

Library Articles at Town Meeting

Last fall, Town Meeting voted resoundingly (347-49) to fund a study to determine where and how we might expand the Library. We would like to update you on the progress of that study and introduce three articles related to the study that will appear at Town Meeting in April. We encourage you to vote Yes on all three.

What is the Library Planning and Design Study and how is it coming along? The study addresses challenges that have arisen over the years at our current library. Among those challenges are inadequate study, program, and technology space, crowding in the stacks and work areas, handicap access, parking, traffic, and flooding. The study is designed to investigate two options: (1) expanding the current library building at 5 Concord Road and (2) building a new library on a different site. The study is a required step in qualifying Wayland for a State library construction grant, which would pay about 45% of construction costs if the Town decides to go forward with a Library building project.

Over the past several months, the Library Trustees have worked with the Library Planning Committee and the Permanent Municipal Building Committee to hire an Owner's Project Manager (OPM) to oversee the study. We are now working with our OPM, John Sayre-Scibona of Design Technique, to select an architect and embark on the next phase of the study, which is the site review.

What is the site review and what sites are we looking at? The Trustees will consider several Town-owned sites for Library expansion, including the current site at 5 Concord Road. From these, one site will be selected for presentation to the Town and submission to the State for a construction grant. Among other things, our study team will look at the size, shape, and siting of the lots; suitable locations for a library with our space and program requirements; accessibility for vehicles and pedestrians; centrality in town; and zoning and conservation requirements.

The State requires that the Trustees control any site proposed for construction; that is, the property cannot be under another department's jurisdiction at the time a grant application is made. The Board of Library Trustees already controls the property at 5 Concord Road, and we will be investigating this site carefully. Two of the articles proposed for Town Meeting would allow the Trustees to control a different property if one of them proves to be a good site for a new Library. Both proposed properties are Town parcels not currently in use.

- Article 17 would allow the Trustees to control a portion of 195 and 207 Main Street.** These two parcels, totaling 6.7 acres, comprise the former DPW Highway Garage site and the adjoining lot on the north side of the Middle School driveway. These parcels are currently under the control of other Town boards.
- Article 18 would allow the Trustees to control a portion of 202 Old Connecticut Path.** This 26-acre parcel, a portion of the former Paine Estate, is currently undeveloped. This parcel is currently under the control of the Board of Selectmen.

Both of these parcels are larger than the Town would need for a Library, and it is likely they can accommodate more than one Town use. If one of these properties is chosen for a Library site, the Trustees would gain control over only the portion of the property needed for the new library building and its “adjacencies,” i.e., landscaping, parking, driveways, etc. The rest of the property would remain available for other Town uses.

Why do we have to vote on these transfers at Town Meeting? By law, all transfers of jurisdiction over Town land must be authorized by Town Meeting voters and then voted by the current controlling board(s), which have the final say over whether a transfer is made. The Trustees wish to emphasize that *they will only ask for a transfer of control if and when it is determined that an application for a state library construction grant will be made.*

Would these articles commit us to building a new Library at one of these sites? No. It is possible that the Library can be expanded on the current site. It is also possible that a different Town property might arise for investigation (though this would require a vote at a Special Town Meeting to transfer jurisdiction). It is also possible that the Town will undertake no Library expansion at all. These articles simply open the two stated properties to investigation.

What is Article 19 and what will it cost? Article 19 would allow the current library building at 5 Concord Road to be connected to the municipal wastewater system. This action would allow us to remove our aging septic system, which is located on the north end of the lot, and potentially expand right there. This is a very tight lot, limited on the east by wet land, on the west by Route 126, and on the south by our parking lot. Having access to land to the north of the building would give our architect more room to consider expanding our 115-year-old building.

Wastewater management for the current library needs to be addressed whether the building is expanded or not. Our current septic system was built 29 years ago, before Title 5 regulations went into effect, and there is little space available to site a new underground system. Article 19 provides a solution that would not tie the building to the constraints of a septic system.

The breakdown of cost for Article 19 is as follows: \$53,356 PILOB (a charge equal to FY2015 betterment for other users) + \$2,206 for FY2017 operational cost + \$400 in clerical charges. The requested sum, rounded to the nearest thousand, is \$56,000.

The Board of Library Trustees is submitting these three articles to the voters so the Town can conduct the best possible Planning and Design Study. By opening up several sites for investigation, we give our design team flexibility to come up with a strong recommendation. All three articles have received the support of both the Finance Committee and the Board of Selectmen. You can get more information about these articles from the upcoming warrant or by contacting me or any member of the Board of Library Trustees.

We urge you to vote Yes on Articles 17, 18, and 19.

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