadequate, unsafe facilities for children.
- Inefficient AC and heating system that is expensive to maintain and may suddenly need to be replaced: \$600,000-\$700,000.
- A tired elevator that also may suddenly need to be replaced.
- Insufficient, deteriorating restrooms and failing plumbing in the basement.
- Unobserved entrances that may need to be protected.
- Meanwhile, the public's need for library services will not go away, and costs will probably rise.
- How would an outdated library affect the area's ability to attract new businesses, residents, and highly qualified employees for our hospital, businesses, professional firms, banks, and college?

We hope you will endorse the following goals and join us in a public education campaign. In particular:

- Obtain input and support from surrounding towns.
- Move and expand CHILDREN'S LIBRARY with dedicated spaces for preschoolers and teens.
- Create two accessible, safe entrances within sight of staff.
- Install a new HVAC system.
- Build a Net Zero facility.
- Install a new elevator.
- Add and improve restrooms.
- Relocate computer space.
- Make adult shelving accessible to all.
- Restore 1923 building.
- Create a larger Community Room that can be subdivided into smaller spaces when needed.
- Improve wiring for technology and electricity.