

# Action Plan for the Future

## The Southington Library Long Range Plan 2009-2015



*Create! Explore! Engage!*

Developed with input from and thanks to:

Susan Smayda, Library Director  
Advisory Long Range Planning Committee Members  
Library Staff Members  
Southington residents who participated in focus groups  
The Library Board of Directors  
Elizabeth Mainiero, Cupolo Consulting

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## Introduction

In June 2007 the Southington Library applied for and received a grant from the Community Foundation of Greater New Britain to create a new five-year, strategic long-range plan.

### Planning Process

This Long Range Plan for Southington Library was formulated with abundant community guidance and input during a year-long exploration of the role the Library should play in meeting the informational, educational and cultural needs of the Community. A Community Based Long Range Planning Committee, several focus groups, Library Board members and staff contributed to this plan.

### New Mission

The first step in the planning process was to review the Library's mission statement. After several brain-storming sessions a new mission statement was created: *The Southington Library is Southington's community center and premier resource for information, life-long learning and cultural enrichment.*

### How is the Library doing?

Every group that met agreed that the Library is already offering excellent programs and services. However the level of service provided and the number of programs offered are not sufficient to meet the demands of Southington's growing population. The input gathered indicated a strong desire for more children and teen programs, more senior programs, more technology and more space for cultural events.

How can the Library meet the demand for more?

It became clear early in the planning process that there are serious limitations to satisfying the Community's demand for increased programs and services:

- the current children's room is too small, noisy and busy to offer new services;
- the staff is already working as efficiently as possible;
- there are no quiet-study areas;
- there is no "Teen Services" librarian;
- the Meeting Room seats only half the people who wish to attend popular pro-grams;
- there is a serious lack of storage; and
- there are virtually no staff work areas.

Consequently, this Long Range Plan outlines preliminary goals that lead to the major goal of a new, bigger, more efficient library building. Current services offered within the building will continue at the level now offered.

### Preliminary Goals

Increase awareness of the library's role as a Community Center - Administration, Board and Staff members will actively promote the Library to ensure that the community becomes aware of and participates in Library services including: pro-grams for all ages, classes, and events. To effect this, the library will recruit and train volunteers to promote the Library at Community Events such as: the Apple Harvest Festival and Music on the Green. It will also increase the role of volunteers especially teens and seniors and will increase the visibility of the Friends of Southington Library.

Use new methods to market Library services. The catch phrase "Create, Explore, Engage!" was suggested as a three-word remind of the Library's Mission Statement. A variety of new communication tools will be used to improve public awareness and obtain public support for the Library's plans including its mission, goals, objectives, services, collections, pro-grams, building, staffing, and budget.

**Major, Long Term Goal**

Plan and Build a Bigger Library - To satisfy the needs of the Community the Library Board must obtain a larger, efficiently designed library thereby creating an environment conducive to improved services. To accomplish this major effort the following steps need to be taken:

- architectural and engineering studies must be made,
- funding has to be found and obtained, and
- the public and the funding authorities must agree to support the Library Board's commitment to renovating the library and adding an addition that corrects the deficiencies of the current building.

This document details current library services, the results of the planning process, the library budget, and provides information about the Town of. A time-line lists the target dates throughout the upcoming five years for accomplishing the objectives of the plan.

## Purpose of the Long Range Plan

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This Long Range Plan for the Southington Library was created to allow the Library to assess the changing needs of the community and develop a viable plan to meet these needs in the coming years. The Executive Director and the Board of Directors wanted a specific plan with measurable goals and objectives to guide them towards the future.

This plan is designed to provide a road map to make Southington Library a modern library that meets the needs of the community through appropriate use of space, staff and re-sources

This plan does not include the Barnes Museum which is also under the authority of the Library Board of Directors.

### Long Range Planning Approach

A community based Long Range Planning Committee composed of community stake-holders from every segment of the population (see Appendix 4a) was created to provide input and advise the Library Director and the consultant about the public's library needs for the future. The Planning Committee met several times during the year to evaluate current library services and explore the ways in which these current services meet (or fail to meet) the needs of the community. They also discussed trends relating to society and technology and how the library might keep ahead of these trends.

Using data collected during focus groups and staff interviews the committee developed a vision for the town and the library and determined roles, goals and objectives to be adopted to make that vision a reality. The Library Director, the planning committee, the consultant and various staff members crafted wording for the objectives and activities with an accomplishment time line for the upcoming five years.

### Planning Committee Outcomes

The library has a new mission statement, a new major goal and preliminary goals with articulated tasks to accomplish its major goal between 2010 and 2015. These are listed in this document.

### Looking Ahead: Dreams for the year 2019

In order plan for the future, the Long Range Planning Committee projected what Southington Library should "look like" in the year 2019:

- By 2019, the Southington Library should become a spacious "flagship" destination for people of all ages in the community who want to grow and learn, exchange ideas, and be challenged intellectually and culturally.
- The library will gain the community's respect as an essential and integral component of the Town.
- It is to be a state-of-the-art environment that is easy to access, welcoming, warm and inviting .
- It will offer multi-media experiences in an ambiance conducive to learning; it will serve as a hub reaching out to people to promote lifelong enlightenment.
- People of all ages will find opportunities at the library for culture, education, socializing and leisure.
- It will draw people in because the atmosphere welcomes everyone.
- The library should be housed in a new modern building (or renovated existing library facility with addition) that meets the storage, technological and programming needs of Southington in 2019.
- The building will need flexible compartmented spaces that can be easily changed to accommodate present and future needs.
- Teens, children, "tweens," adults, technology stations all will have separate areas.
- There will be study rooms that are a haven for quiet contemplation as well as several meeting rooms so that programs can be offered for children, teens and adults simultaneously.
- As one would suspect, this will require a much larger parking lot than the library has now.
- This new library building must be designed as a "green" building that utilizes technical advances to keep utility costs low. It should be certified as a LEED building.

The new library should:

- be architecturally appealing.
- be well planned with designated areas for children and adult programs, quiet study, pleasure reading, art exhibits, and small meetings.
- use a combination of natural light and task lighting to create a bright and airy atmosphere. Lighting throughout the building should comply with industry standard to allow patrons to see titles on bottom shelves, read a book, or work at a computer without glare.
- have improved access to materials – with ADA compliant aisles between book stacks
- have check-out and check-in areas that don't impede traffic flow.
- have a Café and book store combination and outdoor gardens

The Library will offer services that are proactive not reactive. Artists and authors will be encouraged to meet and provide programs for the public. Lectures on genealogy and history, and musical and drama events will be presented. Teens will feel welcome, accepted and able to enjoy a participation level that encourages their interests.

The town will acknowledge the need for, and will fund, sufficient staff to offer and perform this improved level of activity. Materials will be current; technology will be cutting edge. Books will be there for borrowing and the Friends used book store will continue to be popular for people who wish to buy books at a reasonable price.

### **How the Plan was Formulated**

The search for community input was extensive. Broad input was gathered in order to reflect current trends, demographics and needs. Input was obtained from:

- Focus groups including seniors, the general public, teenagers, and parents
- The Community Based Long Range Planning Committee
- Staff interviews
- Consultant's study of existing library services and facilities
- Demographic research

Groups were asked to provide the following information based on their own experience:

- Strengths and weaknesses of the library
- Opportunities that could be implemented in the library
- Barriers that might prevent implementation
- What they would do if they had the chance to attract more people to use the library

*Input reports from all sources are in the appendices.*

### **What was discovered**

The following basic needs emerged during the planning process:

- Learning and education for all ages
- Information and reference material
- More children's and senior citizen programs
- Longer or revised hours of opening including Sundays
- Consistent funding that keeps all collections current
- Culture and arts
- Service to book clubs
- Consumer, community, and government information
- Business and vocational information and guidance
- Sufficient staff to fulfill these needs



### Activities that affect the use of the Library

There are numerous programs and activities that compete for people's limited time and money. These include:

- Home access to the Internet,
- New technology including "Kindles"
- Sports and programs offered by Parks and Recreation
- Various group activities such as Senior Center programs and activities

The prevalent need expressed by every group is that a larger building must be planned and built to support services. Improvement to current services requires additional space! To obtain this building, the following recommendations for support were made:

#### Short term for the building

- Add more and better technology

#### Long term for the building

- Position the library as a welcoming and enticing place
- Obtain an efficient, 41,586 square foot building
- Have an internal facility audit
- Look at how other communities faced a similar situation
- Address physical limitations of the library; upgrade and expand it
- Add parking spaces, quiet study areas and small group congregating areas. Also improved signage, a relocated or 2nd elevator that is large enough for a gurney.
- Reuse but update the old building program
- Have an architectural study to incorporate ideas to showcase to get public support
- Do a building feasibility study

#### Short and Long Term: Outreach and Public relations

- Educate people about the importance of the Community Library
- Build support for a new (or larger) library
- Get the community ready for the push for a better library
- Have a grass-roots movement
- Tell the story of how the library enhances the community
- Deal with the attitude in Southington which says that "The library is good enough for us".
- Get many residents of all ages to visit libraries in other towns to see and explore better facilities to raise horizons- perhaps run library tours

### The Plan Results

Mission: *The Southington Library is Southington's community center and premier resource for information, life-long learning and cultural enrichment.*

#### Vision and Service Targets

Southington Library and Museum will provide the following services to all members of our community from the very youngest child to our most senior citizen:

Life Skills: Southington Library will offer services designed to provide and promote:

- Reading readiness
- Reading and technology literacy skills
- Opportunities for the enjoyment of enjoy lifelong reading

Information Delivery Systems: Southington Library will provide information and technology skills:

- Through an abundant supply of up-to-date technology
- By extending help in finding, evaluating and using information on a broad array of consumer topics

Cultural Awareness: Southington Library will increase awareness of:

- culture,
- the arts,
- history and
- genealogy

Current Topics and Titles: Southington Library will

- supply current, high-demand, high-interest material in a variety of formats for persons of all ages

## Goals to be Achieved

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The Southington Library will make every effort to accomplish the goals identified by focus group participants during the 5 years of this Long Range Plan. However, at present, with a children's room that is too small, overflowing, busy and so noisy that it disturbs adults, and a Community Room that seats 60 when 120 people wish to sign up for popular, and staff work areas that are crammed into hallways or tucked under the stairs, few, if any, in-house services can be added.

Therefore, targeted service goals are those that can take place outside the building, not within it. The goals therefore are phased steps towards obtaining a new building or an addition to the present building. Current services offered within the building will continue at the high level of excellence now offered.

The Planning Group acknowledges that goal fulfillment may be slowed by current negative such as:

- bad economic environment
- newspapers disappearing
- marketing competition for attention from other sources.

**Preliminary Goal 1: Administration, Board and Staff members will ensure that the community participates in and becomes aware of the library's role as a Community Center: its services, special programs, classes, and events.**

A. Participate as a "branded library community center" in various community events (i.e.: Music on the Green, Apple Harvest Festival, etc.)

1. Develop a moveable display set
2. Facilitate off-site library registration
3. Identify and train volunteers who will represent the library at these functions

B. Assist in the creation of a Southington Unified Arts Cultural Calendar.

1. Library Director will volunteer to have the library coordinate a cultural calendar.
2. Library staff will train representatives from all the participating agencies to in-put their contributions.

C. Outreach to those unable to come to the library

1. Identify those who need the service
2. Identify volunteers who will deliver to the home-bound
3. Staff will train Volunteers
4. Staff will choose materials to be delivered.



## D. Increase the role of volunteers and library friends including teens

1. Identify volunteer needs in each age group
  - a) Seniors
  - b) Teens
  - c) Working people
2. Identify volunteer skills needed by the library
3. Evaluate and renegotiate the current volunteer situation vis-à-vis the union contract Advertise for volunteers with those skills
4. Write up a volunteer policy and have the Library Board of Directors adopt it.
5. Assign volunteer recruitment and coordination responsibility to an existing or new part time staff member

## E. Target specific service increases to satisfy public input recommended by focus groups

1. Work towards service consistency in staff interaction with the public
  - a) Create an up-to-date staff manual
  - b) Make policies easily available and up to date
2. Redirect some of the programming towards:
  - a) “Seniors” who are library users
  - b) Use input from focus groups to design programs for older elementary school children
  - c) Design special programs for Teens
3. Encourage staff to rethink service in new creative mind-sets
  - a) Staff to make lists of actual tasks performed.
  - b) Staff to brainstorm improved ways to accomplish same results
  - c) Encourage interdepartmental cooperation in order to better serve the public.
4. Keep pace with technology
  - a) Staff to research direct email to public
  - b) Monitor the technology plan in terms of service: to the public
  - c) Update staff technology skills with education and training
5. Increase services to teens
  - a) Create a staff position whose primary responsibility is for teen services Pro-mote existing services to teens through school system
  - b) Convene a teen committee to implement teen services. i.e.: Mother/Daughter reading club
6. Add and/or retain added service hours if evaluation shows a need

**Preliminary Goal 2: Communication: use new methods to market potential library services, collections and programs in order to increase public awareness of what the library offers.**

## A. Improve public awareness about the library’s Long Range Plan which includes the mission, goals, objectives, services, collections, programs, building, staffing, and budget.

