

Focus Group Preliminary Meeting Minutes

The focus group, comprised of 7 members of the community,* met on Thursday evening, September 26, 2013 in the Maine Room of the TML. There seemed to be consensus around the inflexibility and inefficiency of the existing building, as well as around the importance of library programs and services driving the architectural programming for the library of the future located on the existing site. Many participants mentioned that the stacks, and book storage in general, should not drive the design of the project, nor should oversized, single-purpose areas be considered as important as multi-functional and flexible spaces that can be re-purposed in the future as needs change. Of lesser importance—the look of the building exterior and the style of the interior as long as it is welcoming and efficient.

Committee members were asked to name the most important and least important themes and concerns they heard at the August 29th public input meeting, and to provide their own ideas about the most and least important points to consider in a library renovation or new building project.

The most important themes/concerns participants heard at the August 29th meeting were: emphasis on programs and services (mentioned by 3 focus group participants), the importance of the library as a focal point in town (mentioned by 2 participants), the desire for a new building vs a renovated building (mentioned once), and cost (mentioned once).

The most important themes/concerns to the participants themselves were programs and services (mentioned 4 times), new vs renovation (mentioned once), building exterior/parking/grounds (mentioned once), and cost (mentioned once).

Least important to the community (according to focus group participants) were the building exterior/parking/grounds (mentioned 4 times), location (mentioned 2 times), and layout/fitup of interior space (mentioned once).

Least important to the focus group members were whether the building was new or newly renovated (4 times), the building exterior/parking/grounds (mentioned 2 times) and the building as a focal point of the community (mentioned once).

*Bollie Bollenbach, Trish Brigham, Marialice Wallace, Carrie Croft, Sara Lennon, Anita Samuelson, and Jo Chalot. Martha MacAuslan facilitated, and Kate Hewitt acted as recording secretary.