

NOTE: Answers are not quotes, but summations or interpretations of two-way conversations.

- **Your background, pre-Ilsley**
  - A. Undergrad work at University of Virginia. Moved to Middlebury for job teaching at college and to practice, fell in love with the town during visits in college. Met Architect Partner Steve Kredell in grad school and started practice here.
- **Your background with Ilsley project.**
  - A. Member of the 2014-2017 Library Building Committee from inception or near-inception to conclusion of Round One.
- **What, if anything, in your opinion went wrong with the previous initiative?**
  - A. The architects followed the clear charge of the Library Building Committee to develop the BEST solution to the program and listed deficiencies without any budget cap: don't hold back. For a different outcome, the Design Advisory/Building Committee might consider setting a \$ target or scope for the architects to work with that they believe is DO-able. If this approach is not taken, the results will be the same: a budget perhaps out of reach of what the citizens are willing to shoulder. Architects will respond to their clients' set parameters.

**Q. What about the communications process? Should that be re-examined?**

- A. The citizens certainly seemed to be well-informed and involved throughout the previous design period, and from the beginning. John Freidin was responsible for updating the Selectboard on the project status by frequently attending meetings and providing a report. The final design presentation with \$ figure was not an isolated update to the Selectboard.

Also, there were negative reactions to the "design" as it was published. This can become an unfortunate consequence of presenting only a single option, if the public assumes that the single option is all that is possible. The basis for the programmatic design was actually sound, and various design concepts and options were presented at multiple meetings open to the public. A well-attended public "ideas" meeting/design charrette also took place with the architects and building committee.

- **What should be done differently this time?**
  - A. Perhaps some of the real work that happened to examine alternate solutions should have been part of the final presentation, to bring the community along through all the explorations to the conclusion. There were at one point at least 6 block diagram considerations in play. Out-of-downtown solutions were considered briefly, as was connecting to EDI site designs also being developed during the same time period, or sharing outdoor spaces with EDI designs. Better utilization of the Ben Franklin or Marquis Theater buildings was also conceptually discussed, including connecting the IPL to them, or even using some of those spaces for library or other community functions, such as a "maker spaces."

Also, cost and scope targets should be considered as part of the RFP.

○ **What are the pros and cons for the various delivery methods for this project?**

Traditional architecture in conjunction with Construction Management seems a good approach. Design-Build was considered briefly, at most, last time.

**Fee structures for architects...**

Architectural fees are divided slightly differently from firm to firm. At McLeod Kredell Architects, we typically allocate 80% for pre-construction activities (Schematic Design, Design Development, Construction Documents about 1/3 each) and 20% for construction activities – Bidding and Construction Contract Administration. *Ed Note: the fee overall percentage of construction cost is typically based on the complexity of the project type, and is higher traditionally when renovation is part of the scope, as there are more unknowns.*

○ **How do we best go about cost monitoring and containment?**

A. Construction Management could certainly be considered as a viable option this time. Naylor & Breen currently provides those services for numerous Middlebury College projects, working with architects to complete the team.

John believes gbA did have professional assistance with their cost estimating, but that should be verified directly with gbA.

○ **In your opinion, is this the right building / site for the Library?**

A. A lot of community love and respect is certainly accorded to the oldest iconic part of IIsley—the 1923 building. It is an anchor for the landscape of downtown, because of its prominent position on Main Street.

○ **What was behind the decision process to abandon the two more recent additions?**

A. The 1977 addition to achieve ADA access to multiple levels is likely no longer compliant with current ADA guidelines. Also, it has no sense of entrance. ADA has now evolved to more of a “Universal Access” approach, so just providing access into the building somehow—side door/back door—is no longer the goal.

The 1988 addition has many aspects that made removal the best course of action, including structural limitations to use, envelope conditions that are presumably lesser than current standards, and aesthetics that have varying degrees of local support. Water intrusion into the original building is not the only factor indicating removal as a reasoned solution. Removal of the 1988 addition also allows for a public, universally accessible entrance on the front of the building facing Main Street.

○ **How was parking considered or NOT considered?**

A. Parking was considered under the library new addition, as part of the EDI initiative, and under a plaza serving both EDI and the library, connecting at the upper parking lot level.

- **Why gbA – their strong points? Weaknesses. Describe the selection process.**
  - A. John Freidin expressed a strong desire for a “great design.” Architects were considered with national reputations for library design, many of whom were from other locations, like NYC. gbA was local by comparison, and demonstrated the capacity and experience to handle the project nicely.

gbA’s fee structure was also dramatically more reasonable than the big NY firms. The committee’s original budget target at 25K (as I recall) was increased to 44K to cover their fees proposal. The feasibility study and all the efforts that went into completing it represent a genuine value at that price.

- **DISCLOSURE:**

*John McLeod pointed out, to ensure total transparency, that about 2 years ago—after the Ilsley project study had been completed for a while—an “informal alliance” was initiated between McLeod/Kredell and gbA. It is not a formalized partnership, but they do collaborate comfortably when projects seem to call for collaboration. Steve Kredell is the primary partner involved with this alliance. It allows for staffing up or down to occur depending on incoming project sizes from either firm. gbA has a staff of 7 in Montpelier, while MKA has 3 full time and 2 part-time staff.*