1. Target PR towards explaining opportunities
2. Research options to reach non-users:
  - a) Use of e-mail to make direct connections
  - b) Funding needed to market the library
  - c) Assigning responsibility to an existing or new part time staff member

## B. Gain support from town administration and obtain public support for the library: mission, goals, objectives, services, collections, programs, building, staffing, and budget.

1. Create an advocacy group for the library
2. Train the advocacy committee about the library and how to become an advocate for the library using:
  - a) Pamphlets,
  - b) On-line course events,
  - c) Speakers
3. Target specific community groups or elements to learn more and become educated about the library
  - a) What it does
  - b) How it does it
4. Set up interviews and/or group meetings with targeted key people or population segments
  - a) Give them tours
  - b) Give them in-depth introductions to what and how the library works

**Major Long Term Goal: Obtain a larger efficiently designed library that will permit excellent services**

Overall Objective:

A. Find sources of funding for the project

1. Obtain money for preliminary architect and engineer study
2. Check into grant possibilities
3. Inquire about fund-raising done by other agencies or non-profits
4. Assess the role of volunteer versus hired fund-raising professional to evaluate the potential of fund-raising from the community. Assess and engage a fund-raiser.
5. Board makes decisions with assistance of financial advisors in regards to fund-raising
6. Library has a fund-raising campaign
7. Board of Directors goes to town for funding

Overall Objectives:

A. Create and carry out a current and future building plan that addresses and corrects the deficiencies of the existing building in order to support the service targets of the library.

1. Rearrange existing collections for maximum accessibility for users.
2. Revise the 2000 building program according to current building needs.
  - a. Write an RFP for a building consultant
  - b. Select and hire a consultant
  - c. Work with the consultant to complete the building program
3. Building program should include elements which will assist American with Disabilities, and provide sufficient space for services necessary for children, teens, large meetings, for the growing Southington population.
  - a. An elevator that is more convenient.
  - b. Rearrangement and addition of space as necessary
  - c. Sufficient parking
4. LEED rating according to U.S. Green Building Council's rating system of sustainability as a "green" building
5. Board should formally accept the building program
6. A building committee should be formed

B. Design then build the needed renovation/addition

1. Get funding towards the next step in obtaining a larger building
2. Develop and send out an RFP for an architect
3. Select, Interview then hire an appropriate architect

4. Work with the architect to complete the schematic phase
5. Work with the architect to complete the preliminary design phase
6. Submit application for state grant construction funding
7. Work with the architect to complete the construction documents phase
8. Work with the architect to complete the bid documents, process the bids and hire the construction company
9. Plan and accomplish a temporary services plan to offer service during construction
10. Work with the architect during construction administration
11. Move into the redone building

## **Library Organization and Description**

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The Library is a town library with a nine-member Board of Directors. The Executive Library Director attends board meetings. An operating budget is provided by the town. The Friends of the Library operate a book store to provide funding for programs and services not funded by the library's operating budget.

### **Basic Library Services**

Southington Library provides programming services for adults and children. The staff assist all ages in research, lend materials to borrowers, help people use or learn to use the Internet and computers, obtain Interlibrary Loans (the Library will attempt to attain any material not available in its collection from other libraries in and out of state), and cooperate in resource sharing (Connecticard) whereby any Connecticut resident with a Connecticut library card can use any public library in the state and return materials to any public library in the state.

### **Hours and Door Counts**

The Library is open 64 hours on a Monday through Saturday schedule during the school year. The library is closed on Saturday during the July through Labor Day. There are no Sunday hours of operation. An average number of people using the library in the summer are 1,000 per day with peak daily of 1,200 or 1,300. During winter, the average is 850 per day.

### **Borrowing Terms**

Most books and audio books are loaned for 3 weeks. New best-sellers may be loaned for 7, or 14 days. Magazines, Videos & DVDs are loaned for 7 days and limited to 4 per card. New DVDs are loaned for one day.

### **Programming**

Because there is no children's program room, and the community room downstairs is undersized and heavily used, expansion of library programming is limited until larger facilities for programming exist. This hampers the library which aims to become the cultural center of the town, a presence which people in town will identify as "their place". Programs are well attended. The meeting room holds 60 people. The library offers a variety of programs. Emphasis is placed on literature based programming. Sometimes, 120 people show up for a program and half of them have to be turned away. Routinely, in order to accommodate anticipated large crowds, programs are held in the "Café" area, thus disturbing regular patron activities.

Regular story times are scheduled for children each week and special programs are offered every month *i.e. Tales & Tunes for Tots, Afternoon Adventure*, etc. Parents vie to sign up for children's programs as quickly as possible when they are announced, but many have to be put on waiting lists because the smallness of the facility restricts the number that can be accommodated.

In order for the library to become the cultural center hub for the town, program offerings will be broadened when more space is added.

**Special services**

Special services include lending free museum passes and art exhibits and openings featuring an Artist of the Month.

**Technology**

The library offers an array of technology services that people can use both at home and in the library. The Library has 15 public computer workstations with free access to the Inter-net, word processing, spreadsheet and public presentation software. WiFi is available to in-house Laptop users. Southington Library circulates downloadable books that patrons may access from their home computers for use on iPods, iPhones, and many MP3 players. The Children’s library has four public computers with educational games for children.”

**Staffing**

The library employs the equivalent of 19 full time people. It barely offers service to Young Adults. It serves an average of 800 people per day during fall-spring, and 1000 per day in summer. Use peaks at 1,300 per day occasionally. People are very aware of the regular excellent services offered. On the other hand, the focus groups demonstrated that towns-people do not seem aware of the variety of services that the library offers. In order to improve service to Young Adults and to better market various specific services, additional staff should be provided.

**Volunteers**

Due to existing Union rules, new volunteers may not be recruited for tasks to be accomplished within the library building. Non-staff members are not permitted to do tasks which can be considered the responsibility of a regular staff member although several volunteers who have been volunteers for many years are grand-fathered. They cover books, perform shelf reading to ensure that books are in the correct order, and assist with mailings. At present, there is no volunteer policy in existence. This Long Range Plan recommends using volunteers for outreach tasks outside the library building. It also recommends that the Union and the management revisit allowing community service projects and civic scout projects in the library.

**Budget**

For the 2010 fiscal year, the Town budget is \$118,834,374 of which \$76,333,307 is for Education, (Kindergarten through High School), and \$42,501,067 for General Government. General Government includes the Library (ages birth to100+). The library budget of \$1,276,720 which serves all citizens, is 1% of the total town budget. With a mission to be the Town’s community center and premier resource for information, life-long learning and cultural enrichment, the yearly budget should total 2% of the Town budget, or double the current appropriation.

<b>Annual Budget</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>
Staffing costs	84,4015	895,357	895,400
Utilities & Maintenance	115,356	123,900	121,200
Programs	10,000	11,500	10,500
Computers/Automation	102,338	112,320	109,320
Books & Multimedia	100,007	103,000	100,000
Supplies	36,234	37,000	35,000
Building/Equipment	5,496	2,500	3,000
Continuing Education	3,494	3,500	1,500
Air Conditioning Unit	40,770		
Handicapped Doors	5,065		
Microfilming	350	1,500	800
<b>Total Budget</b>	<b>1,263,125</b>	<b>1,290,577</b>	<b>1,276,720</b>

### Southington Library's CT Ranking

Thomas J. Hennen Jr, library director for the Waukesha County Federated Library System devised and prints a yearly ranking system for libraries. The HAPLR (Hennen's American Public Library Ratings) Index includes 15 factors. The focus is on circulation, staffing, materials, reference service, and funding levels. Nationwide public library statistics are collected and disseminated annually through the Federal-State Cooperative System for public library data (FSCS) from 9,000 libraries. Southington's Library's rank is 18th in Connecticut in a category of Connecticut towns populated by 25,000 to 49,000 people. The town is at the 65th percentile mark with a rating of 598 out of a possible 950. This demonstrates that the Library is serving its community, but is not serving its public with total excellence. The score would improve if the facilities were larger, had better program facilities for adults and children, added quiet study and discussion rooms, and more parking. Increased use could result by hiring a teen librarian.

#### Southington Library Statistics - Compiled by the Connecticut State Library

POPULATION OF SERVICE AREA 2007	TOTAL LIBRARY VISITS	LIBRARY VISITS PER CAPITA	TOTAL REGISTERED BORROWERS	REGISTRATIONS PER CAPITA	TOTAL CIRCULATION	TOTAL
						CIRCULATION
						PER CAPITA
42,142	241,600	5.7	26,426	0.6	302,708	7.2

TOTAL PROGRAMS	TOTAL PROGRAM ATTENDANCE	PROGRAM ATTENDANCE PER CAPITA	USE OF PUBLIC COMPUTERS	TOTAL COLLECTION	TOTAL SQ. FEET	SQUARE FEET PER CAPITA	AVERAGE # PEOPLE ENTERING PER DAY
372	14,695	0.3	22,478	286,055	21,000	.5	800-1,000

MEETING ROOM'S LEGAL SEATING CAPACITY	HOURS OPEN IN A TYPICAL WEEK (MAIN LIBRARY)	USE OF PUBLIC	DATE OF LATEST	TOTAL 2007-07	PER CENT
		COMPUTERS	MAJOR CONSTRUCTION	CONNECTICARD	OF TOTAL
				CIRCULATION	CIRCULATION
60	64	22,478	1974	14,464	5%

TOTAL BOOK & SERIALS CIRCULATION	AS PER CENT OF TOTAL CIRCULATION	ADULT BOOKS & SERIALS CIRCULATION	ADULT BKS - PER CENT OF TOTAL BOOK CIRCULATION	JUVENILE BOOKS & SERIALS CIRCULATION	JUV. BKS - PER CENT OF TOTAL BOOK CIRCULATION	DVD & VIDEO CIRCULATION	DVD/VIDEO - PER CENT OF TOTAL CIRCULATION
213,424	71%	63,193	30%	144,073	68%	68,001	22%

HOURS IN WORK WEEK	TOTAL FTE'S BASED ON 40 HOURS	TOTAL MLS FTE'S BASED ON 40 HOURS	PER CENT OF TOTAL FTE'S THAT ARE MLS	VOLUNTEER HOURS IN TYPICAL WEEK	WAGES & SALARIES PAID FY2008	EMPLOYEES LABOR UNION
35	17.0	10.6	62%	15	867,089	Y

**Description of Current Library Building**

The current library was built in 1970s and was designed to offer adequate space for 20 years. At the time of building, the population was 33,800; now it is more than 42,142. The space within the building has been rearranged to maximise existing space, but is it clear that the building is no longer adequate for the services that the public demands.

- The current library was built before automated circulation systems, PCs, and the Internet.
- The library does not meet ADA requires for access to books, programs and other services.
- There is limited parking
- Stack access is uncomfortable and not conducive to browsing
- Access to the program room and art gallery on the lower floor is poor. Handicapped individuals must use the elevator which is located far from either of the main doors in an area that is hard to get to for those in powered wheelchairs.
- There are no group discussion rooms; no quiet study rooms; no large children’s program room; insufficient collection space for adults and young adults, foreign collections, children, electronic resources, and offices; no work space for the busy circulation department.
- Lighting is substandard according to Illuminating Engineer Society of North America recommendations

**Building Program**

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**Building Program**

A building program was drafted in September 2000 by consultants Nolan Lushington and Mary Beth Mahler with then library director, Jay Johnston. This draft remains a viable document with some updating relative to projected future services.

**Cost Estimate for Southington Library Construction Costs and Architectural fees**

This estimate is based on preliminary building studies made by Library Director, and the Long Range Planning Consultant as a direct result of the findings of the Long Range Plan. It was prepared using the State planning guide for required footage, review of existing space, and projected needs for the Library 20 years into the future.

The current, 21,500 square foot, building was designed to house 100,000 volumes and seat 125 people. The population at the time was approximately 33,800. The current population is over 42,000. The Connecticut State Guide estimate suggests that 41,586 square feet are needed.

