

Town of Glastonbury
Welles-Turner Memorial Library Board
Monday, May 11, 2020
Minutes

A virtual (ZOOM) meeting of the Welles-Turner Memorial Library Board was held on Monday, May 11, 2020. The meeting was held virtually due to ongoing COVID pandemic. A quorum was present.

Meeting called to order at 4:56 p.m.

1. Roll Call

Present Board Members: Susan Pearlman (Chair), Henry Hunt, Ellen Saunig, Jennifer Hudner, Jaye Winkler. A quorum was present.

Other attendees: Barbara Bailey (Library Director), Donald Kray (Friends of the Library), Jesse Saylor (TSKP Studio - lead architect for Library renovation), Susan Pinckney (Interior Designer - TSKP Studio)

2. Library Renovation/Expansion Update

Report from Jesse Saylor and Susan Pinckney:

- Overarching goal for the design of the project is to blend ideas about Glastonbury – rustic/rural heritage. Take traditional and contemporary elements and blend them together. Ex: Welles-Shipman Barn. The existing library has some of these influences as well. Original Welles-Turner house was removed and replaced by the 1950s building. This tradition carried through the 1990s, though the 1990s addition had modern elements as well.
- Makerspace – will have a lot of windows – providing a view to public is important.
- Book drop – there is a proposal to extend it out so you can put books in book drop without leaving your car.
- Entry (on Main Street) – potential for garden arch. Traditional arch, modern arch, pergola? Goal is to make the entrance more welcoming. However, do not want to obscure the entrance to the doors.
- Upgrades to children’s terrace – adding window as well as canopy roof to shade the window. Adding a hardscape area. Allows children’s programming to run outside. Story area, replanting surrounding landscape, reading benches, etc. The window will also bring more light to the interior.
- With respect to books, the goal is to maintain current size of the collection.
- YA section being changed to juvenile area. Floor will be raised so it’s up at the same level as the children’s area.
- Lower stacks so children can reach.
- New “new books area” – will include new material, displays
- New YA area is where current fiction area is.

- Makerspace – partitions so it can be operated after hours while the rest of the library is locked off.
- New lobby – sense of columns reduced. Main stairway more visible. Easier access to new books. Children’s expansion. Proposal to add playful cutouts to children’s area.
- Children’s area – expand space, define preschool play area better, reduce stack heights, outdoor terrace. Additional light. Wanted to do something with the columns to make it look less “column-heavy,” for instance, by the addition of the “tree column,” with surrounding benches. Tables for craft time. Comfortable seating for the adults. Step-seating for the kids for story time or just for general sitting.
- All the lighting is being replaced. Light quality will be improved.
- Juvenile area – Lego table, book displays, apple-shaped ottoman. Goal was to provide younger kids with more room to spread out.
- YA area – combination of spaces. Right now, it’s primarily just book stacks.
- Makerspace – it’s not part of the YA space, in that it’s separated, but the goal is it to be a draw for teens, young adults, and adults. There’s an area called “the vault,” (similar to what’s in Wallingford Public Library), that will have more delicate equipment that requires training, etc. Also allows acoustic separation between that louder equipment. Recording studio with camera, green screen, will allow for video and audio. This is also acoustically separated from the rest of the Makers’ space. Flexibility with power locations. A lot of lighting, but also shade. Space made as flexible as possible so it can expand and change as needs change. Accommodate a wide range of needs and interests. Get as much storage as possible. Electric: challenge is always to provide it where you need it, without cords on the floor. Porcelain tile. There is a sink area and additional storage.
- Upper level: fiction section moved upstairs to northern wing. Nonfiction to be in larger, southern wing. Includes the addition and remove columns/stacks from central space. Create a “commons room.” Comfortable seating & tables turning the day, can be reconfigured for an evening lecture or performance. There’s a one-step platform for a stage. 120 seats can be assembled. Similar to Westport Library Forum Room. Reconfigured reference area – moved reference desk off to the side so still good vantage points coming up from lower level. More comfortable seating. Lounge seating, chairs and tables. “Gallery” – space for artwork, seating. Meeting room, almost to function like a board room. Relocated the door to the patio. Also, remove the alarm so you can actually go outside to the patio. Creating a lot of seating for quiet study.
- Types of seating: there are a lot of modern option than the traditional wood carols. “Pods” will have power outlet. Down-lights will be provided over the pods. Identified these locations in drawings and can be discussed with contractor/furniture before the boxes are actually going into the concrete. “Privacy lounges” – lounge chair that’s been modified to have very high sides to give a sense of privacy. 51 private spaces, not counting the “booths” that have double occupancy. This is in addition to area such as the south end of the nonfiction area where there’s additional seating.
- Working tables – in the fiction area. There will be some larger tables scattered throughout for people who need to spread out. The smaller tables are still 3 ½ to 4 ft. Also, tables in

