

Carthage Public Library

Amended

November 29, 2017

Library Director, Amy Gee called the meeting to order at 4:30. Also present were: Library Building Consultant, Dr. Fred Schlipf; Mark Misselhorn, architect for Apace Design; Board Members John Dittmer, Angie Perry, Donna Tracy, David Zanolla, J.R. Parn, and Michelle Bavery who entered later; Building Focus Group members: Rob Biondolino, Howard Perry, and Mayor Jim Nightingale, and Jeanne Schell who entered later.

Following introductions, Dr. Schlipf reviewed the Building Program. He had prepared a program for us in 2000, but he and Amy worked together to completely revise and update it to take into account changing needs.

The purpose of a building program plan is to be a road map, specifying what spaces are needed and the size for each, which helps the architect design the building. Mark agreed that it is very helpful to have such a plan in place. In addition, State Library construction grants usually require the library to have a building program.

The program is a projection, trying to estimate the space needs 20 years into the future. It's best if the building can be designed to be flexible, so that the size or location of spaces can be adjusted by rearranging furniture. If walls or soffits or special features are built in, it is more difficult to make changes in the future.

Building new is the easiest way to build a library. If you start with an existing building, it's harder to fit your design into the building. Two story buildings require more staff, which greatly increases operating costs.

Fred quickly reviewed each section of the building program, encouraging questions or comments from those present. New areas in this plan are a Maker Space and study rooms which are current trends for libraries. Most find that the study rooms are used all the time. Amy noted that this evening we had one tutor working with students at a back table, and another tutor using the upstairs board room.

The meeting room size listed is large enough for 50 adults on chairs, or 100 children on the floor and includes storage for tables & chairs.

The restrooms will need to follow the plumbing code.

JR asked how technology will affect libraries in the future. Fred thinks digital materials will have more of an impact on academic libraries than public libraries, as people will still want print books for leisure reading. Most public libraries now have smaller reference and periodical sections. It's difficult to say if libraries will need more or fewer public access computers. A good wireless network is needed with electrical outlets everywhere, and the flexibility to add or move computer stations. Some libraries check out tablets or laptops for use in the Library.

The program estimates our total gross space needs as 13,700 sq ft for a one story building, or 14,800 sq ft for a two story building (room for 2 stairways, elevator, etc.) Some cuts could be made to the program to decrease the size, or it could be divided into phases with plans for future expansion.

Fred and Mark addressed the issue of a sprinkler system. They are expensive to install and maintain and can potentially cause damage to materials. If it's possible to avoid the necessity while still following the codes, that is good. Usually required if a building is \$12,000 sq ft or larger. Need to keep expansion in mind. It is even more expensive to retrofit a sprinkler system into a building than to install during original construction.

Most modern libraries want to be a community center, a learning center for all ages. If the building is more spacious, comfortable, and welcoming, people are more likely to come and linger.

Next we discussed various options.

The current building is long and skinny with vaults in the middle of the first floor which limits arrangements and makes it difficult for staff to see back into the staff area. The only space to expand is to the south, which would make it even longer and harder to supervise. The lot slopes downhill. Each floor is about 4,000 sq ft with some room for mechanical items in the basement. That is about 6,000 sq ft short of the space recommended in the program.

Legally we would need a new elevator & since the current shaft is not large enough, it would need to be demolished. We also need another set of exit stairs to meet code. Mark had prepared drawings with a new elevator and stairs. The mini addition would be about 840 sq ft and the area between the elevator and stairs would provide an extra 340 sq ft of usable space on each floor. The elevator and stairs would be quite far from the entrance.

His ballpark estimate to remodel the 2nd floor and add the mini addition with elevator and stairs was about \$1.2 million, which does not include any work on the first floor (at a minimum, new carpeting is needed). He did include architect fees in the estimate, but not furnishings so it was more than just construction cost, but less than total project cost, for slightly less than 10,000 sq ft. total.

The current building could be modified to be code compliant, but it would be expensive, and still not provide the amount of space or flexibility needed, so it doesn't make much sense for a long term solution.

We also need to consider operating costs. A two story building increases staff costs. For utility costs, a new building would be more energy efficient – good insulation, LED lighting, efficient HVAC. However since we would be heating, cooling, and lighting a larger space all of the time, utility costs might actually be higher.

Project costs (including furnishings, fees, site prep, etc.) for a new building are somewhere around \$250 per square foot, and the price increases about 3% per year. This does not include cost for site acquisition.

The cost of obtaining a suitable site and preparing it will be a significant factor. Will land be donated, or would we need to purchase? If we need to demolish existing buildings, that adds to the cost – asbestos abatement, dealing with a basement, cisterns, etc. The Mayor said the city paid \$75,000 to tear down the old laundromat next to the Christmas store.

We would want to build a 1 story building. A two story building would require more expensive construction techniques to make floors load bearing, about \$85,000 for an elevator & shaft, and would also need 2 stairways. Operating costs would be higher with elevator maintenance and inspections, plus increased staff costs.

We would need $\frac{3}{4}$ -1 acre, less if off street parking is available and if we don't need to allow for set backs. Parking, driveways, sidewalks, setbacks, and landscaping all take up space. Also want to be sure to have space for expansion. Also consider the topography and drainage.

They drove past the Advance Physical Therapy building. The building itself would not be suitable to incorporate into a Library, the ceiling is too low. It would need to be torn down. If the 2 story house was also torn down, the site would be large enough and there is parking along the street. The lot does slope steeply toward the south.

The land by Dollar General appears to be on a crest with good drainage, but there are probably remains of old buildings underneath.

We also mentioned the First Community Bank Building and lot next to it plus the barber shop, but the bank building is too small. The old school building next to the WOW Park, is probably in the flood plain.

Discussed funding sources. The large construction grants from the state that were awarded in 2012 probably will not be offered again. Small \$125,000 matching grants are offered each year, but it's a very competitive process. USDA offers rural development low interest loans. Could hold a referendum for authority to issue bonds, which is also a loan. Check with local industries and local foundations.

For a fundraising campaign, need a lead gift – a large amount of money to kick off the campaign. Carefully plan naming opportunities in advance and be sure to set the amounts high enough. Also think about any costs associated with a name change. The Carthage Public Library in the Schlipf Building would be less complicated and costly than changing the name completely to the Schlipf Library.

The meeting ended around 6:15 pm.

Amy Gee, Director
Carthage Public Library District