Looking at actual costs for libraries constructed in CT in the past few years, our assumption is that the addition including site costs would be about \$295 sq ft and renovation costs at \$175 if built today. 20,086 sq ft X \$295=\$5,925,370; Renovation/infrastructure: 21,500 X \$175=\$3,762,500; Total today = \$9,687.870. Naturally, these costs will escalate or decrease according to inflation by the time the building is built. This is a very preliminary estimate! A more accurate estimate can’t be made until after the library has revised its building program, hired an architect, and has preliminary drawings.

**Summary of two different Estimate Choices**

1. Existing Library Renovation & Addition: Construction, Site Costs & Architectural Services:
 

Addition & renovation in 5 years	\$12,514,689
Architect Services at 8% of project	\$ 1,001,175
<b>Total Estimated</b>	<b>\$13,515,864</b>
  
2. New building: Construction, Site Costs & Architectural Services
 

New Building construction in 5 years	\$15,847,507
Architect at 8% of project	\$ 1,267,801.
<b>Total Estimated</b>	<b>\$17,115,308</b>



**Budgeting for Architectural Costs**

Percentage	Year	Phase	Renovation/Addition	New Building
Year 1 @ 15%	2011	Schematic	\$150,176	\$190,170
Year 2 @ 15%	2012	Design Development	\$150,176	\$190,170
Year 3 @ 45%	2013	Construction Documents	\$450,529	\$570,510
Year 4 @ 5%	2014	Bid Documents	\$50,059	\$ 63,390
Year 5 @ 20%	2015	Construction Administration	\$200,235	\$253,560

Cost Escalation	Assumptions	Renovation & addition	New Building
Year	Inflation Added	Est. Cost	Est. Cost
Year 1 2011	NA	\$ 9,687,870	\$12,267,870
Year 2 2012	\$640,368	\$10,328,238	\$13,078,776
Year 3 2013	\$682,697	\$11,010,935	\$13,943,283
Year 4 2014	\$727,823	\$11,738,758	\$14,864,934
Year 5 2015	\$775,932	\$12,514,689	\$15,847,507

**Town Snapshot and Demographics**

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**The Town**

A recent issue of Hartford Magazine says Southington has the best quality of life among cities and towns in Hartford County with population above 25,000. It outpaced such well-regarded rivals as Glastonbury, which finished second, third place Windsor and fourth place West Hartford. Southington boasts America’s oldest continuously operating theme park, including a rollercoaster along a cliff-side and a water park. Southington is known for its apple orchards, and holds a popular Apple Harvest Festival in early October.

Southington is town located in Hartford County, Connecticut, and situated about 10 miles east of Waterbury, 82 miles NE of New York, 20 miles southwest of Hartford. The geographic area of the town is 36.9 square miles, ranking it 40th out of 169 Connecticut towns. Southington is located along five exits of Interstate 84, and is known for its high school sports teams, the Southington Blue Knights. The Quinnipiac River flows through the town. The Mount Southington Ski Area, ESPN and Lake Compounce straddle the Bristol/Southington town lines.

Southington is home to more than 42,142 residents. Its population is mostly of European descent. Southington’s per capita income is 30% higher than the U.S. average, while its poverty and crime rates are less than half the state rates.

The Town of Southington adopted the Council-Manager form of government in 1966. The Town has a nine-member Town Council, elected to two-year terms. The Council appoints one of its members to serve as Chairman. At 43 years of service, the current Town Manager is the longest serving town manager in the United States.

**History of Southington**

The name, Southington, comes from a combination of two words: South & Farmington. Before the town was officially incorporated in 1779, it was part of Farmington. Samuel Woodruff settled in Southington in 1698. Two small forts were built in the region. A meeting house, independent of the Farmington parish, was constructed in 1726.

Originally, Southington had several districts. Plantsville, Milldale and Marion each had their own schools

and post offices. Sections of towns that have faded include South End, Flanders and Patton Brook.

When the Farmington Canal was opened in 1828, it was a safe and efficient way to transport goods and passengers to Long Island Sound. The canal ran from Northampton, Mass. to New Haven. With the advent of the railroad, the canal went out of business. Transportation helped make Southington what it is today. Southington and Plantsville Tramway, established in 1888, was one of the first trolley systems in the state and the country. Inter-state 84 changed Southington’s rural nature in the mid-1960s.

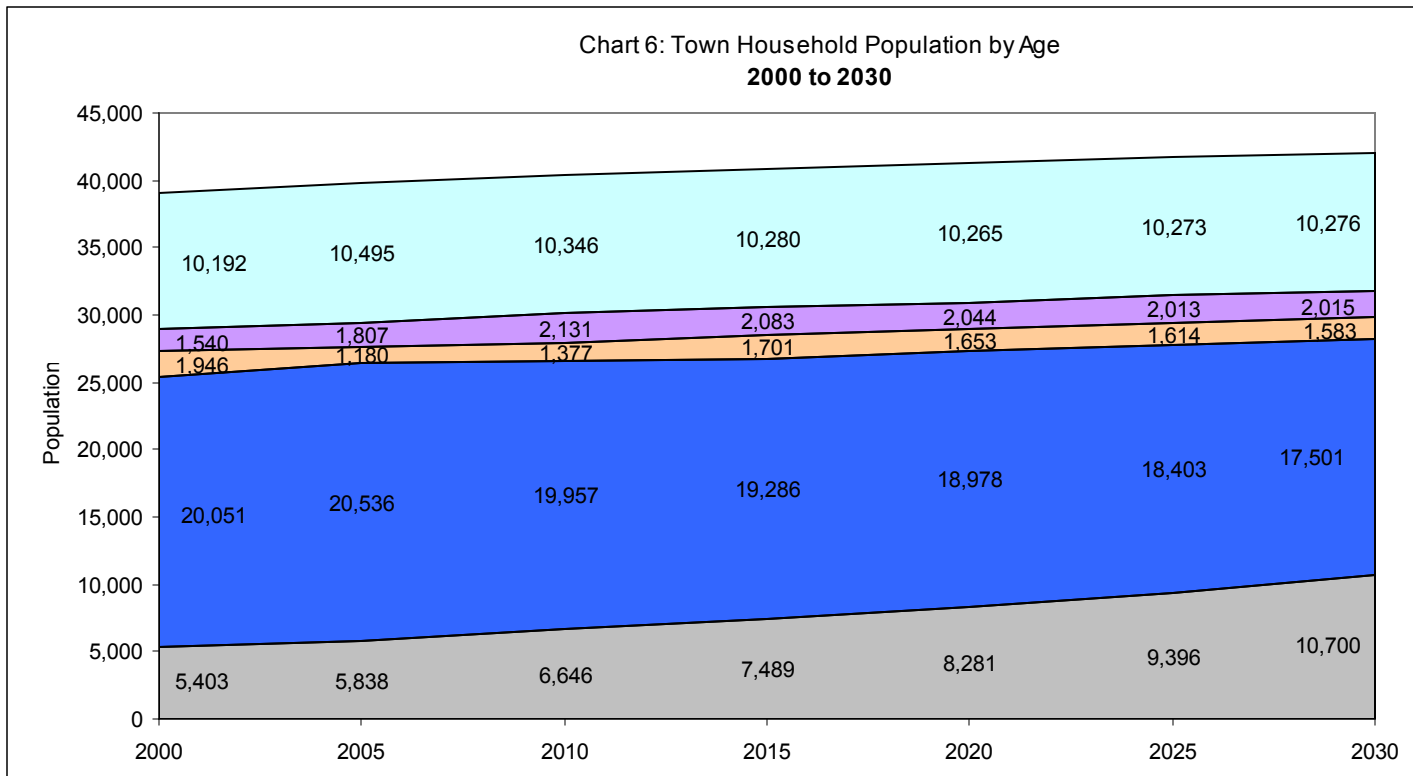
This town was a place where many products were invented or perfected: the coffee grinder, screwdriver, water-based cement, paper bags and the thorn-less rose. Southington also was the location for the first machine-made bolt factory in America.

The oldest house still standing in Southington is the Jonathan Root house. Local legend has it that General George Washington visited the Root House, a tavern, on his way to meet with Rochambeau, who had brought 6,000 French soldiers to aid the American colonists.

**Population & Demographics**

In 2000, Southington was home to some 39,728 residents. As of 2007, Southington’s population had grown by 6.18% to 42,182 people. The population projection chart below is the best tool the library can find at present to determine which services should be targeted to an age group.

Ages 0 – 19, and 65 and over, will have the most substantial growth while ages 30 – 64 will shrink.



- Age 0 to 19
- Age 20 to 24
- Age 25 to 29
- Age 30 to 64
- Age 65 and Over

**Housing Statistics**

As of March 16, 2009, there were 258 houses for sale in Southington with a median asking price of \$275,000. Prices are going down each month. Also on that date there were 29 foreclosures. These houses had a median value of \$204,000. The median home cost in Southington in 2007 was \$355,300.

**Education Statistics**

Southington has eleven schools serving 7,500 students with 432 teachers including 11 librarians. There are 8 elementary schools, 2 middle schools and one large high school. The school system in its 2005 strategic plan determined to use data to evaluate learning, to target professional development and to provide instructional consistency.

Southington public schools spent about \$8,233 per student in 2007. The average school expenditure in the U.S. at that time was \$6,058. In 2007, there were about 15 students per teacher in Southington.

Private schools in Southington include: Central Christian Academy, a Baptist elementary school covering grades 1-12 with 170 students; St. Dominic School, a Catholic elementary school with 192 students; St Thomas School, a Catholic elementary school with 126 students.

Southington is home to two private colleges, offering mostly one and two-year programs. Briarwood College is a small residential college of 43 acres which offers degree programs targeted towards employment skills. The Branford Hall Career Institute in Southington helps adults prepare for work in medical or clerical fields.

About 50% of the town's workers have some college education and about 22% of its residents are college graduates. In 2000, 86% of the population had completed high school or additional education. Business and Employment

**Employment**

The largest employment category is building and construction trades. This includes painting, remodeling, siding, masonry, etc. Consumer services, products and professional services is also a substantial category, covering hair design, photography, accounting, consulting, and architectural services. Shopping and stores as well as healthcare also make a strong showing. The businesses or branches of businesses that have over 100 employees are: Bradley Health Services, Ethicon Endo - Surgery), Hartford Fire Insurance Company, Home Depot, Bradley Hospital, Pilgrim Furniture Town, Medex Southington, Southington Community YMCA, Southington Town School District, Stop & Shop, Town Of Southington, Wal-Mart Store, Yarde Metals. Other leading employment sectors in Southington are skilled machining, high-level engineering, insurance analysis, and health care. The five leading employers in 2002 were Johnson and Johnson, Bradley Memorial Hospital and Health Clinic, Ideal Forging Corporation, J.J. Ryan Corporation, and LMC Light Metals Coloring.

**Revitalization**

Manufacturing was always an important sector in Southington's economy. Today, a large part of this industry involves high-skilled precision manufacturing, such as fabricated metals and aircrafts. Southington has the state's largest Enterprise Zone, with financial and tax incentives to promote new uses of existing industrial areas.

With the decline of industry many old factories and buildings were left vacant. Ideal Forging filed for bankruptcy in 2001. Its factory building was located in the central business district. Meridian Development Partners plans to create upscale homes, condominiums, store fronts, and parks on the former site after contamination remediation is complete. Southington has taken initiative to spur its own revitalization. In 2002, the town completed the downtown renaissance project. This project replaced the sidewalks on Main St. and Center St. with granite curbing and brick pavers. Life-long resident philanthropist, Robert Petroske donated \$50,000 to the revitalization effort, which included decorative lamp posts, benches, rubbish bins, flowering trees and a former fountain. A renaissance zone was created where private business owners in the zone could apply to the town to continue the project. The town water department, which built a new facility in 2002, demolished its former facility

in June 2008 and will be developing the land into a landscaped park, along with a continuation of the sidewalks, iron fences and decorative lamp posts. The old water facility abuts the linear walking trail.

A trail was built over the town's old rail line. Dubbed the Farmington Canal Greenway, when completed it will stretch from New Haven, CT to North Hampton, MA. Southington boasts various parks and open land: Crescent Lake, Panthorn Park, Recreation Park, Southington Dog Park, Southington Little League Fields, and Veterans Memorial Park. In addition there is the Southington Country Club, Hawks Landing Country Club, Pine Val-ley Golf Course, and the Metacomet and Ragged Mountain Trails.

### **Town Facilities and Services with which the Library can Partner**

In addition to library services, the Town's Youth Services department offers various programs to encourage middle and high school age children to become successful in life. Social Services has various programs that provide children with clothing, books, book bags and other items if they cannot afford.

The Southington Parks & Recreation Department offers a variety of programs for all ages in sports and the Arts. The Department runs: open gym, fitness, men's & youth basketball, line dancing, ballroom dancing, safe boating, coed volleyball, arts & crafts, golf clinics, men's & women's softball, summer playground program, youth theater program, swim program, over 50 softball, tennis program, football passing league, trips (both one day and overnight), "Music On the Green" and "Music Off the Green." [Southington is thought of by various focus group participants as a place where "sports are considered more important than the library."]

