

WAYLAND LIBRARY FEASIBILITY STUDY
QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

1. Does Wayland need a bigger library?

In the spring of 2002, the Library Planning Committee, appointed by the Trustees of the Wayland Public Library to identify the public's image and expectations of their library, issued a report that indicated citizens highly valued the services of the Wayland Public Library, but found the physical facility inadequate. Findings included:

- The print collection, especially fiction, is tightly packed and hard to access despite regular withdrawal of older materials. The non-print collection, which includes DVDs, CDs, and audiotapes, is not in a designated area and is dispersed throughout the main level of the Library.
- There are no quiet reading areas, individual study rooms, or conference rooms for small groups.
- The Children's Room has limited program space and no seating and study areas.
- There is no young adult room.
- The Raytheon Room, which is a community meeting area, can only accommodate 45 people, and many library lectures, films, and other performances attract much larger audiences.
- There is inadequate workspace to process new books and interlibrary loan deliveries and to service equipment. Storage is extremely limited.
- Parking is insufficient.
- Handicapped access to the Library is difficult.

Based on the Library Planning Committee's findings, the Trustees decided to conduct a feasibility study to determine if the current facility could be expanded to address the needs articulated in the report. At town meeting in spring 2002, \$40,000 was approved for the Library Feasibility Study. In fall 2003, the Trustees established a Library Feasibility Study Committee.

2. What is the charge of the Library Feasibility Study Committee? Who is on the Committee and how were they selected?

The Library Feasibility Study Committee's task is to determine if the Library can be expanded on its current site (5 Concord Road) to meet the needs of the Wayland community for the next 20 years. The Committee was asked to hire an architectural firm to conduct the study and to work with them to produce the report for the Trustees and the citizens of Wayland.

The Library Trustees posted the positions available on the Committee, and all Committee members were sworn in before the Wayland Town Clerk. The Committee has thirteen members: seven citizens who were appointed by the Trustees and the members of the Board of Trustees. The Library Director serves ex officio. The Trustees looked for diversity in neighborhoods and age, relevant skills, and interest in serving the Library.

The Committee includes an architect, attorney, engineer, retired librarian, teacher, and homemaker. Several members have school-age children; others are grandparents. About half live north and half live south of Route 20.

3. How was the architect selected?

The Feasibility Study Committee worked many months developing a Request for Proposals, which included general information about the project, the scope of services, the goal, fee, schedule, selection process, submittal requirements, the Library Building Program, site maps and other diagrams, and a copy of the final report of the Library Planning Committee. The Feasibility Committee advertised the RFP in the state’s Central Register and a local newspaper. Over twenty architectural firms responded. In preparation for their review, Committee members developed questions and guidelines for use in evaluating the proposals. After interviewing four finalists in a uniform, structured process, the Committee selected the Providence firm of Lerner | Ladds + Bartels to conduct the feasibility study.

4. What is the current size of the library and how does it compare to libraries in similarly sized communities?

The Wayland Public Library is approximately 16,000 square feet, with a town population of around 13,500. Sudbury, which has a population of 17,000, recently expanded its library to 31,000 square feet, and Weston with a population of 11,600 has a 32,000 square foot facility.

<i>Town</i>	<i>Wayland</i>	<i>Sudbury</i>	<i>Weston</i>	<i>Westwood</i>
Population*	13,239	17,259	11,652	14,181
Square Feet	16,000	31,000	32,000	32,000 (proposed)
Circulation*	274,991	272,414	320,805	259,183
Circ Per Cap.*	20.77	15.78	27.53	18.28
Collection*	90,944	96,370	114,463	107,860
Collection Per Cap.*	6.87	5.58	9.82	7.61

*Source: FY03 Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners Public Library Data Reports

5. How did the Committee determine the amount of space required for the library expansion?

The Committee used the Library Building Program as the foundation for its work. The Program is a planning document that outlines long-term service and space needs for the library. It is based on input from staff, administrators, trustees, and results from public surveys and focus groups conducted by the Library Planning Committee. The Library Building Program was updated and refined by the Library Feasibility Study Committee and the architects. Lerner | Ladds + Bartels used their experience with other libraries and nationally recognized library planning standards to evaluate all program areas. The architects estimate that an expanded or new library facility will require 30,000 square feet or more to meet the operational and community needs outlined in the Library Building Program.

