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Ilsley Library Space Forum 11/10/16

1 message

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Fri, Nov 11, 2016 at 6:02 PM

To: kevinunrath@gmail.com, jf@vbt.com

The planning forum on November 10, 2016 highlighted the needs of the Ilsley Library. Paramount issues include: mold in the basement area, line of sight issues, need for natural light and more room for books.

The library building was constructed in 1923 and has served the community well for 93 years but a lot has changed since then. Now the Ilsley is a community meeting space and encompasses many local groups and activities along with computer and information components that indicate a major change in building layout. Also the Ilsley building is in need of major replacement of all mechanical systems including heating, AC, elevator and sprinkler system. In addition there are drastic issues with mold in the basement that make the area very undesirable. Parking for the library is difficult and may become even more of a challenge in the future. No one knows for certain what the needs of the Ilsley may be in 50 years so the best approach might be to have a basic format that is open with areas of usage defined as required.

The challenges facing renovation of the present building range from a structure that now has four floors to an ideal format with one or two floors. This open format would facilitate important issues including having services like information technology on one level rather than the present three levels. Also with line of sight issues addressed along with natural light which is an important psychological component and an at grade entrance.

Rather than renovate the existing building it might be ideal to have an entire new structure either at the present location which might include purchase of adjacent property or another location in town with the municipal gym as an example. A possible location might be the open area near the ice skating rink or the elementary school. It is very important to consider that the new building should be designed to serve the community for 50+ years.

Note that the location of the present building on Main St. is an enhancement to the town but it is important to look forward and consider all options on building location. The mission of the building has changed from a lending library to include a community center with many activities requiring meeting spaces for patrons to enjoy and interact. A building at a new location would hopefully solve the parking problem and provide solutions for items discussed at the forum on 11/10/16.

I SUGGEST THE OPTION OF A NEW BUILDING BE CAREFULLY CONSIDERED BEFORE ANY PRELIMINARY ARCHITECTURAL PLANNING IS INITIATED

Thanks for your consideration.

Bob Champlin

PS As a side issue I suggest a car drop off book deposit be provided on the future design. Also I do not feel a solar electric car station needs to be part of this project as there is a station for 5 cars in Frog Hollow and another station being built at the Marble Works. Another suggestion is to discuss Ilsley use and expenses with neighboring towns.

Comments for Library Building Committee Meeting January 26, 2017

John Freidin wanted me to keep my comments short as there is a full agenda tonight.

I have indicated at the last meeting of this committee that the perfect new building would really be a community center with a library function and that an at grade entrance with central reception desk with view corridors to as much interior space as possible would be ideal.

Also that the building would be designed to allow for reconfiguration as required as time went on.

Another factor is adequate parking. In the present downtown location it is very difficult to find a parking spot during the day, This parking problem will become more severe as building use increases as it had done in the past.

With these factors in mind I did a very preliminary overview of possible building locations outside of the town center. Kevin indicated that Manchester, VT relocated their library about one mile from downtown with good results.

I tried to find possible locations and looked at:

1. Area by the ice skating rink. There is room there but the location is out of the mainstream traffic.
2. Area by the new Middlebury Municipal Gym. This area may not be adequate to support a project of this size.
3. Area by the Middle School. Possible site but I do not know if this is available.
4. A 1.5 acre property about .9 miles from downtown with dimensions of 140'X 580' on Route 7 at the corner of Middle Road. This location is ~~on Route 7~~⁵ close to the High School and Middle School and would most likely allow for a building that would fit the needs of the community for many decades. There is a old building on the property that would be demolished. A certificate indicating there is no problem with soil contamination has been obtained. Zoning: Village residential/ commercial. Town water, sewer, power, natural gas(?) and internet service is available. For reference, price is \$995,000 and property is now available as offer from a retailer has been withdrawn.

Note: The above information is believed to be accurate but is subject to confirmation.

Bob Champlin
January 26, 2017

ILSLEY LIBRARY MEETING MARCH 16, 2017

The main criteria for an ideal Ilesley Library have been carefully considered by the Library staff and the Library Building Committee. The criteria are listed below:

- A. A welcoming at grade entrance with reception desk having sight lines to building perimeter..
- B. An open sunlit format that would allow for flexibility as Library needs change.
- C. Adequate adjacent parking to accommodate present and future library needs. Note that there are presently 12,000 annual visits to the Community Room alone and visits may increase with time requiring additional parking.

The architect and Library Building Committee are considering the Courtyard B option which involves removal of the 1970's and 1980's additions. This leaves the basic original structure and a proposed new structure of 3 or 4 levels which would be connected to the original Ilesley building.

This option has the advantage of retaining the grand original format and historic connection to downtown Middlebury but does not offer the ideal design criteria.

The main entrance for the Courtyard B Option would be on the parking area and is not as welcoming as a Main St. entrance.

The existing original Ilesley building is a historic landmark and offers wonderful architectural details and a very nice space to enjoy Library activities but does not lend itself to the desired design criteria.

The Courtyard B option would be new construction with 3 or 4 levels with stairways between levels rather than an ideal 1 or 2 story format. It would probably require staff at each level. This option would require demolition of the 1970 and 1980 additions and there would be a cost for renovation of the original Ilesley Building which would include new utilities, sprinkler system, possible structural work and possible asbestos abatement and the cost of new construction for a new 3 or 4 story addition. Note that this would be costly.

A new building in the close proximity to the town center would be convenient to patrons, offer an at grade entrance and an open and sunlit format with adequate parking. Other municipalities in Vermont have relocated from downtown and found that this works out very well.

I strongly suggest that a location in close proximity to the center of town be considered at this time. Possible locations might be the school district land near the ice skating rink or at the land at the intersection of Middle Road and Court Street.

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