The Calendar House, under the direction of the Senior Citizen Commission is a multipurpose facility where residents of Southington, age 55 and over meet friends in order to fulfill their social, physical, emotional and intellectual needs. The facility includes class-rooms, a woodworking shop, a coffee/library lounge, a conference room and a game room. Trips and social occasions are offered. The Main Hall houses the Senior Community Café which provides hot meals on weekdays. The Computer Learning Center teaches seniors about computers for a fee; other courses are often free. For the sports minded, Calendar House offers a men's golf league, indoor badminton, mixed bocce league and horse-shoe pits. Their "Dial-A-Ride" Bus Service is available on a daily basis to any Southington resident who is 55 years of age or older. Transportation is available to shopping areas and doctor visits within boundaries of the town as well as to the Calendar House.

### **Southington offers a variety of entertaining places to go:**

The Barnes Museum, which is also operated by the Library Board, displays local historical items, including photos, documents, clothing, and other artifacts which date from the 1800s. Mount Southington Ski area offers a convenient location for Connecticut skiing and snowboarding for all ages and ability-levels with novice and more challenging down- hill runs.

### **Organizations in Southington\*:**

- American Legion Kiltonic Post 72: 66 Main St., 860-621-4243
- Central Connecticut Women's Forum: President, Shirley Bloethe, 860-747-8833
- Democratic town committee: Chairwoman, Elaine Bedard, 860-621-5198
- Falcon Club: 33 Knowles Ave., 860-621-0286
- Greater Southington Chamber of Commerce: One Factory Square, Arthur Secondo, 860-628-8036
- Kiwanis Club: President, Roger Jones, 860-621-7143
- Masonic Temple: 76 Main St., 860-628-4350
- Orchard Valley Garden Club: publicity, Laurie Nelson, 860-628-8783
- Republican town committee: Chairman, Edward Pocock II, 860-628-2942
- Southington Rotary: Victoria Triano
- Southington Historical Society and Center: 239 Main St., President, Robert Cusano.
- Unico: President Richard Lopatoski

\*contacts listed as of June 2009

**Primary Goal 1: Ensure the community participates in and becomes aware of the Library's role as a Community Cen-**

**Objective: Participate as a "branded library community center" in various community events.**

Actions	Start	Complete	Personnel
Develop a movable display set to use at community events <i>(i.e. Music on the Green/Apple Harvest)</i>	10/09	05/10	Library Director/Adult Program Planner/Head of Children's/Head of Reference/Head of Lending
Facilitate off-site Library Card Registration	01/10	09/10	Head of Collection Management/Head of Lending
Identify and Train "Library Ambassador" volunteers who will appear at "outside" venues to champion the Library.	02/10	09/10	Library Director/Department Heads

**Objective: Assist in Creation of Southington Unified Arts Calendar**

Actions	Start	Complete	Personnel
Library offers to create and coordinate an online calendar	10/09	12/09	Library Director
Library trains community representative on using calendar	01/10	04/10	Collection Management staff

**Objective: Outreach to the Homebound**

Actions	Start	Complete	Personnel
Identify who needs the service	10/09	02/10	Reference and Lending Departments
Identify volunteer skills needed	01/10	08/10	Library Director/Reference/Lending Departments
Write volunteer policy/adopt policy	12/10	10/10	Library Director/Reference/Lending Departments/ Library Board
Advertise for volunteers with needed skills	10/10	12/10	Library Publicist
Assign volunteer responsibility	12/12	1/11	Department Heads

<b>Objective: Target Specific Service Increases</b>			
Actions	Start	Complete	Personnel
<b>Service Consistency in staff interactions</b>			
Create comprehensive procedures manuals	10/09	06/10	Library Director/Department Heads
Make policies/procedures available	06/10	12/10	Board of Directors/Library Director
<b>Redirect Programming</b>			
More programming for seniors	06/10	06/15	Adult Programming Coordinator
More programming for older elementary students	05/10	06/15	Children's Librarians
Programming for teens	?	06/15	New Teen Librarian
<b>Encourage Creative Mind Sets</b>			
Staff make accurate task lists	10/09	06/10	Department Heads/Staff
Staff brainstorm improvements	04/10	04/11	Department Heads/Staff/Library Director/Consultant
Improve interdepartmental cooperation	10/10	06/12	Staff/Library Director/Consultant
<b>Keep technology up-to-date</b>			
Research direct email to public through Triple I	10/09	04/10	Lending Department Head/Adult Programming Coordinator
Monitor technology plan	10/09	12/15	Department Heads/Library Director
Update staff tech skills	10/09	12/15	Department Heads/Library Director



**Objective: Target Specific Service Increases - continued**

Actions	Start	Complete	Personnel
<b>Increase Services to Teens</b>			
Create position to serve teens	09/10	06/12	Library Director/Board of Directors
Promote services through schools	?	12/15	New Teen Librarian
Convene teen advisory group	?	12/12	New Teen Librarian
Add service hours if needed	10/10	12/15	Library Director/Board of Directors

**Primary Goal #2: Implement New Comprehensive Marketing Plan**

**Objective: Improve Public Awareness of all programs and services offered by the Library**

Actions	Start	Complete	Personnel
Target opportunities to promote library	10/09	12/15	Library Director/Publicist
<b>Research ways to reach non-users</b>			
use email/social networks	06/10	12/15	Department Heads/Library Director/Adult Programming Coordinator
obtain funding for marketing	01/12	12/15	Board of Directors/Friends/Library Director
assign marketing responsibility to new or existing staff member	06/12	12/12	Library Director

**Objective: Improve Public Awareness of all programs and services offered by the Library**

Actions	Start	Complete	Personnel
Create a Library Advocacy Committee	10/09	06/10	Board of Directors/Library Director
Train Library Advocates	06/10	06/11	Library Director/Department Heads/Publicist
Target opportunities for Advocates to “do their stuff”	06/11	12/12	Library Director/Department Heads/Publicist
Set up interviews or meetings with targeted groups			
Give them tours	12/09	12/15	Library Director
Give them in depth look at how the library works	02/10	12/15	Department Heads

**Major Long Term Goal: Obtain a larger efficiently designed library that will permit excellent services**

**Objective: Find Funding Sources**

Actions	Start	Complete	Personnel
Obtain funding for preliminary architect & engineer study	12/09	06/10	Library Director
Check Grant possibilities	12/09	04/10	Library Director
Investigate fund-raising done by other libraries & nonprofits	12/09	01/10	Library Director/Information Department
Assess volunteer vs. professional fundraiser	04/11	06/11	Library Director/Board of Directors
Board determines fundraising goals	06/11	06/11	Library Director/Board of Directors
Board has fundraising campaign	06/11	06/12	Board of Directors/Library Director/Fundrais-
er(?)			

**Objective: Create Building Plan**

Actions	Start	Complete	Personnel
Revise 2000 Building Plan			
Write an RFP for Building Consultant	02/10	06/10	Library Director
Select and hire Consultant	06/10	08/10	Library Director/Board of Directors
Complete the Building Plan	08/10	02/11	Library Director/Board of Directors/Consultant
Ensure ADA, LEED and space compliant	02/11	03/11	Consultant
Board accepts Building Plan	04/11		Library Board
Building Committee is formed	06/11		?

**Objective: Design then build new library**

Actions	Start	Complete	Personnel
Get funding for next phase	06/11	08/11	Board of Directors/Library Director
Develop and send out RFP for architect	08/11	12/11	Library Director/Board of Directors
Select/Interview/Hire architect	01/12	03/12	Library Director/Board of Directors
Complete Schematic plan	03/12	06/12	Architect/ Library Director
Complete Preliminary design	06/12	10/12	Architect/Library Director
Apply for State Grant	06/12	10/12	Library Director/Board of Directors
Complete Construction Documents	10/12	02/13	Architect/Library Director

Actions	Start	Complete	Personnel
Complete bid docs/bid and hire construction company	02/13	04/13	Library Director/Board of Directors
Create temporary services plan	06/12	12/12	Library Director/Board of Directors
Work with architect during construction	04/13	06/14	Library Director
Move into redone building	06/14		Library Director/staff/Board of Directors

# Appendices

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**Southington Library & Museum Community Based Long Range Planning Committee**

John Barry, Town Council Chairman  
Joseph Erardi, Superintendent of Schools  
Kelly Berkmoes, Youth Prevention Coordinator S.T.E.P.S. Liaison  
Louis Perillo, Southington Economic Development Director  
Doris LaRese, President, Friends of Southington Library  
John Myers, Executive Director Southington Cheshire YMCA  
Crystal Heft, Director Early Childhood Collaborative  
Cindy Cayer (at large member)  
Chris Palmieri, Vice-principal, DePaola Middle School  
Bob Verderame, Executive Director, Calendar House (Senior Center)  
Barbara Mackay, Dean of Student Life, Briarwood College  
Rich Corcoran, Executive Director, United Way of Southington  
Trish Walden, Vice President, Central Connecticut Senior Health Services, Inc.  
Theresa O'Connor, Chairman, Library Board  
Linda Deluca, Southington Arts & Crafts Association  
Susan Zoni, Literacy Volunteer  
Ed Pocock, Sr. (at large member)  
Daria Smith (At Large Member)  
Jason Pisko, Teen Representative  
Ellie Dietz, Chamber of Commerce



## Southington Library 1st Planning Meeting Report

Tuesday Jan 27th, 2009

Group members introduced themselves and told why they had been interested in committing to coming to 3 - 4 planning meetings. The consultant, Beth Mainiero described the Planning Process. A few people shared thoughts about "The Future of Libraries" readings & viewings

### Mission

The group heard the existing mission: To provide opportunities for each citizen-customer to improve their lives through: the knowledge gained from great books, instilling a love for reading in children, and providing innovative media resources, responsive children's and information services, recreational reading and outstanding museum resources.

Each attendee then wrote and shared their ideas for a mission. People seemed to like the idea of having a proactive short statement that the staff could easily remember if someone asked them what the library aims to accomplish. The mission that most people liked is:

The Southington Library is a community center/hub for lifelong educational enlightenment.

This mission statement will be reviewed at the 2nd Planning Committee meeting. Final statement determined by the group will be taken to the Board for approval.

SWOTS (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities- we did not do Threats but will see what the public focus groups list as threats)

The group brainstormed the strengths, weaknesses and opportunities of and for the library:

### Strengths

#### Programming

\*\*\*<sup>1</sup> Children's programming and reading readiness preparation

Seniors programming

### Organization

Return on investment

Leadership & Partnership

Committed Board

Adapts to changing needs

### Building

Central location

Atmosphere

### Services

Outreach through Internet, Barnes Museum and mail

\*\*Used book store

Highlights the arts

Publicity

### Personnel

Staff expertise

Administration willingness

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<sup>1</sup> \*astericks denote number of times a person affirmed the statement.

Weaknesses

Organization

Fiscal support for technical updates

Busy residents lives prevent library use

Image- community is unaware that so much is offered

Building

Physical plant is too noisy

\*\*\*\*\*Parking

All spaces are too small

Signage

Aisles are too small; lighting not good; it is difficult to access materials

Services & Collection

Historical room

Lack of ESL and literacy materials

Bookstore hours

Lack of teen programs

Lack of sufficient inventory

Personnel

A few unapproachable staff members

Opportunities

Organization

Get a one million dollar grant

Advocacy groups

Develop more of a relationship with the school system

Make Town/School/Library partnerships and community collaborations

Building

\*New Parking lot

Land is available for parking lot

Building expansion

Services

\*Technology opportunities

Strategic PR and marketing

Catalog the historical collection

People to people outreach

\*Embrace young people's skills (ie: radio that involves teens)

Embrace the arts

Blue Sky Dreaming

Each person was asked to do a little Blue Sky Library Dreaming for the year 2019 and turn it in.

The resulting synthesis of everyone's blue sky dreaming is the following:

It is the year 2019. The Southington Library has become a spacious "flagship" destination for people of all ages in the community who want to grow and learn, exchange ideas, and be challenged intellectually and culturally. The library has gained the community's respect as an essential and integral component of the Town. It is a state-of-the-art environment that is easy to access, welcoming, warm and inviting. It offers multi-media experiences in an ambiance conducive to learning; it serves as a hub reaching out to people to promote lifelong enlightenment. People of all ages find opportunities there for culture, education, socializing and leisure. It draws people in because the atmosphere welcomes everyone.

