

**Durham County Public Library:
Main Library Planning & Programming Study**

PROJECT NAME

Main Library, Auditorium

MEETING LOCATION

Bill Ash, AIA

PREPARED BY

7/29/2008

DATE

5:30 p.m.

TIME

MEETING NO.

26467.000

PROJECT NUMBER

Public Forum / Invitation for Public Comment

PURPOSE OF MEETING

Brief:

The purpose of this meeting: To solicit input, comments and questions from the general public regarding the current status of Main Library and to provide a forum for library users and potential users to voice expectations for Main in the future. The Planning Team discussed the general process of programming and planning, shared where the project is in this process, and discussed current library trends. Public Comments were gathered in two forms: (1) Verbal/Any Topic, provided via open mic and (2) Written Responses to Prompting Questions, provided on cards that were distributed then displayed on the wall.

VERBAL COMMENTS / Any Topic (Open Mic)

No. Comment

1. Several attendees voiced opinions, both in favor and against, on whether a Local History Museum should be incorporated into the Main Library. The Planning Team suggested that monies required to build and maintain such a museum would not likely be a part of the Library budget, and that any perceived savings in operational cost due to shared resources are usually in reality only slight or non-existent.
2. Durham deserves a great library. The existing building is in poor condition, embarrassing. The county commissioners should fund the library at the appropriate level to create a great library. *Rob Lamme.*
3. Crossing the downtown loop to get to the library is problematic.
4. Add more individual study cubicles/carrels and/or more quiet space. Possibly ban cell phones?
5. The Library should not be built for today's needs but should accommodate future growth and trends.
6. We need a good building; we already have a good library, due in most part to the excellent staff. Do not confuse the building with the library.
7.
 - Would like to see some Food Service for lunch to attract all the employees in or soon-to-be in the immediate area (Justice Center, Human Services, etc.).
 - Add a shuttle to and from transit station to help with crossing the loop.*Alan Lang, Library Board of Trustees*
8. More 2 person tutoring / quiet space.
9. The Library should be thoroughly bilingual in Spanish and English.
10. Would like to see more partnering with the community or external entities for better programming / children's program / art gallery / music.
11. There is no other source for additional revenue that the county can tap into for funding items like the Library, except for property taxes and the proposed Prepared Food Tax. Voters are urged to get out and vote in November for the Prepared Food Tax. *Becky Heron, County Commissioner.*
12. Pleased to hear the library has a 98% chance of staying where it is.
13. Concerned about the library being closed during renovation/addition. Glen Whisler, County Engineering, indicated that likely the building would be closed during modifications, and that keeping buildings open during renovation often leads to longer construction periods and consequently, longer periods of compromised service. The Planning Team noted that some libraries have set up temporary off-site facilities during renovation or addition.
14. One of the concerns about downtime during renovation is the library's proximity to Urban Ministries, and that the library provides for some people their only available heated space during the winter and cooled space during the summer. Skip Auld, Library Director, responded that the Library and Planning Team are working with Urban Ministries and other homeless advocacy groups on these kinds of issues. A day center has been discussed as a need for this area, so that the library need not fill this role ad hoc.

WRITTEN RESPONSES

Question #1: What is the Best Role of Main Library in the Durham County Public Library System?

Card # Response(s)

1.
 - Main library should offer the most group gathering / teaching facilities for informing the community
 - Book collections can be scattered into regional branches
 - Main= core collection of print
2. The main library would have special services and a collection that is broader than is available / affordable for all regionals
3.
 - Anchor on east end of main downtown business district
 - Serve all citizens including homeless
 - Particular attention to dropouts – children can leave school at 16 years old regardless of literacy

