

**Wayland Free Public Library
Library Planning Committee
Minutes of Meeting on November 27, 2017
Raytheon Room, Wayland Public Library**

Present: Maureen Cavanaugh, Tom Fay, Aida Gennis, Neil Gordon, Ann Knight, Vicki LaFarge, Lynne Lipcon, Daryl Mark, Tim Marsters, Sandy Raymond, Barbara Scolnick, Rachel Sideman-Kurtz, and Thom White

Call to Order of the Library Planning Committee (LPC) at 7:05 p.m. by Chair Tom Fay

Mr. Fay stated that the meeting was being taped and to be mindful of speaking into the single shared microphone. He opened the meeting with an opportunity for public comment, reminding those in attendance that there would be ample time for comments later during an official agenda item of the meeting. Judy Ling, Concord Road, asked whether there had been studies about what a smaller expansion of 5 Concord Road might look like. Another member of the public commented on his desire to maintain the feeling of a Town Center and stated that the library in the center of the town supports that vision.

Minutes of Previous Meetings

The minutes of the meeting of October 19, 2017 were approved unanimously.

Discussion with members of the public regarding hurdles to a library expansion at the current library site, 5 Concord Road

Mr. Fay reminded those present that investigating all possible ways to expand at 5 Concord Road, while meeting the library's current and future needs, was a priority from the onset of the work of the LPC. The LPC recognizes the beauty of the building and the attachment residents feel to it. Finding a way to deliver modern library services that the community deserves at the current historic site was an objective of the committee. After much research by members and professional consultants, including visits to many area libraries, the LPC concluded that the site at 5 Concord Road could not be used to successfully apply for a state library construction grant as the site would not support the library's state-approved library program, which is a requirement of the application.

Mr. Fay asked LPC member Thom White, an architect, to speak to the problems of expanding at the 5 Concord Road. Mr. White outlined the site challenges, the most specific of which is Wayland's own Aquifer Protection District bylaw that defines the maximum impervious area permitted on any lot (30%) under any circumstances. The current library site is in significant violation of the bylaw. The aquifer protection threshold does not allow the building footprint to be expanded, even when considering combining both 5 Concord Road and 1 Concord Road (the upper parking lot). In addition, even if somehow the Aquifer Protection District bylaw could be waived, a building expansion over the current septic system to the north that complied with setbacks would add only 1,200-1,400 feet per floor. Expansion to the south where the current parking lot is would eliminate what little parking there is. With an increase in the library size, additional parking would in any event be necessary and would be required with state grant

funding. Constructing an addition over the parking lot to allow for parking underneath would block the view of the historic library's rotunda, which is probably the most cherished exterior architectural feature of the building. Even retaining the parking in the lower parking lot by building above it, the library would still be short of the expanded number of parking spaces required by the Board of Library Commissioners.

Mr. Fay then opened the meeting to give community members the opportunity to ask questions.

Steven Klitgord, 274 Concord Road, asked whether moving the historic freight shed across the street nearer to the Depot might be a possibility to create more parking for the library...or possibly using the shed for library functions. Mr. White said it might be possible to create 8-10 parking spaces if the Freight House was moved. However, the combined lots would still be in non-compliance with the Aquifer Protection District bylaw. Beyond the shed, the easement and the wetlands limit development of additional parking. Other possibilities might include making the pavement pervious, however the proximity to wetlands and flooding history of the site would likely limit the use of pervious pavement.

Judy Ling, 274 Concord Road, asked about the possibility of a waiver of the Aquifer Protection District bylaw. Mr. White said that waivers can be obtained for dimensional requirements of municipal buildings, but he thought it unlikely that a safety ordinance put in place by Town Meeting to protect its ground water would be waived. And with the absolute language in the bylaw, that it would be unlikely.

Steve Freundlich, 62 Cochituate Road, stated he served on the last Master Plan Committee and said that the plan advocated the development of a more vibrant, walkable town center and that the relocation of the library to another area in town was not consistent with the Master Plan. He suggested that people could park at alternative areas in the town center and get used to walking some distance to go to the library. He wondered what people wanted in a library that wasn't already here and questioned whether those things are really necessary, especially in the digital age. He stated that taxes are already high in Wayland and additional capital projects should be added with care.

Mr. Fay reviewed the process the LPC underwent to come to their recommendation of making a grant application for 195 Main Street.

Mrs. Gennis outlined the work of the LPC to come to their recommendation of 195 Main Street as the site for the new library. She also commented on the focus groups, multiple surveys, and studies that provided information about what people feel is missing in the current library and the space required to be able to provide services missing at the current library, most importantly services for youth of all ages, quiet study areas, larger program spaces, space for technology infrastructure, and adequate staff workspace. She stated that the clear deficiencies in the current building led the Library Trustees to form the LPC to study the deficiencies of the current library and recommend whether or not it made sense to consider applying for a state library construction grant to expand library services at the current site or a new site. She commented that the proposed site, while not in the geographic center of town, is sited in a densely populated area of town with a lot of walkers and bikers and is more accessible to school children, particularly those

in middle school, than the current building. Mrs. Gennis explained how the Trustees have been working with the Permanent Municipal Building Committee (PMBC) on this project since the Study began, as the PMBC is in charge of any plans for large construction projects in town. The PMBC worked with the LPC and Trustees to create matrices for evaluating prospective library sites and the very clear front runner was 195 Main Street. She ended her comments with a statement that the Library Trustees believe that if the library function moves to another space, the building at 5 Concord Road will continue to serve a civic purpose in the community. This early in the process it is not yet clear what that will be.