6. What are the findings of the Library Feasibility Study Committee?

The Library's current site at 5 Concord Road is severely limited by its size and proximity to the wetlands and cannot support a 30,000 square foot building that complies with set backs, lot coverage percentages, and parking mandates. Expansion of the current facility would require additional land, which could be obtained by purchasing the adjoining property to the north. The additional land would provide the space and flexibility needed to erect a library facility that meets the needs of the Wayland community for the next twenty years. However, there is a cost premium associated with expansion on the current site.

7. How did the Committee arrive at the current proposed design (the pavilion design)?

Initial design concepts resulted in a massive, block-like addition to the original library building that overwhelmed the site, detracted from the historic building, and was incompatible with the surrounding residential neighborhood and nearby historic district. After much discussion, the Feasibility Study Committee and architects decided that a series of buildings (pavilions) linked by an enclosed spine and visually separated by green space would be much more in keeping with the feel of a New England town center. The pavilion design also allowed for the character of the original historic library building to be restored and not be overshadowed by a large addition. The other significant feature of the proposed design is the creation of underground parking to meet the parking requirements of the expanded facility.

8. Why is the square footage of the proposal so much bigger than the square footage needs of the Library Building Program?

The design disperses the hubs of activity, i.e., the children's room, the circulation desk, and the community program room, into a series of buildings or pavilions linked by walkways that require extra square footage.

9. Why is so much space allocated for the community program room? Local history? Circulation? Audio visual?

The Raytheon Room, the library's current program room, was designed to accommodate 40-50 people. In the past decade, library programs such as Shakespeare, the Classics, Wayland Historical Society talks, slide/lecture art series and others have attracted much larger numbers making the room grossly inadequate. Ideally, a program room should seat 100 comfortably, have a separate entrance so it can be used when the library is closed, have storage areas for chairs and tables when not in use, have adjacent coat rooms, and rest rooms and sufficient kitchenette space.

The present Local History area is a gated corner of the balcony. The room would be useful to researchers if there was space for a table and chairs. Locked bookcases with

glass doors would aid the preservation of historic materials. Lack of space has been a factor in the library's reluctance to collect local history materials beyond the most basic items, such as annual reports and high school yearbooks. Also, the design puts the Local History area in renovated space in the original historic library.

The circulation department is the library's operational center; it must have adequate space for staff, computers, telephones, returned books and non-print materials, reserve items awaiting pick-up and book trucks for sorting and reshelving materials. Audio-visual materials, which include books-on-tape, books-on-CD, music CDs, videocassettes and DVDs, are the library items that have seen the greatest growth in circulation in recent years. Libraries should have designated areas for these popular materials that permit sensible shelving and patron browsing.

10. Why is underground parking needed?

Underground parking is necessitated by zoning requirements for public building parking needs, site restrictions involving impervious surface coverage of total lot, and aesthetic reasons to eliminate the view of a big parking lot in an historic, residential neighborhood.

11. What are the disadvantages of an expansion at the current site?

There is a cost premium for expansion on the current site. Underground parking, the pavilion design, historic preservation, and site restrictions all contribute to the premium price. There may be a \$2-\$5 million difference between building on this site and building on a virgin site.

12. What is the cost? Why is it so expensive?

Initial estimates put the cost for a renovated and expanded library on the current site at \$13-\$16 million in current dollars, depending on the design alternative. Site limitations, historic preservation, the pavilion design, and underground parking all contribute to the high cost.

13. Is the property to the north of the library available for purchase?

While the abutting property is not currently on the market, conversations with the current owner concerning possible future purchase have been ongoing.

14. Can the library be expanded on a portion of the abutting land?

Acquiring a portion of the land to the north would not provide enough space to fulfill long-range library needs for the next 20 years. This option was carefully explored by the architects in their site analysis.

15. What will happen to the house on the property to the north?

The Feasibility Study Committee and architects examined building scenarios that both included and excluded the house in the design. There are several options that the Trustees would consider if the Town purchased the property: 1.) use a portion of the property for the library addition and parking and sell the house as is; 2.) integrate the house into the library's expansion plan so that it is retained and renovated for library and/or Town use; 3.) remove the house to accommodate an addition and parking lot and provide for long-term future expansion, if needed; and 4.) sell and relocate the house, freeing up the entire lot.