4.
 - Educate
 - Meeting space for all ages
 - Research
5. The central resources that all branches flow from
6.
 - Destination
 - The place to go for enlightenment
 - Access to facts, ideas, sharing
 - Put bookstores out of business
7. Symbol of innovation architecturally and a source of pride for the community
8. Use the main library as an anchor attraction for downtown
9. A central anchor of public and technical services and the largest "regional" library serving the core of Durham
10. Main library has need to respond to multiple users – businesses, homeless, government, regular users – the mothership of library system
11. The best role for the main library in the DCPL system is that of information provider for the Community of Durham and the downtown area beyond.
12.
 - Promote Genealogy and local history
 - Enlarge the existing room
 - This area of interest will increase as our population ages. More citizens will have time to research their own history
13. The public library must provide a way for everyone to get on-line
14. Coordination, resources, public programs location
15. Leadership
16. Education center for all populations- children, teens, college-age, illiterate, homeless, older users
17. I'm not convinced the renovation should be considered as a Main Library. Perhaps, with the opening of the new regionals, this should meet the needs of the DOWNTOWN community.
18.
 - The Main Library is the downtown regional library and needs to support the amenities of one.
 - It is also like the "Durham Library" to visitors to Durham
19. Reinforce and strengthen services in a cooperative manner
20. As a "central hub" for city of Durham – should serve as accessible meeting space, learning space (for computer classes), etc.
21. Main library should have most comprehensive book collection and specialized reference services
22. To serve as cultural and literacy center of The City
23.
 - Community focus center
 - HUB of Activity
24.
 - Large, main resource center
 - Center of circulation
 - Capstone of whole system
 - Center for learning (classrooms, tutoring rooms, tech center, town info)
25. Consider the benefits of the foundation to include a possible history museum because of the synergies
26. As a connection to the community and world
27.
 - To be a hub for information and community life that continues to feel accessible to everyone
 - To continue to be and work at being a "neutral" space that many people feel comfortable in.
28. Flagship location for library-biggest programs, more special services
29. The main library should be the first choice library in the city- most resources, best hours, best staff. It should stay in its current location because it is an amazing asset on the East Side of Durham. It can be designed to be integrated into all of the cool redevelopment (GoldenBelt, Mangum 506, Eastway) going on in East Durham
30. Leader / Hub / Focus – support of system, but also a "regional" library for central area of Durham where residential population is growing
31. As a place where kids without access to books, art, performance and the sight of people reading are exposed to this life joy
32. Central location for all Durham residents
33. Provide access to information for all community members, regardless of ability to pay
34. To be the leader
35. Flagship reference collection is housed at Main. Also the main building needs to have enough space and resources for staff who hold system wide responsibilities. Main Library needs QUIET STUDY SPACE. Why is Main always last in

- terms of resources and upgrades?
36.
 - House of material resources most found elsewhere
 - Community Center
 - Open 24-7
 37. The best role of the library would be to update the current space with faster computers and better lighting
 38. Study space and new technology
 39. Unlike branch libraries, there is greater opportunity to serve/attract visitors and the business/professional community
 40. The best role for the main library in the DCPL system is to be a multifaceted center of learning, knowledge, growth, and fun
 41. Main library should be everything that the regional libraries are plus a state-of-the-art facility for special programs and needs
 42. Centralized repository for materials ordered from outside locations
 43. Don't Move
 44. Be the core repository for high value information
 45.
 - Education
 - Access to Information and Technology
 - Community Building
 46.
 - Cen. Admin. Home (physical home)
 - Serves as "regional" for downtown area
 - Traditional role- books, tapes, videos- but also technology (i.e. computers)
 47. Central point of control to ensure consistency of services across system
 48. Be HUB for the city possibly partnering with organization such as Visitor Center, Chamber of Commerce, and SBA
 49. Learning center for all ages in the Durham Community
 50. Magnet for community services
 51.
 - My favorite place to visit in Durham! Close to my house (easy to walk here), wonderful staff, great AV collection, my favorite books are in biographies/Art/Architecture/Gardening
 - Keep in current location please!
 52. Main Building should represent the entire durham community by adding a museum and archive aspect
 53. The place to find books the branches and regionals don't have
 54.
 - Leader in the system.
 - Very innovative social and educational experience

Question #2: How can the Main Library better relate to the city?

