

Dover Library Board of Trustees Minutes
5/1/2008
Dover Library

Present: Alison Piper, Karen McKoy, Kate Haviland, Diane Sampson-Zenger, Cathy Mitchell, Charlotte Canelli, and Guest - Nancy Weinstein

Absent: Holly Collins

The meeting was convened at 9:30 AM

Director's report:

Ms. Canelli recommended approval of the Mix in Math raised growing bed program for the Children's Department, funded by a federal grant through Metrowest Region. All involved departments are in agreement with this exciting endeavor. The Board voted to approve the program.

The "people counter" is not functioning properly, particularly in the children's entrance, as has been documented by hand count. The Board agreed that an accurate count is critical for planning in the future; it approved the purchase of two new counters which are tamper-proof and which have an hourly log and the potential for a network interface at \$340 each, using funds from the State Aid account.

Library future needs and priorities:

Ms. Piper, as head of the Alternative Sites Subcommittee for the Community Center Building Committee, asked for the input of the Board about the proposal for a combined library/community center – both for an opinion on being part of such a facility and on what the upcoming needs are for any expansion of the library.

Ms. Canelli opened the discussion noting that the current library was built in 19689 and partially renovated in 1996-7. She has learned from discussion with state library consultants involved at that time that the square footage added was less than felt needed by those consultants. Ms. Piper noted that both the last town long-range plan and town master plan allude to possible expansion needed by the year 2010. Although the population of the town has remained relatively stable for the last few years, Ms. Canelli notes that library use patterns have changed considerably in the last ten years:

- Demographic changes include an increased number of active elderly and young adults.
- The concept of a separate space for young adults is popular.
- There are an increasing number of programs for adults as well as children.
- Lifelong learning has become popular.
- Technology (WiFi, Internet access) has created new users.
- Tutoring in the library space has become increasingly common.
- There are frequent conflicts for space requests between library use and other community users.

Ms. Canelli suggested field trips to some of the 20 newer libraries in the state to look at how they have addressed these changes – almost all have multiple meeting room spaces. None have been designed as "Community Centers" although there are a few with a combined Council on Aging function. Ms Weinstein asked if there are any studies looking at space needs for different size communities. The "silo" philosophy of current

town departments and difficulty in communication and collaboration for needs was discussed.

The discussion was then structured to address:

1. The Board's "Wish List" for the library per se:
 - Space – Library-centric (and maintaining our commitments to the MLS): for programming, technology use ("Information commons", training labs?), staff workspace and personal space (toilet and eating room), storage, display, shelf space and "active collection" space, area for the Friends?
 - Space – multipurpose: meeting rooms, kitchen for events, both community and fundraising, young adult use, tutoring, media use (DCTV?)
 - Space issues: secure, visually accessible, "green", noise-reducing spaces which are flexible and are ideally on a single floor, both for ease of maintenance as well as reduced staff needs
2. How we could address these desires as a Board for the Library without the concept of a combined space with other town departments:
 - Assess the consequences of "not acting" or of stop-gap measures to address needs
 - Assess what we can do without a building project to address these concerns
 1. Redo the community room – sound, HVAC, media
 2. Move Children's room upstairs for a single floor function
 3. Dedicate YA space
 4. Expand downstairs meeting room
 5. Expand collection space/display/shelving/multimedia
 6. Staff space renovation
 7. Friends dedicated workroom
 8. Assess traffic and parking and book drop and handicapped access
3. What are the issues of having a combined facility as a community center?
 - Operating costs – whose budget? how split?
 - Who will fund construction – state funds available for a combined facility?
 - Day-to-day management, staffing, security and programming decisions – how made, who controls, who pays
 - Grants available from corporations, alternative energy funding?
 - Fees charged for space use?
 - An overall supervisory body will be needed with representation from individual stakeholders (Library, Park and Rec, COA) as well as other decision-making bodies of the town (Selectmen, Capital Budget, Warrant?)
 - Wisdom of including a gym is debatable considering the space, cost, actual need and perceived use patterns. The Board overall is NOT eager to see a gym as part of a combined facility.
4. What does the library need to see happen if a combined facility is considered?
 - The core identity of the library must be preserved.

- Collaboration with sharing of social and community capital is necessary for this endeavor – losing the current “silo” mentality of town departments. Our current “Yankee self-sufficiency” leads to fragmentation and inefficient use of our resources.
 - A new managing board must be created with bylaws to create and run such a combined facility.
5. What does the Board need to do to address these concerns and report back to the town committee assessing community center building options on 5/28/08?
- Tour other new libraries in the state and talk to their members regarding mixed facility successes and failures.
 - Gather data to substantiate our proposed needs for space and expansion.
 - Determine how the Board wishes to interact with community center/combined facility committees.
 - Attain input from our own staff regarding these issues.

To address the points raised in #5 above, a subcommittee was formed to include Alison Piper, Charlotte Canelli, Karen McKoy and Kate Haviland (until her term expires 5/20/08). This Library Advocacy Subcommittee will create a library advocacy statement (to be approved at the 5/14/08 Board meeting) for the newsletter, website and the 5/28/08 meeting of the Alternative Sites Subcommittee for the Community Center Building Committee. This subcommittee will create a data-driven report by the fall making the case for library expansion.

The meeting was adjourned at noon.

Respectfully submitted,
Karen McKoy, Secretary