The possibility of refitting the house to accommodate a Senior Center is one of many possible creative reuses of the building. This concept is appealing because services would be available to our youngest and our oldest citizens all on one site. There is the possibility of shared community space for programs. In addition, seniors are frequent users of the library and its programs and special events.

16. Is the house large enough to accommodate the expansion needs of the library without additional building?

The house would require extensive structural and architectural alteration to meet the weight-bearing needs of the library collection and, even with renovation, would not provide the space and flexibility required for the library program.

17. What are the disadvantages/advantages of preserving the house to the north? Could it be moved?

The disadvantages of preserving the house to the north are the limitations it will place on the new building design and layout including the necessity for underground parking and the cost of upgrading for public use. The advantages include preservation of a beautiful historic house in a residential neighborhood and its enhancing the feel of the library design as a New England town center. Relocation of the house eliminates the need for costly underground parking.

18. Can we keep the 1987 addition in the proposed plan?

Unfortunately, the 1987 addition will not structurally support an addition and will have to be removed.

19. Was any consideration given to building a smaller addition? What would be lost in the program?

A smaller addition would require using the block building design, which would be less appealing for the neighborhood. Because the smaller addition would not provide as much open space and flexibility, it would also not fulfill the state library building grant

requirement to plan for the next 20 years and could potentially result in further expense to meet the Town's future needs. The parking at the current site would not improve.

20. Are state funds available for library construction? Is Wayland eligible?

The Massachusetts Public Library Construction Program (MPLC) offers partial funding to eligible projects that successfully complete a rigorous grant application process. At present, this program is on hold, but is expected to be available as the economy improves. The Wayland Public Library has a good track record in obtaining public funding. It was the recipient of several federal and state construction grants from 1977 to 1986. Some area towns awarded MPLC grants in recent years include: Sudbury, Maynard, Framingham, Needham, Wellesley, Ashland, and Boxborough.

21. Have you considered combining efforts with the High School project?

There have been informal discussions between individual members of the Library Board of Trustees and individual members of the School Committee regarding a combination of efforts. The arguments in favor focus on land availability, location, economics, and parking. While not within the scope of this study, many questions can be raised regarding philosophic differences between a high school media center and a public library. Although both institutions serve the information needs of their users, the collections may vary a great deal, with schools emphasizing support of the curriculum, and public libraries serving adults and children of all ages. Would one library building at the High School allow both the public library and the school media center to achieve their respective goals and objectives? Would it be feasible to build a separate public library building at the high school site, taking advantage of shared parking and construction savings? What impact would that have on traffic, parking, and library use?

22. Have other options for building sites in town or reuse of buildings owned by the Town been explored?

This feasibility study was specifically limited to examining the current library site and the possibility of expanding at this location. Now that the Feasibility Study Committee has gained a better understanding of the challenges it faces in trying to expand at the present site, the Committee will recommend that the Library Trustees investigate the use of other sites. There may be a possibility of reuse of another town building. Also, there is town-owned land that might be used for municipal construction in several locations in Wayland, both north and south of Route 20. Potential sites will need the careful scrutiny and analysis that our architect and Committee have given the current library site.

23. When would the expanded library be built?

Until further feasibility studies of alternate sites have been completed, it is difficult to predict a break ground date. The timeline will be affected by the economy, the competing needs in the Town, and the availability of state funding programs (MPLC).

24. What's next for the library project?

In April 2005, the Committee accepted the architect's report, which clearly indicates that the Library cannot be enlarged at the current site without the purchase of the adjacent property. The Library Trustees will continue to monitor the availability of the adjacent property. However, because of the high costs associated with expanding at the present site and current fiscal constraints in the Town, the Trustees plan to investigate other options while still continuing to study the architectural concept provided by our architects.

25. Will there be another feasibility study?

Yes. Other sites must be explored so that we are all convinced that we are building the library that the citizens of Wayland want, that it will meet the needs of the community over the next 20 years (a requirement for receiving state aid), and that its cost/benefit ratio is acceptable.

Wayland Library Feasibility Study Committee
April 2005