



Takoma Park City Council Meeting – December 2, 2020 Agenda Item 7

Work Session

Presentation of the updated library design and detailed construction costs

Recommended Council Action

Advance the project to the bid preparation phase after reviewing the final design and projected costs

Context with Key Issues

The Takoma Park, Maryland Library is a vital resource and community hub that serves residents of all ages and backgrounds. The library building does not meet ADA requirements, has significant problems with its heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems and does not meet space needs for collections, programming or young adult services. For this reason, the Library renovation project was begun in 2015 and public discussions and concept design work has proceeded since then.

On July 31, 2019, the City Council passed Ordinance #2019-26 which authorized a contract with RRMM Lukmire Architects to perform the first phase of detailed design work toward a replacement Library at a cost not to exceed \$300,000. This involved approximately seven months of schematic design, design development work, independent cost estimate, and additional flood plain analysis. On February 26, architect Greg Lukmire presented the Council with new information on floodplain findings and independent construction cost estimates. Additional information was presented and discussed at the Council Work Session on March 11, 2020, which confirmed that raising the floor of the building would be sufficient to meet flood plain requirements and that the total estimated costs of the project would fit within funds available (\$9.8 million).

On April 15, 2020, the City Council considered and voted unanimously on Ordinance 2020-8 to authorize the City Manager or her designee to enter into a contract with RRMM Lukmire Architects for continued concept design, engineering design, permit application preparation, and construction document preparation for the Library renovation at a cost of \$499,835. That is the balance of the contract amount for design services totaling \$799,835. In June 2020, an online resident survey was conducted of several proposed exterior building designs. The survey results and exterior design options were presented on July 8, with a discussion of the key points and attributes of the different designs presented by the architect that resulted in a clear winning design. On September 24th, RRMM Architects presented the draft LEED Scorecard and building design to the Committee on the Environment for feedback.

RRMM Architects sent the full design development submittal package to City staff to review during the second week of October. That package included the hard construction costs estimate report, building drawings, civil, mechanical, and structural narratives, energy model report, mechanical calculations, product cut sheets, and technical specifications. The Library, Public Works, Recreation staff and other staff commented on the design package in detail, which has resulted in design adjustments to fit the desired user experience. Design documents were also circulated by the City Sustainability Manager to residents with green construction expertise for comment.

This iteration of the library design is the culmination of five years of public discussion and feedback. It reflects the architect's effort to balance community and staff input with sustainability objectives, budgetary constraints, and site conditions. The architect has filled in cost factors that were previously unknown and costed out various components of the project. These estimates can be used to modify, delay, or eliminate components if the Council determines that is in the interest of the City, taking into consideration the economic impact of COVID-19. With the imminent retirement of the Library Director and the pandemic preventing in-

person services in the existing building, there are significant advantages to proceeding with the project in this fiscal year to minimize the timeframe that City residents are deprived of a library building. City staff hope to receive sufficient guidance from City Council on budgetary decisions to be able to move forward with final construction documents and send the project out to bid this spring, in order to start construction of the new building in summer or early fall.

Council Priority

A Livable Community for All: Our 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 Considerations

Green building standards are incorporated into the new building design to the extent that the project budget allows. The new Library building floor will be raised to withstand increased flood potential due to climate change. The replacement library will eliminate the health and 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.

Fiscal Considerations

There is \$9.8 million available for an approximately \$9.8 million project. The available funds are not easily used for other uses or as savings to taxpayers. Not spending the \$7 million Library Bond for the Library project will not save the City money, but would need to be used for a similar capital building project. The \$7 million Library Bond requires payment of approximately \$388,683 each year through 2047. That amount includes \$3,941,933 in total interest payments, similar to mortgage interest payments on a residential property. The amount of total City debt is well within the City's and GFOA's financial guidelines. Bonds allow for the spread of payments over time, with costs borne by current and future users of the Library. The architect has detailed information on project components to be considered by Council in making design and spending decisions. One of the costs of the project is for 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 projects, to keep the project on budget.

Racial Equity Considerations

The resources of the Takoma Park Library 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 within walking distance of five schools and many multifamily buildings. 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 gender neutral 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.

Attachments and Links

Library Renovation October Blog Post

<https://takomaparkmd.gov/news/update-on-the-library-renovation-project/>

Library Renovation Project Page

<http://takomaparkmd.gov/initiatives/project-directory/library-renovation/>