The library is now housed in a new modern building (or renovated existing library facility with addition) that meets the storage, technological and programming needs of 2019. This was accomplished by a program that called for flexible compartmented spaces that could be easily changed to accommodate present needs and future planning. Teens, children, “tweens”, adults, technology stations all have areas. There are study rooms that are a haven for quiet contemplation as well as several meeting rooms so that programs can be offered for children, teens and adults simultaneously. As one would suspect, this required a much larger parking lot than the library had in the past. This new library building was designed as a “green” building that utilizes technical advances to keep utility costs low. It is certified at a LEED platinum level.

The best features of the new library are:

- Architecturally it is lovely to behold.
- It is well laid out for book browsing, periodical reading, visual art lovers and history buffs.
- It is bright and airy, a result of the combination of natural light and task lighting. No matter what people are doing, whether they are trying to see titles on bottom shelves, read a book, or work at a computer without glare, the lighting is appropriate.
- People like the Café and the book store combination and the outdoor gardens
- There is improved access to materials – with wide aisles between book stacks.
- It has checkout and check in areas that don’t impede traffic flow.

The Library offers services that are proactive rather than reactive. Artists and authors are encouraged to meet, and to provide programs for the public. There are lectures on genealogy and history, and musical and drama events. Teens are welcome, accepted and enjoy the participation that encourages their interests.

The town has acknowledged the need for sufficient staff to offer and perform this enhanced level of activity. Materials are current and technology is cutting edge. Books are there for borrowing and the used book store continues to be popular for people who wish to buy books at a reasonable price.

Meeting Dates:

Next Meeting of the Planning Committee is March 24, 5:30pm – 7pm. Pizza will again be served.

Agenda for 2nd Meeting:

- Review mission and Blue Sky statements for changes or reaffirmation
- Write a Vision
- Create a byline/motto/maxim
- Choose library service roles
- Review focus group input for themes
- Suggest goal and/or objective themes for staff to hone into goals, objectives and activities to meet the objectives.

Other meeting dates to help recruit people (both library users and non users) to attend:

- Parents of school age children Library Meeting Room Thursday March 5, 9:15am – 10:45am
- Seniors Library Meeting Room Thursday March 5, 2:00pm – 3:30pm
- Teens Possibly at the school Thursday March 12 – time TBA
- General Community Town-wide Focus Perhaps 3/12, or 3/18, or 3/19 at Derynoski School

Planning Member Meeting Attendees:

John Barry, Kelly Berkmoes, Cindy Cayer, , Ellie Deitz, Linda Deluca, Joseph Erardi, Doris LaRese, Barbara Mackay, John Myers, Theresa O’Connor, Chris Palmieri, Louis Perillo, Jaso Pisko, Ed Pocock, Daria Smith, Bob Verderame, Trish Walden, Susan Zoni

Unable to attend:

Richard Corcoran, Crystal Heft

## Southington Library 2nd Planning Meeting Report Tuesday March 24th, 2009

### Mission

The group revised the mission to be suggested to the Library Board for approval to read:

The Southington Library is a community center that stimulates lifelong education and cultural enrichment.

### Service Roles

Discussing choices of service roles appeared to be a challenge, perhaps because participants had not been sent service role descriptions so they could prepare thoughts on the subject. What was apparent was that committee members wanted the library to be all that it could be to everyone. It was difficult to hone choices, especially since many of the American Library service roles seem a little outdated. It was suggested that we combine some statements to make them more appropriate for Southington Library. The following consolidated statements are made from combinations suggested at the meeting. They are submitted here for immediate (through email) member reaction, suggestions and input<sup>2</sup>.

- Basic and literacy: Southington Library will offer services that address people's needs to read and speak English in order to best perform their essential daily tasks.
- General Information: Southington Library will offer skills, a sufficient supply of up-to-date technology, and help in finding, evaluating and using information on a broad array of topics including consumer choices and local government.
- Cultural Awareness: Southington Library will increase awareness of culture, the arts and history and genealogy in order to raise an understanding of cultural heritage in the community.
- Current Topics, and Titles: Southington Library will purchase in-demand titles and topics in various formats and sufficient quantities to satisfy resident demand.

Themes emerging from the focus groups', staff, and planning committee input indicated to those present the direction that goals might address. Susan and Beth will work on a draft of goals, objectives and activities to present online to planning committee members for reaction. These will include timelines that accommodate "quick fixes" that won't hamper the push for a better facility and long term goals positioned throughout the next five years.

The following were suggested as broad topics that goals could be grouped under:

- Learning and Education
- Information and reference material
  - o Have sufficient staff to help everyone learn how to use the technology
  - o Study longer or revised hours of opening including Sundays
  - o Ensure consistent funding that keeps all collections current
- Culture and arts
  - o Serve book clubs
- Consumer/Community/ Government
- Business and vocational

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<sup>2</sup> As they say on "Dancing with the Stars," these are presented in no particular order.

<sup>3</sup> Please note - Technology didn't seem to fit in the Titles and Topics as requested so I have added it to general information.

In order to address these properly, it was felt that the support underpinnings that would best permit the above to be addressed are:

- Outreach
- Building- Short term
  - o Add more and better technology now
- Building- Long term
  - o Position the library as a welcoming and enticing place
  - o Get a building that works better
  - o Have an internal facility audit
  - o Look at how other communities faced a similar situation
  - o Address physical limitations of the library; upgrade it and expand it
  - o Add parking spaces, quiet study areas and small group congregating areas. Also improved signage, a relocated or 2nd elevator that is large enough for a gurney.
  - o Reuse but update the old building program
  - o Have an architectural study to incorporate ideas to showcase with the public
  - o Do a feasibility study
- Public relations
  - o Educate people about the importance of the Community Library
  - o Build support for a new(or larger) library
  - o Get the community ready for the push for a better library
  - o Have a grassroots movement
  - o Tell the story of how the library enhances the community
  - o Deal with the attitude in Southington which says that “The library is good enough for us”.
  - o Get many residents of all ages to visit libraries in other towns to see and explore better facilities to raise horizons- perhaps run library tours

Blue Sky Dreaming for the year 2019 was approved as follows:

It is the year 2019. The Southington Library has become a spacious “flagship” destination for people of all ages in the community who want to grow and learn, exchange ideas, and be challenged intellectually and culturally. The library has gained the community’s respect as an essential and integral component of the Town. It is a state-of-the-art environment that is easy to access, welcoming, warm and inviting. It offers multi-media experiences in an ambiance conducive to learning; it serves as a hub reaching out to people to promote lifelong enlightenment. People of all ages find opportunities there for culture, education, socializing and leisure. It draws people in because the atmosphere welcomes everyone.

Meeting Dates:

Next Meeting of the Planning Committee is Tuesday April 28, 5:30pm – 7pm. Pizza will again be served.

Agenda for 3rd Meeting:

Review rewritten library service roles and change as needed and adopt

Review goals and objectives and change as needed, then adopt

Create a byline/motto/maxim

Please remember to email Susan Smayda ([smadyas@southington.org](mailto:smadyas@southington.org)) and Beth Mainiero ([emainiero@hotmail.com](mailto:emainiero@hotmail.com)) your current thoughts, changes, and recommendations to emails received when you get them so that we can have a revised version to present at the next meeting.

Planning Member Meeting Attendees:

John Barry, Kelly Berkmoes, Cindy Cayer, Linda Deluca, Joseph Erardi, Doris LaRese, Barbara Mackay, John Myers, Theresa O’Connor, Jason Pisko, Daria Smith, Trish Walden, Susan Zoni

Unable to attend: Rich Corcoran, Ellie Deitz, Chris Palmieri, Louis Perillo, Ed Pocock, Bob Verderame

## Southington Library 3rd Planning Meeting Report Tuesday May 12, 2009 5:30 pm – 6:45pm

In the Dining-room of the Barnes Museum

The group approved the mission and vision which should now be sent to the Library Board for approval.

Mission:

**The Southington Library is the community center and premier resource for information, life-long learning and cultural enrichment.**

Vision:

Southington Library & Museum will provide the following services to all members of our community from the very youngest child to our most senior citizens.

In discussing the library's roles, 1st, it was clear that the term "role" is confusing. 2nd, the Planning Committee attendees were adamant that services can't be added unless a new library or a facility addition with renovation is built! They also advised that the Museum be included in the goals towards cultural enrichment, that the bookstore group devise a statement of mission. In consequence, the following reflect s wording and rearrangement to an alphabetical listing that reflects their advice:

Primary task to accomplish:

Facility Upgrade- Because the library has already been arranged and rearranged several times to maximize existing space, it is impossible to make more space to serve an estimated 44,000 population. The building was built in 1976 for a population of 33,800. It is 21,500 sq ft; state guidelines show a need for 41,586 sq ft. Southington must build a new building or an addition to the current building in order to serve in the future!

Service Priorities to be emphasized 2010- 2015 within resources available:

Cultural Awareness: Southington Library and Museum will increase awareness of:

- culture,
- the arts,
- history and
- genealogy

Current Topics and Titles: Southington Library will purchase in-demand titles and topics;

- in various formats and
- abundant quantities

Information Delivery Systems: Southington Library will offer information and technology skills:

- by offering an abundant supply of up-to-date technology,
- by extending help in finding, evaluating and using information on a broad array of topics including:
  - o consumer choices
  - o local government.

Life Skills: Southington Library will offer services designed to provide and promote:

- reading readiness,
- reading and technology literacy skills
- opportunities for the enjoyment of lifelong reading.



The group brainstormed a byline to assist in “branding” the library:

**Create! Explore! Engage!**

The group was entranced with Sue’s wish: That the Greenway Commons development in the center of Town have a library component which would feed people to shops to buy and feed people to the library as a true central cultural complex.

No next Meeting of the Planning Committee is currently set.

Please remember to email Susan Smayda (smadys@southington.org) and Beth Mainiero (emainiero@hotmail.com) your current thoughts, changes, and recommendations to emails received so that we can revise the draft before it is too late.

Planning Member Meeting Attendees:

Kelly Berkmoes, Cindy Cayer, Joseph Erardi, Doris LaRese, Barbara Mackay, Daria Smith, Chris Palmieri, David Monti. All would like copies of the final plan. Guest: Sandy Micalizzi

The following is the important portion of the draft document as revised to 5/15/2009

Trends currently affecting the Library

The goals are planned with awareness that these negative trends could affect actualization:

- Bad economic environment
- Newspapers disappearing
- Propensity of people to need “information bombardment” before marketing reaches their cognizance.

### **Preamble**

The Southington Library will do everything it can to accomplish the services identified by focus group participants during the 5 years of this Long Range Plan. However, at present:

Children’s room is:

- small, overflowing, busy and noisy
- disturbs adults

Community Room:

- seats 60 when 120 people wish to sign up

Staff work areas are:

- crammed into hallways
- tucked under the stairs

In consequence, few in-house services can be added. The majority of the goals then are phased steps towards obtaining a new building, an addition to the present building, and extending the library to the populace.

### **Service Goal 1: Administration, Board and Staff members will ensure public awareness of the Library as a Community Center.**

A. Participate as a “branded library community center” in various community events (i.e.: Music on the Green, Apple Festival, etc.)

Activities:

1. Develop a moveable display set
2. Facilitate off site library registration
3. Identify and train volunteers who will represent the library at these functions

B. Assist in the creation of a Southington Unified Arts Cultural Calendar.

Activities:

1. Library Director will volunteer to have the library coordinate a cultural calendar.

2. Library staff will train representatives from all the participating agencies to input their contributions.

Outreach to those unable to come to the library

Activities:

1. Identify those who need the service
2. Identify volunteers who will deliver to the homebound\
3. Staff will train Volunteers
4. Staff will choose materials to be delivered.

Increase “perks and freebies” incentives that advertise the library to the public

Activities

1. Evaluate existing perks & prizes:
  - a) Adult programs with prizes, drawings i.e.: Nano Ipod gift for those who register for downloadable books
  - b) Add more museums
2. Find new ways to let people know about chosen offerings

Increase the role of volunteers and library friends including teens

Activities

1. Identify volunteer needs in each age group
  - a) Seniors
  - b) Teens
  - c) Working people
2. Identify volunteer skills needed by the library
3. Evaluate and renegotiate the current volunteer situation vis-à-vis the union contract Advertise for volunteers with those skills
4. Write up a volunteer policy and have the Board of Directors of Governors adopt it.
5. Assign volunteer recruitment and coordination responsibility to an existing or new part time staff member
6. Recruit & expand an advocacy committee to reinforce and broaden library support

Target specific service increases to satisfy public input recommended by focus groups

Activities

1. Work towards service consistency in staff interaction with the public
  - a) Correct the staff manual
  - b) Make policies easily available & up to date
2. Redirect some of the programming towards:
  - a) “Seniors” who are library users
  - b) Use input from focus groups to design programs for older elementary school children
  - c) Design special programs for Teens
3. Encourage staff to rethink service in new creative mind-sets
  - a) Staff to make lists of actual tasks performed.
  - b) Staff to brainstorm improved ways to accomplish same results
  - c) Encourage interdepartmental cooperation in order to better serve the public.
4. Keep pace with technology
  - a) Staff to research direct email to public through the Millennium Computer System
  - b) Monitor the technology plan in terms of service: to the public
  - c) Update staff technology skills with education & training
5. Increase services to teens
  - a) Promote existing services to teens through school system
  - b) Convene a teen committee to implement teen services. i.e.: Mother/Daughter reading club
  - c) Create a staff position whose primary responsibility is for teen services
6. Add and/or retain added service hours if evaluation shows a need

Service Goal 2: Communication: use new methods to market potential library services, collections and programs so that more people know more about what the library has to offer.

