

What's Up with the Library? Glad You Asked!

The Library Planning Committee (LPC) was charged by the Town Council with planning for library services and facilities for the next 25 years. We're also charged with meeting with the Town Center Committee, seeking public input, and considering lower cost alternatives than what the citizens voted on in November of 2012. Our committee—comprised of Town Councilors Frank Governali, Kathy Ray, and Jessica Sullivan, School Board Member Kate Hewitt, and Library Trustee Molly MacAuslan—has been busy!

In July, Committee members met with library trustees to discuss programming and services of today and plans for the future. We also met with community services personnel to discuss the possibility of more shared programs and services in existing or new facilities. There was interest and enthusiasm all the way around in this conversation and this is an area that deserves more exploration and discussion.

In August, the LPC and the Town Center Committee (TCC) held a joint meeting at the Jordan Conference Room to discuss the ways the library can contribute to enhancing the Town Center and the life of the community as a whole. The meeting minutes are available on the Town website (capeelizabeth.com), but in a nutshell while there was little sentiment expressed for keeping the existing building, the overwhelming response from the members of the Town Center Committee was that whether it's replaced or renovated, the Library needs to stay in its current location. Members of both committees also agreed that the Town Center could be enhanced if a walking path could be constructed connecting the Library to Ocean House Road.

Most recently, the Committee hosted a public input session at CEHS, where close to 70 people attended and gave us their thoughts about what the essential elements of the library are and would be in the upcoming years. We talked about children's, teen, and adult programs and services, books and computers, access to and planning for technology, and the need for community meeting space as well as for collaborative and creative spaces. We heard that folks are interested in an environmentally sensitive and efficient building, and we heard that while some elements of the existing buildings are important to some people in town, overall there's surprisingly little sentimental attachment to the building as it exists today.

If you weren't able to attend the meeting, we'd still like to hear from you! You can always email us at libraryplanning@thomas.lib.me.us, or look at the town or library websites where you'll find a survey to complete giving us your thoughts and feedback. As always, this is YOUR library so please let us know what you're thinking about its future!

www.thomasmemorallibrary.org or
www.capeelizabeth.com

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