Card # Response(s)

1. Leader in programming, literacy, technology, immigrant education, etc
2.
 - Open Queen Street Again
 - Fix the loop
 - Restore the civic front door on Roxboro
3. The Library should address the information social recreational and education needs of all Durham citizens
4. The Roads, Roxboro Road, Side Walks, How you get to the Library
5.
 - We must flip the entrance toward downtown
 - Do something to facilitate pedestrian access
 - Make sure the library design incorporates something uniquely Durham – reflects our community
 - Having a new façade is essential. This must be something more than window dressing!!
6. Move it into the heart of the downtown
7. Communicate
8.
 - Easy Pedestrian connectivity
 - Not on the fringe
 - Undo the loop to reconnect to downtown
 - Connection to history and science museums
 - Most changes need to occur offsite or by others
9. Make sure library staff are involved in all community planning efforts. Make the building a main forum for public discussion

10. Needs to engage the downtown-bridge gap of the loop, become accessible to downtown, look like less of a monolith
11. By involving itself with all aspects of the life of the city
12. Make a greater effort to serve the information needs of local histories
13.
 - House museum
 - Serve as community center – meetings, etc.
 - Open 24-7
14. Please keep the main library at this location
15. The library must stay here at the heart of the city and be the “mother church” for the other branch libraries
16.
 - Especially more interaction with local schools and universities
 - Better coordination with NCCU on acquisitions and programs
17. Physically become more accessible to downtown- reconfigure surrounding streets to make them easier to traverse.
18. Open the building to the city! Its visual front as a closed door is a turn off. Accent the west face; activate it on the property.
19. Provide more city-wide, inclusive programs... serve as a venue for smalls school programs / performances for example
20. Physically- now library is an island surrounded by asphalt- needs to be accessible in comfortable way for walkers, bikers...
21.
 - Open as classroom to various groups
 - Better physical access
 - Enhance security and reputation of safety
 - Provide friendly and non-threatening resources from homeless/jobless/illiterate
22. Main Lib. could better relate by building stronger interconnecting relationships with all public/private agencies whose constituents use library
23. More learning opportunities for school field trips
24.
 - Community meeting rooms
 - Atrium with historic photos
 - *Keep library in current location*
 - Cleveland Holloway neighborhood and east Durham need to have library on this side of city because we walk here regularly
 - Encourage university students to use this library too
25. Library needs to inform the city regarding state-of-the-art library programs and facilities. City should provide resources for these services.
26. Main Library can relate to the city/county by providing museum and archive space and service to the local gov'ts in record keeping and promotion of history as well as current services
27. Have more information about Durham and Durham's history
28. KILL THE LOOP!
Keep the library where it is but work with the city and NCDOT to get rid of the downtown loop
If it was easier to get to the library on foot, people wouldn't feel it is so disconnected. It is downtown!
29. Work closely / collaborate with key city partners in order to make DCPL a true hub of learning and recreation
30. The main library can serve as the central repository for the past, present, and future for the city. Particularly, I am interested in maximizing the archival research, and exhibit capacity of the library. Library can be the public face of both the city and county government information, plus the school system, plus health information. The malleable future can even be steered by the library.
31. Free meeting space for neighborhood and community groups
32. Urge the city to connect the library and downtown (pedestrian, vehicle, public transportation) N. Roxboro is like a River / Wall / Barrier.
33. Connect into other cultural and artistic organizations and reflect Durham history
34. Consider the needs of the growing senior population
35. Reflect the city's history & cultural traditions
36. Leadership
37. Expand its range of services
38. Make it easier to walk from other points of downtown. The loop is a barrier and dangerous.
39. Coordinate with community service agencies
40. Integrate with downtown social, cultural, educational, civic, etc. services
41. Stay in current downtown location