Improve public awareness about the library's Long Range Plan which includes the mission, goals, objectives, services, collections, programs, building, staffing, and budget

Activities

1. Target PR towards explaining opportunities
2. Research options to reach non-users:
  - a) use of e-mail to make direct connections
  - b) funding needed to market the library
  - c) assigning responsibility to an existing or new part time staff member

Gain support from the city administration & general public.

Activities:

1. Create a Committee that is an advocacy group for the library
2. Teach the advocacy committee about the library & how to become an advocate for the library using:
  - a) Pamphlets,
  - b) On-line course events,
  - c) Speakers
3. Target specific community groups to educate about the library through interviews, and group meetings:
  - a) Give them tours of excellent local library of similar population
  - b) Give them in-depth introductions to what & how the library works

**Primary Task: Obtain adequate space in order to accomplish the mission established in this Long Range Plan**

Overall Objective: Find sources of funding for the project

Activities:

1. Obtain money for preliminary architect & engineer study
2. Check into grant possibilities
3. Inquire about fundraising done by other agencies or non-profits
4. Assess the role of volunteer versus hired fundraising professional to evaluate the potential of fundraising from the community. Assess and engage a fundraiser.
5. Board makes decisions with assistance of financial advisors in regards to fundraising
6. Library has a fundraising campaign
7. Board of Directors goes to city for funding

Overall Objective: Create and carry out a current and future building plan that addresses & corrects the deficiencies of the existing building in order to support the service roles of the library.

Activities:

1. Rearrange existing collections for maximum accessibility for users.
2. Revise the 2000 building program according to current building needs.
  - a) Write an RFP for a building consultant
  - b) Select and hire a consultant
  - c) Work with the consultant to complete the building program
3. Building program should include elements which will assist American with Disabilities, and provide sufficient space for services necessary for children, teens, large meetings, for the growing Southington population.
  - a) An elevator that is more convenient.
  - b) Rearrangement and addition of space as necessary
  - c) Sufficient parking
  - d) LEED rating according to U.S. Green Building Council's rating system of sustainability as a "green" building
4. Board should formally accept the building program
5. A building committee should be formed

Overall Objective: Design then build the needed renovation/addition

Activities:

1. Get funding towards the next step in obtaining a larger building
2. Develop and send out an RFP for an architect
3. Select, Interview then hire an appropriate architect
4. Work with the architect to complete the schematic phase
5. Work with the architect to complete the preliminary design phase
6. Submit application for state grant construction funding
7. Work with the architect to complete the construction documents phase
8. Work with the architect to complete the bid documents, process the bids and hire the construction company
9. Plan & accomplish a temporary services plan to offer service during construction
10. Work with the architect during construction administration
11. Move into the redone building

#### Long Range Planning Approach

An Advisory Long Range Planning Committee was appointed to give input and advise the Library Director and the consultant about the public's view towards the future. The Advisory Planning Committee looked at their own assumptions, the trends relating to society, technology and the library and staff and public input. They chose a vision for the town and the library system and chose roles, goals and objective themes to be effected towards that vision. The Library Director, along with the consultant and various staff members crafted the wording for the objectives and activities with an accomplishment timeline for the upcoming five years.

#### Planning Committee Outcomes

The library has a revised mission, service responses, goals and objectives and activity tasks to realize the goals between 2010 and 2015.

#### Building- Short term

- o Add more and better technology now

#### Building- Long term

- o Position the library as a welcoming and enticing place
- o Get a building that works better
- o Have an internal facility audit
- o Look at how other communities faced a similar situation
- o Address physical limitations of the library; upgrade and expand it
- o Add parking spaces, quiet study areas and small group congregating areas. Also improved signage, a relocated or 2nd elevator that is large enough for a gurney.
- o Reuse but update the old building program
- o Have an architectural study to incorporate ideas to showcase with the public
- o Do a feasibility study

#### Outreach and Public relations

- o Educate people about the importance of the Community Library
- o Build support for a new(or larger) library
- o Get the community ready for the push for a better library
- o Have a grassroots movement
- o Tell the story of how the library enhances the community
- o Deal with the attitude in Southington which says that "The library is good enough for us".
- o Get many residents of all ages to visit libraries in other towns to see and explore better facilities to raise horizons- perhaps run library tours

Long Range Strategic Plan 2009 - 2015  
REPORT: 1st Focus Group, Seniors  
March 5, 2009, 2:00pm  
Southington Library

Consultant introduced herself and the Long Range Planning Process

Participants spoke in turn about the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities of the library and the threats that would prevent opportunities from happening.

Library Strengths-

**Intangible**

Library as a place everyone in the community can enjoy

\*\*\*That the Library exists!

Library is like a community center which is fun to come into

Staff & Volunteers:

\*\*\* Personnel are great from the Library Director on, they are very helpful

Library welcomes changes that bring it "out of the dark ages"

Collections & Equipment:

DVD collection

Books on tape

IRS tax forms

Rearrangement of stacks has made it easier to get to new books and DVDs

Large Print books

Library has what young people need

Collections are varied, all types of books and other materials

Services:

\*\*Reference Desk help

Internet contact

Museum passes

Coffee

Computer classes

\*\* Artists of the month gallery

\*\*\*Delivery of books to assisted living by Michelle

Ability to have meetings in library at no charge

Children's programming

Adult programming

\*\* Bookstore is nice

Interlibrary Loan service where books one wants are requested from another library

Scholar led book discussion like "Southington Reads"

Building and equipment:

Quiet comfortable spaces where one can be quiet

PR/Marketing:

Kiosk peaks interest

## Weaknesses of the Library-

Staff & Volunteers:

\*\* Library is prevented from using volunteers in the provision of library services

Collections and equipment:

Unclear to public and staff where book club books are kept until needed

Could use more large print magazines

\*\*Difficult to use computer; wish the card catalog was back

No DVD or cassette or CD players for personal use in library

Insufficient collections of western theme books

Not enough copies of new books to satisfy demand in reasonable amount of time after books are published

Services:

School classes don't visit

No Sunday hours in winter

No Saturday hours in summer

Buildings:

\*\* Elevator signage is too small and there are not enough to guide one from the entry to it

Need signs in elevator showing what is on each floor and what the floor is named ( not just LL but lower level)

\*\*Not enough signs to the program room downstairs or to give choice of elevator vs stairwell

\*\* Meeting room is too small

\*\*Building is too small

Poor handicap access through back door

\*\* Chairs in reading area are too low for seniors to raise themselves out of

\*\*\*\* Lighting is not what it should be

\*\*\*\*Parking lot is too small

\*\*Parking lot is awful in snow

\*\* Not enough room for bookstore

## Opportunities for the Library -

Staff and Volunteers

Find opportunities for young adults to become volunteers

Try having outpost libraries that will be small library collections without regular staff but run with volunteers

Collections and equipment:

Make better use of the movies and CDs

Get older books as someone asks for them

Move large print to a better lit area

Add more westerns

Have DVD/CD players for public

Services:

Introduce reading at the earliest age possible

Hook up with authors who are making local rounds of bookstores to give talks at the library

Host a program of movie and book reading where people read the book ahead, then see the movie and then discuss the difference between book and movie

Have more meet the authors programs

Include sugar free items when refreshments are served so diabetics can enjoy also

Have a program with coffee and pastries once a month that is like a mini-cafe with themes and discussion ie: Sci Fi, gardening, travel

Host a writers club

Offer free computer classes

Improve the web page

Have book exchanges/trades for kids

Add a higher proportion of large print books into the choices of what to deliver to assisted living places

Open during weekends in summer

\*\*\*Add Sunday night winter hours

Buildings:

Convince the town powers that we need to expand

Utilize the space at the Barnes for more programs ie: poetry

Reinvent the library

Make a clear path to the elevator

Get a bigger meeting room

Set up chairs for lecture type events with staggered seating so one can see around people heads

Have more erect seating chairs in reading area that have higher seats and arms that one can easily push upon to get out of

PR and marketing:

Need better publicity

Get more people into the library

Get a mascot for the children's room –( but not a real animal because of allergies)

Advertise the chess game especially to drum up interest in intergenerational playing of teens or children with seniors

Volunteer to be on the Faith Middleton NPR show

Encourage a love of reading

Make the environment more like Borders or Walden books

Enhance the library's Internet presence

Send a mailing to all town residents to inform them about the Internet resources available to them through the Internet

Have fundraising efforts

Get better signs to and for elevator

Put a map in several areas of the lower level to show the way to exit in an emergency

Constraints or Barriers to Library's ability to carry out opportunities-

Intangibles:

\*\*\*\*\*Finances of town

Political process requires to many referendums to get anything to happen. Process is onerous

Union contract

\*\*Town priorities are for sports, not the Arts!

Prevailing attitude that computers will take the place of libraries because of the Internet

Building:

\*\*\*\*Space

\*\*Lack of parking spaces is a big deterrent for those trying to get to the library for a program or just to use it

Poor parking lot runoff of melting snow make use an obstacle

Services

Hours of operation too short

Pr and Marketing

Lack of public awareness of library offerings

Focus Participants:

Doris W. Lipetz

Doris LaRese

Ellen Ciak

Nancy Bowman

Joan Savig

Francis Escott

Sandra Winter

Corie Lanning

Laurie J. Nelson

Uta Zickfeld

Claudia Hudson

Faith Andrade

Chuck Miceli

D.A. Ruzzi

Eleanor Furia

Veronica Riggs

Julia Hillander

Marion Domalavage

Susan Smayda Library Director

Elizabeth Mainiero Consultant

Special thanks to Susan Smayda for writing participants input on the large pad in very readable printing!



## REPORT: 2nd Focus Group, High School Students March 12, 2009, 3:00pm School

Sue Smayda brought Pizza, Drinks and Chocolate Cake were provided by High School Library staff members Stephanie Patterson and Beth Hosmer Sue introduced herself, the Long Range Planning Process, and Beth

The students were asked about What they liked about the library, what their dream library would be like, what kind of library they would like to have available to them when they were in their 40s-50s, and hat is the worst thing about the current library.

### What the students like about the library- (Strengths)

Staff & Volunteers:

- Librarians

Collections & Equipment:

- \*\*\*\*\*Computers for research<sup>4</sup>
- Library has everything you need when doing a homework project
- Good selection of books

Building :

- 2nd floor place for teens
- Cubicles for study
- Comfortable to be there and welcome
- \*\*The reading space is a safe area
- One can use the café area to layout big projects and to be able to talk to interview someone
- Library is well organized; it is easy to find what you want

### What is the worst thing about the library now (weaknesses)

Collections and Equipment:

- Long wait for books
- \*\*\*Not enough computers

Services:

- Hours too short on Friday & Sat

Building:

- Too noisy
- Parking lot too small
- Loose railing in Young Adult area

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<sup>4</sup>A \* indicates how many times this was mentioned

- Bathrooms too small
- Difficult to have to take donations downstairs instead of being able to leave them right at the door when one comes into the library

If they could have whatever we wanted now, what would they ask for? (Opportunities)

- Make a roof café and lounge space
- Add a patio where we can read outside
- Bigger windows
- A way to give book suggestions both online and on a clipboard
- Benches where older people can sit and look at the new books while they select them or other books
- More computers
- An opportunity for Key Club members to read books to people at the library as volunteers. This could be to young or older people

### Their Dream Library would have- (Opportunities)

Services:

- \*\*\*Need teen programs with guest speakers. Some could offer information about literature that teens are interested in; others could be about SAT preparation; still more would be speakers from the colleges that would tell about the best and worst of where they go or what their impressions were when they got to the college compared to what they thought the college would be like before they went there.
- Library could offer more academic help
- Library should be offering continuing education throughout life.
- More programs like “1000 books before kindergarten
- Tutoring sessions everyday on demand for free; these could be peer to peer ones with one topic ie: algebra one day and another course topic the next day.
- More special events for teens
- Library cards where one could use their bar code to check in & out. One thought would be to have a credit added onto the card that could be subtracted as one made copies or had a fine to pay or bought pens and pencils or used books at the bookstore.

