

**CITY OF MANHATTAN BEACH  
MINUTES OF THE LIBRARY COMMISSION**

October 26, 2010  
6:30 p.m.  
Manhattan Beach City Hall

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CONTENTS

	Page
10/1026-1 – Presentation of Proposed Programming for the Library Expansion Project by Linda Demmers, Library Consultant and Favaro/Johnson, Architects .....	1

**ROLL CALL**

Present: Commissioners Adams, Cooperman, Hook, Rhees and Popovich

Others Present: Director of Parks and Recreation Richard Gill, Recreation Services Manager Mark Leyman, Los Angeles County Library Regional Administrator Steven Klein, Assistant Director of Public Services Barbara Custen, Chief Deputy Los Angeles County Libraries Fred Hungerford, Library Consultant Linda Demmers, Architects Jim Favaro and Steve Johnson, Manhattan Beach Library Manager Don Gould and Recording Secretary Mary Kirchwehm

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The Minutes of the July 12, 2010 Library Commission meeting were approved as written.

**CEREMONIAL**

None

**AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION**

None

**GENERAL BUSINESS**

10/1026-1 – Presentation of Proposed Programming for the Library Expansion Project by Linda Demmers, Library Consultant and Favaro/Johnson, Architects

In order to clarify the history of this project, Director Gill reviewed the library expansion timeline as follows:

- 1996: Mountjoy Legislation SB 1998 allows cities to opt out of library districts and county library systems.
- 1996: Manhattan Beach Library Commission formed.
- 2000: City lobbied legislature to pass a several million dollar bond to expand the library.
- 2001: The City hired Linda Demmers for a Needs Assessment. Ms. Demmers has developed “Library Programs” for state and county libraries.

- 2003: Bond was passed for the building of new libraries. The bond money is allocated on a need basis. The relative level of affluence in the City of Manhattan Beach compared to other cities places us at a disadvantage in obtaining bond money within the County. Director Gill reported that we have always thought that we were legitimately one of the most in-need cities for a library because our library is so small; approximately 12,000 square feet. National and county guidelines state that a library for a city our size should have 22,000 – 29,000 square feet.
- 2006: County policy changed and excess property tax monies (paid by Manhattan Beach residents for library services) are set aside. Currently, there is over \$4,000,000 set aside. The excess is approximately \$900,000 per year.
- 2007: Linda Demmers was rehired to review and update the Needs Assessment for the City's Facility Strategic Plan (FSP). A certified residential phone survey was conducted inquiring about community facility needs. The result of the survey concluded that a new library is the most needed facility.

Director Gill reported that a Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) library meeting was recently held with City Council where Johnson/Favaro reported that it would be more efficient to build a new building instead of adding to an existing structure with a myriad of problems requiring updating.

Director Gill reported that City Council Library Sub-Committee members Nick Tell and Portia Cohen are currently working on a schedule of public meetings. Once the schedule is developed, it will be communicated to the public. There will be town hall type meetings, possibly beginning in January, as well as other meetings before the Planning Commission and other commissions to discuss programs and designs for the new library.

Director Gill confirmed that funding for this building is from the County not the City. The County has graciously set aside funds, and continues to, from excess property tax monies collected for library services. Director Gill further stated that the library is owned by the County of Los Angeles and is on County property. Therefore, it is the County's library.

Chief Deputy Los Angeles County Libraries Fred Hungerford expressed the importance of the new library suiting the needs of the community such as: operational layout; public service; separate areas for children, teens and seniors; and a larger meeting room. He stated the County's desire to accommodate the City's needs along with the quality and durability of construction.

Commissioner Rhees asked how long Mr. Hungerford has been involved in the process of planning this project with Manhattan Beach and his familiarity with library projects. Mr. Hungerford reported that he has been with the County for 40 years, has been in this capacity of work for 30 years, and has been involved with the Manhattan Beach project since it began in the 1990's. He has worked with Linda Demmers on many projects in many cities.

Architect Jim Favaro reported that the current discussion for the building is a two-story structure with a 10 to 12 ft. setback from the sidewalk, similar to City Hall. This will allow gracious frontage along Highland Avenue. This two-story building will occupy

half the site, leaving available a slightly sloped open space in the back. This open space can be used in any number of ways, such as a pocket park or amphitheater in the summer. Alternatively, it can be saved for future expansion of the library. Mr. Favaro also reported that there will be a 290° view from Malibu to Palos Verdes from the second story. The two floors can be configured easily for an open floor plan allowing staff to survey each floor which will minimize the need for additional staff. The current construction market allows more to be built than previously anticipated.