Mr. Fay stated that community-wide surveys done by the Trustees revealed a clear desire by the residents for the library to provide expanded services not currently available at our library that require more space. The size and high ranking of the competitive grant given to Wayland indicates that the state Board of Library Commissioners agrees strongly that there is a clearly demonstrated need in Wayland to expand the library. He also spoke about the continuing evolution of library services and the fact that people continue to use libraries in large numbers, including people in Wayland. While the uses of libraries change, they remain a central part of their communities. Mr. Fay also commented on the cost to the town of renovating/expanding the current library without a grant. This may eliminate the need to adhere to an approved library building program that defines the space needed for various functions. The opinion of professionals is that renovating the old historic building to meet current code requirements would cost residents at least as much as building a new building and, in the end, would provide much less functional space. He commented on problems with ideas brought up by various residents to acquire neighboring properties to improve expansion possibilities. He also mentioned that another idea raised is to use other buildings around town for library programs, and he suggested that former library director Ann Knight might comment on that.

Mrs. Knight stated distributing parts of the library program to different buildings in town ultimately weakens the overall program. She asserted that it is her experience and the experience of other staff members and librarians in other communities that it is extremely difficult to run and manage programs offsite in areas not under the jurisdiction of the library. This ultimately results in a diminution of library programs. Also, separating staff to work in different buildings decreases the efficiency, team effort, and collegiality of the staff and requires duplication of effort in many areas. Creating separate children's libraries has been tried in many communities without much success. The Board of Library Commissioners is very opposed to bifurcating adult and children's services. It is Mrs. Knight's opinion and that of the professionals of Mrs. Knight acquaintance that this is a bad idea. She also commented that a branch library doesn't make much sense in a community of only 14,000 people. Even larger area communities have moved towards closing their branches as this isn't an economically sensible model for service in small to mid-size communities although it clearly has merit in larger cities.

Mrs. Gennis then made some comments relative to branch libraries and the way they function in communities. She stated that a central library promotes community unity and cohesion. She also commented upon the duplication of staff and library collections necessary to run operations in separate buildings.

Ms. Ling wondered whether there existed an actual study that showed the cost of possibly renovating and expanding the current building. She wondered if that study was available to be viewed. Mr. Fay responded that although no formal study was done, the verbal opinion of the architects was solicited and that was their educated opinion. Thom White, a practicing architect, commented that the challenge to expanding the 1988 addition is that it would require a code upgrade to the existing building which would be considered a seismic upgrade and would most likely involve removing the entire interior finish of the original building and inserting a steel skeletal frame and then putting back all the interior finishes. This would be an extremely expensive proposition.

He stated that the cost per square foot of renovation dollars would most likely be twice that of new construction dollars. Also, due to the location of the current library near wetlands and its propensity to flooding, the site costs to try to comply with Aquifer Protection District bylaws and wetlands restrictions would be much more expensive than those at a new site without those challenges. In addition, waterproofing the stone foundation of the historic building is probably impossible.

Ms. Ling expressed dissatisfaction that a written study describing the costs of renovating the current library was not available. Mr. White reminded her that the LPC did not pursue a detailed study for expansion at this site because, due to the requirements of the Aquifer Protection District and the wetlands restrictions, it was not felt to be legally possible to expand there.

Mr. Fay stated that the LPC and Trustees have been heartened by the support at three Town Meetings for articles related to the studies of library expansion.

Mr. Klitgord expressed concern that the library building would sit vacant for years as the Weston Library has. He does not believe that the use of the library is growing to the extent it justifies a new building. He would like to see an analysis of what it would cost to upgrade 5 Concord Road to the extent possible. He believes that option should be presented to the public.

Alice Boelter, Lakeshore Drive, expressed an opinion that the current library building is in the real town center and that the new shopping area located at the former Raytheon site is not a town center, but a commercial development. She thinks it is important to reinforce the original town center of town by keeping the library at its current site. She suggested that if people find neighboring library facilities and the services they enable more appealing than what is found in Wayland, those people should use those other libraries paid for by residents of those other towns. She also expressed concern that the Roby Will may hamper reuse of 5 Concord Road and should be more carefully explored now.

Emily Myerow, 14 Red Barn Road, expressed appreciation for the work of the LPC thus far and stated that there are many different visions of what a library should be. She suggested that a central library is important for community building.

The meeting took a seven-minute break at about 8:15 p.m.

Discussion and vote permitting the LPC Chair to write and publish articles, comments, and information related to the library project, and the anticipated 2018 ATM Warrant Article regarding the library project, on behalf of the LPC

The LPC discussed how best to disseminate information about the library project from the present time until Town Meeting. It is important to communicate information about the project to the public and an efficient way to do that would be to give the chair authority to write and publish informative articles on behalf of the LPC. The Library Trustees have given that authority to its chair. A discussion ensued around issues of information, education, and advocacy. Mrs. LaFarge made a motion to give Mr. Fay the authority as set forth in the agenda item (above) and the motion was seconded by Ms. Cavanaugh. The vote passed unanimously.

Discussion related to fundraising and creating greater awareness of the library project

The LPC discussed how best to get information out about its work so far and about the current library's deficiencies. This is a difficult problem. An FAQ, information on the website, informative flyers, and other media efforts are planned. Mrs. Gennis reiterated the serious concerns that the state has about the current site..

Mrs. Gennis talked about efforts by the Trustees to hire a person to assist with fundraising. This has not yet occurred, but a search is ongoing. A general discussion about planning for Town Meeting ensued.

There were no topics not reasonably anticipated by the chair within the last 48 hours.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:04 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Ann Knight