Building:

- Would have a movie area where educational related and other films could show on a wall during the week on demand and planned advertised programs could be offered on week-ends.
- \*\* A third floor with more room
- An expanded café with books arranged there by subject and genre with excellent signage for each separate segment
- \*\*\*\*Quiet private spaces for teens
- Sound proof group rooms for group projects where it is okay to be noisy. These might also be used for making music or a film or other types of group activities
- Teen area like a rocket ship- take off in life thought
- Game room
- Day care for parents

Collections & Equipment:

- Copies of their High School texts
- Bigger selection of movies and documentaries
- Better organization of books- arrange them by genre like a bookstore.
- Have displays related to each of these genre
- Label collection areas better
- Self checkout
- Wi-fi (note: library already offers this)

Public Relations:

- Better advertising about what one can find

Staff & Volunteers:

- More job opportunities for young people

When they are in our 20's, this is what they would want (Opportunities)

Collections and equipment:

- \*\*\*Excellent collection in various formats to assist us to learn languages
- Room about travel, study abroad, and vacations
- Continue to have information re colleges

Services:

- Sell supplies for projects in the bookstore

Buildings:

- Quiet, not too many kids in our area
- Comfortable
- Space for us
- More of a café
- A much bigger meeting room
- More meeting rooms
- Places where groups can hold meetings

When they are in their 40's & 50's, this is what they would want (Opportunities)

Collections and equipment:

- Modern technical equipment that is up to date with whatever is new
- More large print books

Services:

- Offerings that will distract our kids so we can enjoy using the library ourselves
- Day care for the children
- Classes to keep up with continuing education

Building:

- We want to still have a library!

Focus Participants:

Sylvie Chno

Ashlee Belanger

Paul Gentile

Brittany Volpe

Rachel Volpe

Tom Snow

Kali Sciuto

Kate Bellis

Lauren Granato

Mary Terrill

Morgan Brennan

Tyler Nicols

Kayley Sisco

Pavlina Piotrowski

Amanda Michaud      Did not attend but shared her information which was incorporated into the above input

Susan Smayda    Library Director

Elizabeth Mainiero      Consultant

High School library people Stephanie Patterson and Beth Hosmer

Special thanks to Susan Smayda for writing participants input on the large pad in very readable printing!

## Report: 3rd Focus Group. Parents of Elementary School Students March 12, 2009, 4:00 p.m. Children's Program Room

As the elementary school children gathered and went off to the lower level program room, their parents were encouraged to come into the tiny program room off the children's area.

In an environment of parent watchfulness on their younger children playing in the Children's Room, and young children wandering in to see what their parents were doing, the parents shared: What they liked about the library, what they thought could improve, what their dream library would be like, and at least one hint about how to get the word out about what was happening at the library.

### What the parents like about the library- (Strengths)

Staff & Volunteers:

- \*\*Staff – “terrific, helpful, pleasant”

Collections & Equipment:

Building :

- \*\*\*\*Computers
- Safe here
- Outside book return

Services:

- \*\*\*\*Afterschool programs: this gives children “something to look forward to...”
- Children's Programs
- Story times
- Summer Reading with prizes for kids
- Things to keep younger kids amused and busy
- Puppet theatre
- Cover-to-cover book discussions – “supplement school”
- Online renewal
- Artist's Apprentice program

### Weaknesses

Collections and Equipment:

- Need more books on CD for younger elementary school children with books so they can look at words while hearing the story
- Not enough books for kids during the summer; need more copies of books on lists

Services:

- Not enough programs for preschoolers
- \*\*\*\*\*Need more afternoon programs for younger kids especially after kindergarten age

- Timing of programs for 4 – 5 yr. old is bad- this is when we take older children to their afterschool involvements
- Children’s program are once a month – books are due every three weeks; we suggest that the two times be synchronized so we come back when the books are due

Building:

- \*\*\*Not enough space for parents who come with kids
- \*\*\*\*\*Not enough parking
- Hard to go to check-out and wait in line with kids hanging on and no way to keep them from running towards doors on either side

## Opportunities

Collections and equipment:

- Self checkout for children’s room
- Need more books especially in the summer
- More of everything that we already have

Services:

- Make kids summer books circulate for a shorter period
- More family oriented programs – parents want to be involved in the activity or topic too so it becomes an exercise in family together time. “I am here and my child is downstairs at the program. That takes away from our time together.”
- Instill love of reading in kids
- Writing workshop to teach kids to write stories
- Intergenerational Film making program
- Workshops with parents and kids involved

Building

- Need a whole new building; we need to be digging into the hill next door right away
- Need a massive kids department
- More room

Public Relations and Marketing

- Every school has a newsletter. Get library news into each newsletter so the word will be taken home!

Focus Participants:

Parents: Tina Nadeau, Beata Raymond, Janique Simard, Jeanine Shugrue, Melissa Mohr, Carla Wadowski, Karen Nelson, Stephen Standish, Andrea McAfee

Consultant Beth Mainiero

Library Director Susan Smayda

Special thanks to Susan Smayda for taking the fastest notes on record.

## Report: 4th Focus Group, Community, March 19, 2009, 7:00 p.m. Lower Level Meeting Room

Participants shared: The Strengths: what they liked about the library; The Weaknesses: what they thought could improve; Opportunities: or what their dream library would be like; the Barriers or Threats to permitting opportunities to take place; and Public relations or Marketing Suggestions: how to get the word out about what was happening at the library.

### (Strengths)

#### Intangible

- Library is busy and well used
- Appeal to children gets them to the library and steers them toward lifelong reading
- Many things are offered- different collection formats, programs, services
- Barnes Museum is an asset to Town
- Free to all; equally accessible
- Uncensored

#### Staff & Volunteers:

- Director's leadership
- Helpful staff
- Staff are helpful and are good resources for book suggestions or finding information needed
- Staff helps you get whatever you need
- Staff answer "whacky" questions

#### Collections & Equipment:

- Book resources
- Having choices of collections- one can do books, magazines, or DVDs
- Computers are all well used
- Free wi-fi
- Website links to community resources
- Statewide database
- Very good collection

#### Building :

- Good physical location near center of town
- Community meeting place
- \*\*\*\*Has a US Post Office mailbox on premises

#### Services:

- \*\*\*Diversity of services and programs because they appeal to so many diverse groups
- \*\*\*\*Programming is not hit or miss but constant; it seems to take place at all different times to appeal to different affinities
- Programs for children and adults



- \*\* Library is open lots of hours- 64, begins at 9am, not 10
- \*\*Children’s programs
- Programs liked:
  - o book clubs
  - o Southington reads,
  - o meeting with authors
  - o non-traditional programs
    - Musicians
    - Art reception and art in hallway
    - Taste of Southington at Barnes
    - Community programs can take place
- Always amazed at what creative ideas the library comes up with
- Interlibrary loan
- Friends bookstore
- Help with taxes
- Library participates with other community actions; it lets people participate in the Community Food bank and even lets one pay fines by this participation
- Library is not punitive- one is not “nickeled and dimed”

Weaknesses

Collections and Equipment:

- Not enough copies of “Trendy” items that will have a momentary appeal i.e.: books about the decorators on TV
- Collection is dated
- There are outdated materials but not enough new materials being purchased
- Many series book collections are incomplete
- Not enough books on companies or databases on business to be truly helpful to a business person who needs more than what they can get for free on their own on the internet

Staff

- o \*\*No staff specifically for teens; the danger is we will lose them and they will not be reading as they age
- o Not enough staff to help patrons of all ages at all time nor to grow programming

Services:

- No Sunday Hours
- Not all ages of children are well served- middle school is under served and doesn’t have a good space at the doorway nor are there programs for this age.
- Not enough senior outreach or ability to have them bussed to the library

Building:

- \*\*\*\*\*Not enough parking
- \*\*\*\*\*Building is too small therefore various programs can’t grow and improve and it limits it becoming a place of excellence
- Building size limits what goes on in the building
- Building is not energy efficient
- Building is noisy and small therefore encouraging kids to be loud and unruly
- Building is not designed to enclose children’s room acoustically correctly; layout is bad

- Lack of quiet space
- Lighting is awful
- Dark paint makes it even darker and hard to see
- Building looks old and well used; it is ragged and worn- maybe not seedy but getting that way
- Community room is too small
- There is no real auditorium or big enough program room to serve a population of 42,000.
- Staff needs more work area facilities
- No small quiet study nor group study and discussion areas
- Library lacks a computer lab to teach classes
- There is no student center
- Having art displayed in a hallway does not permit good viewing or sufficient art to be displayed
- There is not enough space for the book store
- Not serving the business community well;
  - o no small rooms to work in quietly;
  - o no rooms where a businessman who works at home could reserve a place for a presentation or small meeting

Public Relations

- o Library is not reaching enough people
- o Town’s perception of the library shows a lack of understanding
- o The library is after town hall and the school in priority if it decides to go for a larger building
- o Public takes the library for granted
- o Lack of publicity about funding
- o \*\*\*\*\*Funding is a weakness
  - o Not enough funding
  - o Funding is under Town control
  - o Board doesn’t have the flexibility to spend as it sees fit
  - o Library receives few Charitable contributions
  - o Library misses financial opportunities because of the funding structure – town ill penalize extra funds by reducing yearly budget as donations are given or fund raising takes place
  - o Funding has to compete with other town departments like education which has a huge support group

Opportunities

Staff

- o Get the town to fund a Young Adult librarian
- o Encourage volunteerism at the library
- o Get Friends of the library to take on more than selling books

Collections and equipment:

- o Ensure that the library continues to upgrade tech services with current “bells and whistles” as technology changes
- o Explore opportunities to provide more local historical connections

Services:

- Use this planning project to clarify the library’s core mission “What do we really want to accomplish most? We can’t do everything or be all to all people

- Use this planning project to discover what the library is and what it is not
- Look at duplications of services in town and collaborate with them so each can offer services that are not duplicated but are auxiliary to each other
- Become a Community Hub Center for town activities
- Work collaboratively with other organizations in town
- Offer lots of classes
- Engage people in what takes place in the library so they will want to be engaged with selling the library to others
- Develop an outreach program with service organizations like Kiwanis and Rotary
- Develop and strengthen relationships with schools, historical society, etc
- Look for service niche
- Add a bookmobile or some sort of vehicle delivery to those who won't or can't come to the library
- Strengthen ties with school libraries

#### Building

- Make the library be the center of history, information, art, culture and education for the whole town
- Add a modern building that is at least double in size
- Add more parking
- Put more windows in a larger building
- Make the building an arts and education center
- Be the community focal point for all ages and interest: kids, Young Adults, Businesses
- \*\*\*\*\*Add a food court
- Use a food court (or at least bagels) as an additional funding sources
- \*\* Give us more meeting rooms
- \*\*\*\*\*When larger building is planned, add outdoor spaces for reading- or perhaps a roof garden away from the parking and traffic
- Add more space for teens
- Ensure that the new building doesn't just grow but that it has a good layout plan and permits change and growth through the years
- Build a skywalk to the historical society

#### Public relations

- o Get the town to give sufficient funding for ongoing budget and larger building
- o Develop more advocacy
- o Develop an endowment that provides funding that is in addition to what the town gives and make a compact with the town that permits this enhancement funding without cutting down their level of contribution
- o Encourage endowments
- o Boost local pride with a new library
- o Become higher profile
- o Have a block dance
- o Do more fundraisers
- o Emphasize that property values can increase with a new and improved library
- o Use branding as a technique for marketing
- o Work with the Chamber of Commerce to get businesses involved
- o Create ownership of the library
- o Leverage the relationship with the Barnes to advantage

Threats or barriers to realization of the opportunities

- \*\*\*\*\*Obtaining money
- Location is hemmed in and there is nowhere to go
- Building itself as it is prevents a good renovation
- Current technology prevents progress
- Priority of library is low on list of town building projects
- World around us
- People would rather stay at home than go out
- So many competing activities- there is too much to choose to do and too little time to do everything
- Power structures limit what can be done
- Ability of the Board is lacking to do what needs to be done

Attitudes

- o \*\*\*\*\*Lack of public awareness of what they could have
- o Lack of vision in wider community
- o Politics, pride and attitudes of citizens
- o Town gets in way of itself
- o Voters don't want to spend money
- o Apathy with respect to culture
- o A barrier exists between elderly and youth priorities for where money should be spent to build and expand
- o Complacency
- o Lack of vision

How to get the word out about the library

- o Energize the people who are involved
- o Each person teach one about library needs
- o Use an email list to inform people
- o Have an email newsletter
- o Mail things out; use tax non-profit library mailings
- o Conduct study circles like this about the library with different groups
- o Emphasize that the library is FREE to use
- o Create partnerships with business to promote the library
- o Outreach by having more programs off site
- o Partner with businesses
- o Put weekly programs on Cox
- o Have podcasts
- o Determine (psyche out) the wants and needs of town council and finance board people
- o Encourage groups to hold meetings in the library
- o Use newspapers to run a series of articles about a variety of things
- o Have a "Miss Library"
- o Create an advocacy group
- o Hire or get a volunteer PR firm or person

- o Use various volunteer committees for various needs and causes
- o Formalize what doesn't happen by itself
- o Have a moveable branding visible PR thing at every town event- fairs, parade, Christmas in Village, Music on the Green
- o Put an ad in the newspaper and in other media
- o Bring programs out to the community
- o Emphasize that programs are sponsored by the library for free
- o Develop a strong grassroots effort
- o Endorse candidates who are library friendly
- o Connect volunteers in some project
- o Get United Way involved in the library
- o Get more media interest in the library
- o Do chamber mailings
- o And---get a stalker to come through the library for extra publicity

Focus Participants:

S.M. Chmielewski, Jr.