Mr. Favaro reviewed the planning and design phase of the project:

1. Pre-Design Phase: Current phase. Although we are not currently in the design phase, it is necessary to go through a pre-design process to understand the scope of the project.
2. Schematic Design Phase (February/March): This phase engages in design and gets into the materiality of the building. This phase also reviews how the program plays out in the building.
3. Design Development Phase (April/May): Final review with design development and details. The construction documents will be completed and a Request for Bids will then be sent out. Hopefully, the building will be built in a year.

Mr. Favaro reviewed the existing library site, nearby parking lots, and discussed the basic structure of the future program:

Ground Floor (consists of four major areas):

1. Friends of the Library sales area (the northwest corner facing Highland and Civic Center Plaza area) and workroom
2. Children's expanded library area
3. Southeast corner community room to double as a story time area
4. Customer Service

Second Floor:

1. Adult Collection (with expanded views of Santa Monica Bay)
2. Teen Area
3. Customer Service

Ms. Demmers reported that in 2002 an in-depth community assessment was done followed up by a touch-up assessment in 2007. This community places a high interest in its children and schools. In addition, Manhattan Beach has a fairly substantial senior population. Demographically, this community has the highest percentage of library users in the County. There is a lot of demand, and the current library is undersized. Ms. Demmers reviewed the basic requirements to make the building function:

Core Library Program:

1. Self checks
2. Secured delivery room

3. Back up house
4. Shipping/receiving

#### Basics of the Program:

- Early Childhood Literacy (concept of family place where parent and children can read together, small manipulatives area, early childhood learning computers (non internet))
- Teen area and group study rooms (currently two in the program), a place for teens to get together and work with a Wii.

#### Program Concepts:

- Expanded collections (substantial increase in large print books and adult fiction)
- Variety of reader seats (seating to allow parents and children to read together)
- More public technology stations
- Zoning for acoustics
- Larger upgraded program area
- Separate teen area (tables and chairs will feature wheels to allow flexibility)
- Self-service and increased efficiency
- Marketplace for high use, new and browsing collections
- Updated décor, natural light & views
- Friends Sale area and workroom
- Infrastructure upgrade/replacement

Ms. Demmers reported that the internal planning space is 14,190 sq. ft. and that the physical building space is close to 21,000 sq. ft. Of the 14,190 sq. ft., a large percentage of that will be applied to the children's library which is close to 4,000 – 4,500 sq. ft. to include circulation space. There will be a meeting room consisting of approximately 500 more sq. ft. than what currently exists and space for stroller parking. Though there will not be a designated children's story time area, it is suggested that lower shelving in the preschool area be on wheels to allow mobility for open space. Ms. Demmers also suggested increasing the collections area by 25% and the seating by 50%. 35% of the square footage will be available for stacks, putting us much higher than the County's guidelines for collections per capita—90,000 volumes for this City.

Ms. Demmers reported that although the Friends of the Library area has not been designed with a store, it will have twice the amount of open shelving and an alcove. Workroom and storage is also added. The library space and the Friends of the Library space will not be co-mingled.

During a discussion among the Commissioners, the following points were made:

- Commissioner Hook stated her concern with having a Wii in the teen area, suggesting that a group of teens might disrupt other areas in the library; because

this is a community with access to Wiis, perhaps other events for teens would be better; there may not be enough space to accommodate this activity. Ms. Demmers stated that the Wii is not planned to sit out for use at any time, but is typically used for special programs. Mr. Hungerford reported that putting Wiis, Xboxes and Playstations in libraries are a new direction in reaching out to teens. Ms. Demmers reported that the seniors are another group who uses the Wii.

- Commissioner Cooperman suggested that the Wii may be a good entry point to get the next generation involved with the library. He inquired about the future program for the library due to technological advancement and how the facility will adapt. Mr. Hungerford suggested that it may be appropriate to meet with the director of County Youth Services to gain more information about technological programs.
- Commissioner Adams reported that although technology will impact libraries, it will provide additional space for other uses. She reported that she and Mr. Gould visited the Palos Verdes library and observed a lot of meeting space that was completely filled with children. All the rooms were occupied and the children were engaged with one another.
- Commissioner Rhees reported that because the senior community is growing we should have something for our seniors, especially since the City does not foresee building a new facility for seniors in the near future.
- Commissioner Popovich inquired if the community room is the same as the meeting room and asked if the room can be divided into sections.
- Ms. Demmers reported that although the concept of dividing rooms is great in theory, there are soundproofing, access and exiting issues. Mr. Favaro confirmed that the dividers are not effective.
- Commissioner Rhees suggested that study rooms may be able to double as meeting rooms for various board members to meet as well as others in the community. Ms. Demmers suggested a mid size meeting room or a conference room for 10-12 people. Ms. Demmers reported that the County librarian would have to decide if a 12 seat meeting room is a critical component for the library services for this community because the County is funding this as a library enhancement project.
- Mr. Hungerford reported that the libraries they design now have meeting rooms to serve as a separate function. They have full audio/visual capabilities as well as a projector, internet access, a CD burner, and assisted listening programs. Mr. Hungerford reported that the meeting room would need to be an isolated room from the rest of the library. Hours can be changed to accommodate staffing in later hours as long as the available funds are there. There are plans to meet with the City each fall to discuss what revenues are available. We can develop a program budget each year. All comments to include a mid size meeting room will be explored.

