



## Takoma Park City Council Meeting – February 26, 2020 Agenda Item 1 – Updated Information

### **Work Session**

Presentation and update on Library renovation by Greg Lukmire of RR/MM Lukmire Architects, and continued discussion of the floodplain, Library renovation, designs, contract and timetable.

### **Recommended Council Action**

Hear the update.

### **Context with Key Issues**

On July 31, 2019 the Takoma Park City Council passed Ordinance #2019-26 which authorized a contract with RR/MM Lukmire Architects to perform the first phase of work toward a replacement Library. This was to involve “approximately seven months of schematic design, design development work, independent cost estimate, and additional flood plain analysis...” after which time the City Council will consider specific information on construction cost estimates, leading to “project continuation as planned or modification of the design and costs.”

On August 26, 2019 a new contract was submitted and signed between the City of Takoma Park and RR/MM Lukmire for the first phase of work toward a replacement Library, as described above. On October 8, 2019, Greg Lukmire met with Library staff to propose and discuss concept designs for a new Library interior.

On January 22, 2020, Greg Lukmire and engineers met with City management, City and Library staff to present and discuss design options for the exterior of a replacement Library. These designs, as well as a preferred interior design, are on display in the City Library and the Project Page of the City web site.

During this time, it has taken longer than originally expected for the architect to get the needed second flood plain report from the civil engineer. The flood plain work that is required by the County is first a flood plain study to assess current conditions and, once accepted, a new flood plain study with the expanded building footprint to determine the impact of the added building area on the height of the flood plain. The first report was accepted by the County. The second flood plain report has just been completed and shows that the expanded Library footprint causes minimal impact on the height of the flood plain. While this second report needs to be submitted to the County for acceptance after the site plan is prepared, the findings of the report mean that substantial regrading or other additional costly work is not required for the new library.

With the understanding that substantial changes are not needed due to the flood study, the current plans for the project were submitted to an independent cost estimator. The report from the cost estimator was received on February 25. The estimate of construction costs was \$8.3 million and includes a large contingency due to the project still being at an early design stage. The previous number was about \$7.6 million. The difference reflects recent increases in construction material costs of about 5%, labor costs of 10-12% and a different estimate for sitework costs.

At the Work Session, the Council will hear the presentation by Greg Lukmire. The presentation will include a review of the work done to date by both the architect and civil engineer, and will discuss cost estimates and timing of next steps.

### **Council Priority**

A Livable Community for All: The local public library serves residents of all ages, including a significant number of school and day care classes. It offers free programs by noted authors and illustrators, reading readiness for ESL parents, book discussion groups for adults, extensive collections of print and digital resources, Spanish and French programs, and public access computer use with dedicated staff. A larger, more comfortable building will enable us to address the needs of more community residents with evolving and up to date resources for years to come.

### **Environmental Impact of Action**

Elimination of the health and/or potential safety hazards for Library users posed by: fiberglass insulation, asbestos in the library foyers, mold where ceiling has leaked, wood roof framing, frequent loss of functioning HVAC during hot or cold weather, and leaking of HVAC equipment. and apertures for birds, small rodents or insects to enter the building. Green building standards would be incorporated into a new building.

### **Racial Equity Considerations**

The resources of the Takoma Park Library are free to all Takoma Park and Montgomery County residents, and are used heavily by children and seniors of all racial and ethnic backgrounds, including immigrants in the community. Library programs are free to all, regardless of jurisdiction. The Library and Computer Center are open 7 days/week and are within walking distance of five schools. A recent automatic renewal policy reduces the need to impose fines on overdue materials. The Library Friends and staff work with the ESL teacher at PBES to co-sponsor an immigrant family book club, and staff participate in the 'Books and Breakfast' program for ESL parents at PBES. The Library presents: "Books to Action: a Social Justice Book Club for Kids and Families." A program room will enable us to provide more programs that address equity issues without limiting family and after-school use of our children's room. A new building will enable the provision of family and transgender restrooms. Also it will enable us to provide dedicated shelves and study space for young adults – a group that is currently underserved in our small library.

### **Fiscal Impact of Action**

The project cost is being watched closely and adjustments will be made as we review the new cost estimates just received and discuss them with Council. If the project moves to construction, the City will employ a specialist to oversee the construction activities, and to review invoices and change orders, as was done successfully in the Auditorium, Public Works, and Phase II Community Center work, to keep the project on budget. A new Library is a significantly less costly action than raising the level of the parking lot relative to the Library, in order to meet flood plain study requirements. Taking no action will result in further deterioration of the building, to a point where it will eventually become unusable as a public space. Funding has already been allocated for the Library project, through borrowing and Capital Grants. Funds that have been borrowed cannot be returned; they would need to be paid back with interest per the bonding documents, and Grant funds can only be used for Library design and construction work. A "discontinued" City Library would be an inestimable loss to all residents of Takoma Park, and would greatly increase the number of Takoma Park residents who would need to pay for transportation to a County library for services, books and computer access.

### **Attachments and Links**

- Ordinance 2019-26 Authorizing a Contract with RR/MM Lukmire Architects
- New cost estimate and background information from Downey & Scott, LLC
- [Preliminary Library Flood Plain Conditions Report](#)
- [Library Renovation Project Page](#)