Jeanne Chmielewski

Marilyn Gordon -

Judy Grotin

Douglas M. Feest

Karen Cirincione

Jim Williamson

Jason Pisko

Cindy Cayer

Cyndi Strosahl

Susan Skarvenko

Theresa O'Connor

Susan Reisman

Malcolm Mackay

Barbara Mackay

John Lord

Charlie Pensarossa

Rev. Richard Koenig

John Smayda

Consultant Beth Mainiero

Library Director Susan Smayda

Special thanks to Susan Smayda for taking notes on many pad pages!

## Notes from Staff Planning Day Workshop – August 2009

This is a straight transcription of the bullets written on the flip chart.

### Public Library Association Planning Process

- Community Vision: 2018
- Strong mayor gov't
- Infrastructure
- o Town Hall (municipal ctr)
- o Community Center Library
- o Teen Center
- Transport – taxi/buses Htfd. New Haven
- Magnet Schools
- Arts Center
- Remember the Barnes

- 
- Veteran's Services
  - Homeless Shelter
  - Food Banks/Fuel Banks
  - Smaller Stores vs. Big Boxes
  - Open space – add parcels from farms
  - Philosophy of Gov't – cost [down arrow] quality
  - Hospital quality?
  - Bookstore synergy

- 
- Diversity on Gov't
  - More Green Businesses
  - Less Residential Development
  - Main St. more attractive
    - o Aesthetic zoning
    - o Blue Back Square
    - o Organic food store
  - More nightlife downtown
  - Teens – should be free
    - o Coffee shop
    - o Teen-friendly
- 

### Community Needs

- Charter Revision
- Sturctural Redevelopment for small business
- Economic Development
- Relief from superfund clean-up  
[legislators] John Larson, Zeke Zalaski
- Library/Arts Center
- Library/Town Hall
- Parking
- Special Services

### Change in Gov't

- Host Candidate's night
- Show need for more space, etc.
- Mon – Thurs. 9 – 9
- Fri/Sat 9 – 5
- No Sunday Hours
- Tie-in Downtown Library and the Barnes
- Second stage [concerts on the green]
- Teens – librarian
  - o School librarian liaison
- Building = Arts, Town, Common
- Parking, Lighting, Security

## Southington Staff Interviews

Conducted Jan – Mar 2009 by Elizabeth Mainiero, Consultant

Staff members were asked about the strengths, weakness, and opportunities of the Southington Library. It is interesting that the majority seem to have worked at this library for many years. At the same time, there was a feeling that what is needed will never be done. The Town does not seem to them to be supportive of more space and collections. It feels to them like the town looks at the library as a play space, not a necessary educational, cultural and intellectual community center hub. There is worry that Joe Taxpayer will have a negative view of spending in poor economic times so he won't want to provide a larger building.

The staff members feel the Library is busy, customer oriented and friendly towards its patrons. The main topic of their conversation was how difficult it is to give modern library services in the 1970's building. Here are their messages which I have recorded in detail in order to be clear what needs corrected someday.

The facility is too open; it has no private places. Acoustics in the building are terrible. In consequence, throughout the building the noise level is often too loud. This is exaggerated when there is a story hour or a busy time and when noise floats over the whole building from the mezzanine. At times it is so noisy that staff members can't concentrate and they feel forced to have to do their planning work at home. Add sound proofing throughout. Glass in a segment of the mezzanine for a quiet study area- or at least add sound proof cubicles.

The building is not as well maintained as it should be. It feels dirty. There are drip spots where ceiling tiles should be replaced, roof leaks in the back stairs where buckets are put out to collect leaks. Although the building has had a repainting in some places, the colors have not all been appropriate. It could use a repainting. Lighting throughout the building is not appropriate for tasks done in each area. It has grown dim as it aged. Hire a lighting expert to design new lighting for every area and obtain the money to have all lighting replaced. Clean and improve the whole ventilating system. Give the HVAC system digital controls rather than the existing pneumatic manual ones.



Parking is terrible. The lot is too small. It is especially bad when meetings like the garden club take place. Additionally, the parking lot is dangerous. It is not well laid out, therefore accidents occur. Unfortunately, people use the parking lot as a drive through to avoid a light. Perhaps a sign at each parking entrance that the library is not a throughway would relieve a little of the parking lot congestion. The library should add 2 or 3 times as much parking.

The Lending department is hampered by only having a small cramped space with no work area and without the manager's office and a book drop being right behind the public work counter. Working the lending desk is like working at Blockbusters. It is perpetually busy. Lending needs a large public area and a room behind the desk with a window so behind-the-scenes work can be done while also watching for when the number of people waiting to be served needs an extra pair of hands to help at the desk. There should be one book drop, not one in a hard to get to spot behind children's stacks and another to service in snowy conditions outside. The public should be able to drive up and drop off books into a book drop like a drive up atm.

The Children's department is totally overcrowded and awkward. The children's area needs to be a much larger self contained, coherently planned, space! It must include a program room, storage, cozy place to read, study place, segmented area for computer use. Perhaps segments of themes spaces that will excite the children and bring them a fondness for the library and learning. A children's room with walls will lower the noise level that disturbs public and staff.

Staff work spaces are extremely poor. Some desks are under stairs, others as far away from the area they work as they could possibly be. This prevents being able to observe when help is needed. There is little space to prepare or to store materials near any desks. Work/office spaces should be provided that are adequate and quiet enough to enable thinking.

The library has rearranged what goes where as time has gone along. The effort has been to accommodate new services and collections. This has left the elevator and the public rest room in the wrong place. The elevator is too small. A gurney doesn't fit into the elevator when a public person with an emergency has to be taken to a hospital from the mezzanine or lower level. The restroom is difficult to find and is so hidden that there is little possible supervision of what may be going on behind the stacks in the restroom area. Bring the bathroom up to code.

The community meeting room is very busy. Occasionally double bookings occur and that gives no lee-way for there is no area where a group can be put that has been booked as a mistake. Two groups cannot meet at the same time! One cannot have a story hour for young children and a lecture on child rearing for the parents at the same time. So the facility is lacking both program activity areas and study areas. The building needs to become a community center for arts and intellect. It can't do this unless it is larger. The library should be 2 to 3 times as big as it is. A larger, more separate children's area could have nooks that are themed sections. Add a program room for children that is in addition to the one for adults. This would ideally be next to the children's area. Add a cultural wing and study areas where tutors can meet with those they tutor other groups can meet and also add quiet rooms where people can study in peace alone. A larger program room and additional smaller meeting rooms should be added. This would permit mini plays, movies, theater, and music.

Chairs are stored in a hallway since there is no storage area to hold them when they aren't needed. Add storage rooms for supplies so they don't have to be kept in unsafe areas.

Teens have recently been given a space on the mezzanine which puts them where they can be seen. One person noted that the public feels some confusion between "twens" and teens. These labels may be confusing; cataloging has not caught up with the new distinctions. Give teens and "twens" contiguous spaces where they can do homework. They also should have a separate area which might include graphic novels such as the batman series.

Some signage is good and leads people to here they should go, but some is non-existent or not consistent with the quality of the good signage.

Other suggestions:

- Put a branch building in a different area of town to spread the load between several buildings.
- Add a computer lab, cozy areas, an outside patio for children's programs, study carrels for listening to CDs or viewing DVDs. Add TV type monitors that will focus on where help is needed most so that people in another department can see when they could go over to alleviate long lines.
- Build a new building with all the above suggestions and include more electric outlets, a cleaning station on every floor. A ladder on rollers which will slide out of a wall when lights need changed. Ensure that the windows are tilt ones that can be cleaned from inside like many houses have. Give us good storage area rooms. Ensure that any ladder to the roof reached the roof so storm drains can be cleared more frequently. (The existing ladder does not reach the roof top so climbing to clean drains is unsafe and hazardous.) Add more faucets to the outside of the building to prevent the need for heavy very long hoses when watering grass.

The topic of personnel often arose. Apparently, the new director has renewed energy for the library staff. Managers are competent and do their jobs well. Staff members do their best to make the space work in a building that has been outgrown. They keep up with what children want and need and they focus on creating fun for children. They consider themselves as helpful and knowledgeable. On the other hand, territorial feeling seems to exist between departments. Some staff members don't seem to notice when another one needs help, so they don't go over and assist on a temporary basis. Others never notice beyond their own department. Some employees feel penalized for encouraging use of the library when the resultant noise and busy atmosphere bring complaints from other staff members. Although most staff members seem willing to change, an employee may encounter resistance when wishing to take on new challenges.

Production by all staff members is up, but the library still needs more staff hours to keep up with the kind of traffic that is being generated by increased library use. Scheduling seems inadequate when one or two staff members are out sick, on vacation or just feeling badly and therefore cannot be counted upon. Triple rather than the present practice of double scheduling would alleviate the stress this creates. Add additional staff hours in both lending and reference. Add some part timers that can float and work in which ever area needs someone. This will allow less jiggling of who can cover what. Add a teen librarian to give teens better services, collections and programs. Add a night custodial or guard to deal with evening public problem people. Consider adding an assistant director or an administrative assistant or in order to assist with directing building maintenance, personnel, budget and clerical work when the library director is out of the building. Consider letting all staff that wish to have responsibility for buying in an area of their expertise; not only department heads. Make creative changes that will encourage unification of staff, without territorial divisions.

Less conversation centered on services, collections and programs. Universally, the staff members feel they are offering a great variety of services, programs and collections in spite of the misery of the building. Considering everything, they feel there is a decent book budget and that the Friends of the Library are generous by giving the "Fast track" books which permit a 7 day turn around and get more copies of books into the library. On the other hand, the budget for materials is limited. Therefore, the public feels like they wait ages for their chance to read books on reserve lists.

The library offers awesome programs for all ages. There is a huge preschool program that provides for 200 children per week. There may not be sufficient programming for adults. Reference needs to hear more from the public for new adult and teen program ideas. Suggestions were to have more music programs using local talent and to add more programming during this poor economy that encourages social networking

As for collections, they felt collections need to keep up with newest forms of book, music and visual delivery. There should be more copies of best sellers and online databases, i.e.: Facts on File online, Gale contemporary literary criticism. One thought was that when there are more downloads of audio books, some stack space could be redirected towards something else. Several persons expressed that the collection needs weeded; that is has an outdated ugly look about it. But then one of the people noted that if there are too few books on the shelves, citizens won't

think a larger library is needed. Another person noted that book selection is broken up into odd groupings. Teens are with adult; lending selects fiction for YA, reference does non-fiction teen order. Someone has had requests that the library add more newspapers and magazines in large print

As for services, the library needs to do a lot more publicity at the schools. It was suggested that the library harness the energy of parents. If the library serves 200 to 600 kids at an event, wouldn't these parents work towards a larger building that will better serve their children.

A bookmobile, more shut-in delivery and running a bus from Calendar House Senior Center to bring seniors to choose their own would be an improvement in service to seniors. The library might also consider putting tax forms at the door for it is difficult to explain to people how to find them where they are kept. Opening on Sundays would be a boon to many working people!

Staff Members Interviewed: Colleen Perone, Craig Holmes, Cindy Wall, Lynn Pawloski, Louise Champagne, Carla Sheehan, Mike Berube, Sue Meneo, Billie Witkovic, Kurt Schwanke, Gene Grass, Harriet Bitar, Jeanne Chmielewski, Cheryl Nadeau, Joanne Cyr, Michelle Lord



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