quiet study area and former references area. Tables also in old periodical space and in the meeting room. There will be a quite a few tables spread throughout the library.

- Skylights – wood slat ceiling, but above it will be skylights. Skylights should bring light into the central area and bring in more light. Lighting will also be improved in stack areas, though no additional skylights.
- Study/quiet room – is there a security issue with it being so far removed? (JH) – Barbara Bailey – we were concerned about that 20 years ago, but people are generally respectful. It is very well self-policed. Never a problem in 20 years. It will make the “rounds” for the staff a little longer than currently, but not anticipating any issues.
- Study rooms – they will still be there on the first floor – will remain basically as they are now.
- Quiet study spaces – reading areas at the end of the addition. Lounge seating.
- Collaboration/co-working space – “light tube” to pipe the daylight into the center of the “Commons.” This will help bring in some more natural light in addition to the improvements to lighting. Furniture – more mobile furniture, especially in common area. Whole area can be completely opened up if desired. Whole space can be completely transformed for a presentation. Tables can be wheeled off to other areas of the library. Chairs can go in a storage closet. Carpeted floor (ideal for acoustics and comfort under foot).

- Questions from Board members:

*Question: is there anywhere comfortable/quiet for kids to sit and read a book?

Answer: There will be upholstered area for kids to sit. Will also be keeping the playhouse with a safety measure for the overhead.

*Question: stack height in children’s area?

Answer: the stacks will be will be a mixture of heights, but much more accessible to children.

*Question: Could the story room be used as a quiet place for a kid to sit and read?

Answer: there has been a proposal to put a Dutch door to keep young children out at certain times. Tables in rendition will not necessarily always be in room. This will be a call for the Library Director and staff to make once they get settled in.

*Question: Will there be comfortable seating in either area?

Answer: Lounge pieces will be lined up in front of the window. “Step” seating on the left-hand side. Upholstered benches. Ottomans (and potential for additional ottomans). Issue with large, comfortable arm chairs is that they take up a lot of space. Could consider additional opportunities for comfortable furniture. *Note: furniture package is a separate procurement than construction, so there is potentially more time to develop furniture preferences, etc.

Question: Will there be additional space for the Friends book display?

Answer: pyramid display, also room in new book area. Once we get further into furniture, discussion with Friends/Library Director to make sure they're being accommodated.

- Schedule: goal is to bid on construction at the beginning of June 2020. Currently going through town reviews. Everything is going well, but some delays due to COVID. However, still basically on schedule. Bidding environment expected to be favorable in June/July 2020. This will hopefully help get the most value for money. There is a plan for operating the library through construction. Ideally, addition construction will start first (this will take a year and go on through all three phases of construction). Phase 1- move YA and fiction. Fiction moves upstairs. Shelving may need to be assembled in the reference area to make everything fit. Phase 2- reconfiguring upstairs, and doing smaller projects in the children's area. Complete children's area. Entire first floor complete in 6 months, with exception of addition. Goal – entire building open back up to the public in about July 2021.

- There may be a brief period, right around the New Year, when children's area may need to be shut down. Currently, a full shut down is not anticipated, but it's possible.

- Bidding process – a few months is realistic. However, time period between getting town reviews, bidding, permits, can take longer or shorter, and it is somewhat hard to predict. Two months for bidding itself should be adequate.

Concerns about children's area during construction. Can it be moved? Can book trucks be used? No definitive plans as of now.

What is vision for gallery room? Goal is for few months, local artists featured.