- Ms. Demmers reported that she spoke with Margaret Todd, the County Librarian, about what should be on the second floor. Ms. Todd recommended not having the second floor staff intensive since it will use up operating dollars. The more used on the new library the surplus will disappear. It's nice to have it for other things. Ms. Todd suggested speaking with the Library Commission regarding a low maintenance concept on the second floor.
- Commissioner Rhees inquired if there would be cameras on the second floor in the event of health/safety issues for seniors. Ms. Demmers reported that a monitor could be placed on the second floor, but a camera or a second librarian on the second floor would cause a cost increase. Mr. Hungerford reported that the County's position is not to install security cameras because of the staffing cost assigned to monitor the cameras all day. Mr. Hungerford stated that he sees all security incidents and there are very few at this library. If the County does place cameras in libraries, it would be to monitor the restroom access to deter pedophiles. They try to design restrooms to be in view of the service desk nearby.
- Commissioner Adams inquired if any of the libraries in the County system utilize the volunteer program to take care of some of these needs. Mr. Hungerford reported that the County has extensive volunteers though they have not been used specifically for security purposes. The volunteers are extra eyes and ears in the library when they are shelving books, assisting in a crafts program or during story hours.
- Ms. Custen reported that the County is trying to be innovative in the children's area and is exploring the possibility of monthly or quarterly rotating exhibits. Ms. Demmers reported that this is a great opportunity for a donor to fund the lease of the rotating exhibit space.
- Commissioner Cooperman inquired if there would be an open space allowing for exhibits and how the space could accommodate programming needs as they change on a regular basis.
- Commissioner Cooperman suggested that it would be good to have an adult reading room on the second floor where seniors can go with natural light and fewer racks to lessen obstruction.
- The Friends of the Library expressed their disappointment with having an alcove, unlike the City of Redondo Beach. The Friends would like to explore their options since they are currently wrestling with space and generate a fair amount of money every year. Ms. Demmers reported that there is enough space for a store. However, having done a survey of different Friends' stores, it is estimated that 24–36 people would be needed to staff the store, and it was not known if the Friends have the capacity to staff a store. Ms. Demmers reported that the main issue with most Friends' groups is the space needed to work, storage and sorting.
- Commissioner Adams reported that she would like to learn more about the Manhattan Beach Friends' group, their needs, how they plan to use the space,

their challenges and requirements in order for the City to consider these requirements. Ms. Custen suggested a volunteer coordinator meet with the Friends to explain the different options and give examples of what other groups do.

In wrapping the meeting up, Ms. Demmers reported that a final program document needs to be signed off by the County Librarian to make sure it is compliant but also exciting. She mentioned that no matter how specific the building looks, it's fluid until the day the building is done. The County will be touching base several times to review size, space and technical requirements.

Commissioner Rhees inquired if it would make sense to receive any input from the local schools regarding the programming. Mr. Gould reported that the library has a good relationship with the elementary schools and the middle school. Commissioner Hook reported that since there will be town hall meetings the schools will hear about it through regular channels. It may not make sense to have special meetings. Commissioner Rhees reported that due to the budget cuts, there may be something the schools can use from us that they have never had to ask for.

Director Gill reported that he will contact the schools, starting with the superintendent. Director Gill also commented that if there are any additional questions or comments, they can be sent to him and he will forward them to Jim Favaro, Steve Johnson, and Linda Demmers. Councilwoman Cohen and Councilman Tell are currently working on when to progress with meetings.

## **COMMISSION ITEMS**

Commissioner Hook reported that she was made aware of a man exposing himself to a female child in the library. Although the mother was pleased with the way the library staff handled the matter, it was of some concern as to the frequency of this type of occurrence. Mr. Gould reported that this had never happened before and that the library has procedures in place that they follow for circumstances like this. For example, if staff notices someone, particularly a single male roaming the area, they offer assistance so the person is aware that they have been spotted. Ms. Custen concurred that it is one of those unfortunate events, but the County does have procedures that they follow.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:25 p.m.