42. Offer facilities for helping young adults and adult learners – in groups (computer labs, study rooms, meeting rooms)
43. By anticipating and accommodating the community's needs
44. Tie-in to loop; not on outer edge
45. There should be more aggressive, varied programming to bring people downtown and inside- open for the art walk, have special evenings / speakers, celebrate kids, reach out to senior book clubs, etc.
46.
 - Have the city programs and meetings brought into the library to share with the community
 - Keep this Building
47.
 - Put the main entrance to the library on Roxboro St.
 - Street access, as opposed to parking lot access, is main way to tie library into the city
48.
 - Information center about groups around town
 - Map showing location, how to get to various points of interest in Durham
 - Showcase local authors and artists
 - More Spanish resources – the library can reach a whole new population if it can integrate Spanish speakers' needs
49. Make the library more community oriented via:
 - More welcoming interior exterior spaces
 - Include spaces for community events and work on expanding programs leg, literacy, film nights, yoga classes – think broadly
50.
 - Anchor to downtown
 - Serve employees of New Justice Center with Food – NO provisions for food in justice center
51. Design so that building relates to the newly developing downtown, an attraction rather than a parking lot and back door
52. The library should not move. The best way to connect with the city is through common partnerships that will bring a critical mass of people together. Economic development projects is critical
53.
 - Need to resolve homeless hanging out at entrance and in bathrooms- sometimes fighting and cursing
 - BUT, also want to welcome area, inner city residents – esp. children
 - Convenience – parking important
54. Have spaces for groups to meet
55.
 - Much better signage at entrance, better connectivity.
 - Partner with downtown organizations to market library.
56.
 - Longer hours-service to Hispanics, other minorities while not neglecting mainstream population
 - Make sure of security
57. A downtown or urban library should be readily accessible to visitors and pedestrian traffic! It should integrate well into the urban fabric and it should rely on structured (shared) parking that can also be used by other facilities. Ability to access services should include "quick" limited access for visitors, the hours should be extended and security should be a "key" element of the design so all users feel safe.
58. Move it closer to sidewalk, turn entrance to face the city, open up with windows and inviting design
59.
 - Consider joining forces with an emerging history museum
 - Encourage citizens to explore our community's history, culture and arts

Question #3: What is one thing you would change at Main Library?

Card # Response(s)

1.
 - Better relationship to site/streets
 - Hire a good urban designer
2. Provide more services for the homeless, including their own place to go during the day, so that main library is not the day care center for the homeless, so that the library can focus on serious library users, not babysitting
3. Flow of traffic, especially on second floor. (round and round and round in circles)
4. The location, the design, or BOTH
5. The entrance experience – it's hidden and uninspiring now
6. Create pods for discrete activities especially childrens services
7. A more welcoming secure facility
8. The look and feel
9. Somehow make the main library both perceived to be- and actually be- safe.
10. The building is really uninviting, inside and out. There is no sense of privacy, the organization of books is unintelligible spatially, and there doesn't seem to be any kind of specific group space besides the auditorium. The building needs to

- be user-friendly.
11. The front is beautiful but not accessible and has no parking
12. Please support the efforts of the friends of the library. We raise tens of thousands of dollars annually through the book sales. We need a larger, climate-controlled area in which to work!
13.
 - (Physical Change) Remove center stairs and create open spaces that are easier to negotiate
 - Help create a building where people would feel safe when they come to check out books, use materials.
14. More space for socializing- including café or similar
15. More space- better available for technology/computers, the NC collection
16. Façade and design of space. More windows, better access.
17. Openness, light (natural) color
18. More culturally sensitive materials
19. More space to sit and read
20.
 - Bring in more light and color
 - Improve security, to improve welcoming atmosphere
21. I would add better, more sophisticated meeting, presentation and performance spaces
22. Have it open more days and hours
23. Upgrade microfilm system
24.
 - More spaces for computer
 - For comfortable areas to sit and work
25.
 - Increase hours open on Friday night and weekends
 - Please keep in current location!
26.
 - More inviting interior and exterior spaces
 - Underground parking (too much blacktop/asphalt downtown) that is safe
27.
 - Brighten the space; make it more inviting (brighten stairwells, update computer study spaces, etc.)
 - Add a TRUE teen space!
 - Update/Enlarge computer lab/classroom
28. Fix the interior circulation (stair) and bring in the daylight!
29. Would like more and more visible computers for card catalog faster
30. Staff
31. Invest \$100k-200k NOW to give the main library a face lift.
32. Make the exterior cleaner-inviting
33. The poor and homeless make the library an uncomfortable place for many people. Everyone who has a need for library services should get them, but for people who use it as a day shelter, steps need to be taken to change that. Many people have had experiences here and won't com back until there is true safety and security.
34.
 - Pedestrian access
 - Connectivity to other services
35. It would become an archival facility for Durham History. Perhaps with an adjacent (or incorporated) museum of Durham History
36.
 - One thing I would change is the hours of availability to the general public.
 - Secondly, how do you better connect with the homeless shelter? This is a security nightmare and creates a perception of being unsafe.
37. I would surround it with more day and night life, so it is less an island in downtown
38. More space, fewer books. Remove non-essential support services to allow more people space
39. Add/Provide for building an archives component to document local history in Durham
40. Fresh architectural look- improved the internal and external accessibility
41. Make it look less like it fell off an airplane and ended up in an empty lot, and more like it's an integral structure in an urban landscape
42. Move public services / administrative services from main or central library
43.
 - Open more hours Friday and weekends
 - Teen Center
44.
 - Traffic pattern in and out
 - Escalation
 - Bad weather aka infirm audience aka family-friendly, drive-by book/tape/etc pickup
45. Life long learning occurs in many groups at all ages. There are many needs in Durham for physical space for learning:

- Literacy and language learning adults GED ESOL, cooperate with Durham Literacy Center
- Homeschool, charter, and even public school students need multiple rooms and spaces for (a) one on one tutoring as well as (b) specialized computer and research learning laboratories in addition to (c) meeting spaces.
- 46. Increase space for NC Materials- make space for community archives
- 47. More quiet study spaces
- 48.
 - Get rid of the barrier represented by downtown loop
 - Architecture that uses the building as a place that celebrates knowledge, rather than warehouse information. Symbols matter. The current building exterior is bland and uninviting.
- 49.
 - Move it to a more desirable/more customer friendly/shopping friendly/safer location.
- 50.
 - I would get them to open longer hours and later. They also need to work with urban ministries (who does not have provided A/C space in the summer during the day) so that there is PROGRAMMING for homeless populations so they are not fighting over computers, looking at porn, or cleaning up in the bathrooms.
 - The space is dead when the library is not open.
- 51. Increase appearance / aesthetics / architectural / artistic features
- 52.
 - Include more individual cubicles for reading and doing research.
 - Ban the use of cell phones
- 53. The uninviting element of loitering homeless patrons, which creates an unsafe feeling and an unattractive look
- 54. Change the appearance. Make more exciting and approachable. Complete interior overhaul.

Question #4: Other Comments? (A fourth card was distributed to solicit input not covered by Questions 1 through 3)

- | Card # | Response(s) |
|--------|---|
| 1. | DCPL needs Teen Center |
| 2. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Friends" operates a massive income producer out of the <u>garage!</u> • Think about improved space for that role |
| 3. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What about FOL? • We need more space so we can make more money for you. • Other FOL's bring is \$300,000 + per year. |
| 4. | Thank God for the dedicated knowledgeable staff of this library! |
| 5. | NC room needs to have more space for materials and research and (...) open all hours library is open. |
| 6. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I like the wrap around building design and use of lots of natural lighting • Need easy crosswalks for getting across main streets for pedestrians |
| 7. | The history museum should be a part of library. |
| 8. | More inviting interior and exterior. |
| 9. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The library should provide small FREE meeting space in its current location. • Durham has a lot of community groups that need a free place to hold meetings. |
| 10. | This is a <u>great</u> opportunity but attendees did not represent Durham diversity. |

IF THIS REPORT DOES NOT AGREE WITH YOUR RECORDS OR UNDERSTANDING OF THIS MEETING, OR IF THERE ARE ANY QUESTIONS, PLEASE ADVISE THE WRITER IMMEDIATELY IN WRITING; OTHERWISE WE WILL ASSUME THE COMMENTS TO BE CORRECT.

SUBMITTED BY: BA