- Additional questions:

- Martha Poole- liked everything except the front door entrance – the double columns – need to change somehow. Needs to be traditional and keeping with the look of Main Street and the building. Also, did not care for the library.

- Don Kray – reduction in adult LF – this will work with the current collection size (per Barbara Bailey). Currently, there are approximately 600 shelves in unused library.

- Ginny Roscoe (from Second Century Fund) – design is outstanding, except for the archway. In favor of sticking with a traditional exterior.

- Patty Matthews – (Friends) – will the Friends area stay the same? Also, book sales. Area in front that might be designated for Friends books – can the Friends get any other space for books? Hopefully it's being addressed and not just an aside. Per Barbara Bailey – the Friends area will be basically untouched. Wants there to be a permanent space for Friends books and not an afterthought. This issue can be revisited once we order furniture. Depends how much square footage is necessary. Because we are ready to go out to bid, the exterior will not be changed a whole lot, though there will be room to make adjustments to the interior.

- Carol Auslauger – (Second Century) – thank you for time everything looks great.
- Melinda Smith – we need to understand the facility.

Vote: Motion to approve the design as presented tonight. Motion made by Susan Pearlman–unanimously approved.

3. Public Comment

- No additional comments.

4. Acceptance of prior meeting's minutes

Accepted unanimously without comment/correction.

5. Liaison reports

- Don Kray (Friends) – much has been on hold as a result of COVID. Friends has thousands of books – would like to do something with them. Not prepared to speak about them yet. Annual meeting is scheduled for June 2, 2020. Friends will be voting for new slate of officers for two year terms.

* Susan Pearlman (Chair) asked if there was any thought to trying to do something with the children's books through FoodShare or any other program? Don Kray said that there is some discussion with Youth and Family Services to try to get some books out to kids. Early stage discussion. Ideas are out there but not much has been decided yet. However, now that Governor is opening the state with respect to some things there may be more movement.

- Library sanitation (as relates to COVID) - books have to quarantine for three days. At this point, the library has been closed for 8 or 9 weeks so everything that's already there is fine. Books in book drop have to be removed with face mask and gloves and then they have to "sit" for three days.

6. Library Director's Report

From Library Director Barbara Bailey

- Not a whole lot has happened due to library closure. Staff working from home doing things like book selection, working on programs, working on the website, etc.
- Because of the virus, a lot of places are behind in distributing the statistics.
- Governor is planning to partially open the state on May 20, but this is primarily businesses. Looking at opening probably in phases. The library will most likely be in the later phase. Town has some committees that are looking at reopening.
- Apparently, it may not open until the fall. On a busy day, anywhere from 600-700 people, so it's difficult in the current environment.
- Staff is looking at offering some sort of curbside service for people to pick up holds. Need to buy bags (at a premium because all restaurants, etc., are also using bags).

Continue with summer reading program. Will be virtual. Will continue with virtual programming at least through September, most likely longer.

- Everything is being documented so in a future public health emergency there will be some guidance.
- Library has been paying part-time staff. They will work primarily on curbside pickup.
- Question regarding use of virtual programming – first kids program – about 50 “pictures” on Zoom – 15 or 20 was expected. Cookbook club has its same 10 people. Book discussion has most of its regular people. Zoom programming has challenges. Since the first week, attendance at children’s programming has been more manageable – 10 to 20 people. Having a few programs per week at different times of day.
- Digital use has gone up – picked up over 50 temporary card users – likely just for digital.
- At this point, no capacity issues with online programs.
- Library is offering reference services. They check messages. Haven’t got a lot – maybe 10 calls per week, and most questions are about when the library is going to reopen. Calls have decreased as the shutdown has gone on.
- Budget – likely won’t be what the library anticipated. As of now, do not anticipate any impact to the renovation project. Some libraries are putting theirs on hold. We are still moving ahead. There are actually some advantages to being able to move forward with construction while the library is shut down.
- There was a request to provide updates on the website and not just Facebook during the shutdown period.

None.

10. Correspondence

None.

11. Meeting schedule for 2020

Location: WTML Friends Room or ZOOM (depending on status of pandemic)

- September 14, 2020
- November 9, 2020
- January 11, 2021

Approved by the Board.

Adjournment: 6:43 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Ellen Saunig.