

# **WAYLAND PUBLIC LIBRARY FEASIBILITY STUDY COMMITTEE**

## **Report to the Town – April 28, 2005**

### **Formation of Committee and Charge**

The Board of Library Trustees appointed the Library Feasibility Study Committee in the fall of 2003 to determine the feasibility of expanding the Wayland Public Library at its present site on 5 Concord Road. The spring 2002 Town Meeting voted the appropriation of \$40,000 for the library to plan for expansion. To implement the process, the Trustees chose a committee of 13 citizens (including all six Trustees), which was assigned the task of selecting an architectural firm to conduct the study and issue a report.

### **Committee Actions**

1. Reviewed the 50+ page Library Building Program developed during the previous year by the library director and staff. Their descriptions of what was needed in a renovated and expanded building were based on state guidelines and library standards, as well as the 2002 Report from the Library Planning Committee (appointed by the Trustees in 2001), which used focus groups and surveys to identify library needs and inadequacies;
2. Visited thirteen area libraries that had been recently built or remodeled;
3. Met with town departments concerned with land issues (i.e. Conservation, Engineering, Inspection) to learn more about site.
4. Hired an architectural firm.

In all its activities, the Committee worked closely with the library director, staff, and town and state officials to be certain that many points of view were included and areas of expertise were tapped.

### **Architect Selection**

The Committee developed a Request for Proposals (RFP) in the fall of 2003. Section One described the project, information on the scope of services required, the goal, fee, schedule, selection process, submittal requirements and a briefing session. Section Two contained the Library Building Program, with area-by-area descriptions, a chart of space needs and background materials describing existing site issues and design considerations. Also appended were floor plan sketches of the current building, site maps and the Final Report of the Library Planning Committee, April 2002.

The Committee formally issued the RFP in February 2004. In April, four finalists (of 17 proposals received) were interviewed and references checked. In May 2004, the Committee selected Lerner | Ladds + Bartels, Inc. of Providence RI to conduct the study.

### **Site Review and Design Process**

Meeting biweekly with the Committee, the architects proceeded from the initial study of the site and Library Building Program to the design phase of the project. During this phase, the architects and/or Committee members met with a number of town committees, including the Town Center Committee, the Board of Selectmen, the Historic District Commission, the Historical Commission, the Land Use Committee and the Council on Aging to gather input and

share information. At the same time, the Trustees were successful in obtaining a Special Town Meeting vote to extend conduit for the municipal wastewater sewer system closer to the library. Access to municipal sewage disposal, especially in view of land issues, is essential to future building on the current library site.

The architects identified three major design constraints associated with development on the current library site:

1. The property is in the Aquifer Protection District which imposes limits on the amount of impervious area (building, parking lots, etc.) that may be included on a site located within that District;
2. The property is abutted by a wetland, which results in the imposition of development limits set forth by the Department of Environmental Protection and the Wayland Conservation Commission; and
3. An expanded building would require a large number of additional parking spaces in keeping with municipal standards.

The architects' findings reveal that no building expansion would be possible within the confines of the current library property. Acquisition of the abutting property to the north would be required in order for the library to expand to meet its goals at its current location while staying within the restrictions of the Aquifer Protection Laws.

The architects compared the Library Building Program with widely accepted planning standards for public libraries and determined that approximately 23,000 square feet of assigned space would be needed in order to meet the library's program needs for the next twenty years. An additional 30-40% of the space would be necessary in order to accommodate bathrooms, mechanical spaces, storage, walls, etc. for a total of 30,000 to 33,000 square feet.

The initial design proposed by the architects had one large addition to the north of the existing building. The Committee did not find this design acceptable because the large building would not be in scale with the library site or Town Center. The architects developed an alternative "pavilion" plan, which calls for a series of smaller buildings (pavilions) connected by a spine with green space interspersed. This plan would retain the character of the original building and not overshadow it with a large structure. The pavilion plan requires additional square footage because the program is spread over a few buildings joined by spacious walkways (the spine). The result is a total of almost 42,000 square feet.

### **Cost**

A professional independent cost estimator has provided cost estimates ranging from \$13-\$16 million, depending on the design alternative. The estimate is \$11 million for a new building on a hypothetical site. The estimator recommended a 5% per year escalation factor.

### **Conclusions**

The architects concluded that it would be feasible to expand the library at its present site provided that: 1) the library is able to acquire the property to the north and 2) the Town is willing to grant a variance if needed to reduce the number of required parking spaces for

compliance with Aquifer Protection By-Laws. The Committee is also aware that feasibility will depend largely on the Town's willingness and ability to finance this project.

The Library Feasibility Study Committee formally accepted the Feasibility Study Report from Lerner | Ladds + Bartels, Inc. at the April 13, 2005 meeting.

### **Next Steps**

The Library Feasibility Study Committee voted unanimously to propose the following recommendations to the Trustees:

1. The Trustees provide a summary of the Feasibility Study at Town Meeting;
2. The Trustees present the Feasibility Study to the Selectmen;
3. The Trustees publicize the findings of the Feasibility Study;
4. The Trustees identify other Town sites to be studied for future library use as possible alternatives to the present site; and
5. The Trustees monitor the property to the north for possible purchase.

### **Supplemental Materials**

The final report of the Wayland Library Feasibility Study by Lerner | Ladds + Bartels, Inc. will be available at the library and on the library web site. The full report of the Library Feasibility Study Committee includes the architects' Final Report as well as a Question & Answer Sheet, a Library Feasibility Study Chronology, and other related materials.

Respectfully submitted,

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