PHASE II REPORT: Improvement Program

Executive Summary

NOTE: To be written after the Phase II Report is completed.

Assessment

The Phase I Report presented an extensive set of findings derived from a variety of different assessments of the Thomas Memorial Library's (TML) facilities and services. The report incorporated input gathered from approximately 1,000 Cape Elizabeth residents through surveys, focus groups, and personal interviews. The Phase I Report also cataloged a long list of deficiencies in the Thomas Memorial Library facility that were identified by the consulting team's architectural and engineering partners and through personal interviews with Town employees who are familiar with Library structural, mechanical, and maintenance issues. In short, these assessments revealed a facility that presents significant accessibility challenges, that has dated mechanical and electrical systems, and that wastes valuable staff resources due to its fragmented design.

The library consultants also presented peer comparisons and explored the public's perceptions of the services currently offered by the Library. This assessment revealed that many residents of Cape Elizabeth are quite satisfied with the Library facility and its services. At the same time however, a large majority of the public indicated that they believe the Library should be fully accessible to the elderly and to those with disabilities, should employ efficient heating and cooling systems, and should maximize staff efficiency. In other words, although the public loves the Thomas Memorial Library for its unconventional (one person characterized it as "quirky") design, residents also believe that the library should be accessible to all and that it should operate at peak efficiency.

The public identified additional service improvements that would be difficult, if not impossible, to implement given the constraints of the existing facility. Although convenient access to resources not held by TML through the State of Maine's "MINERVA" program was greatly appreciated, many wished that TML's own collection was larger and broader in scope. Expansion of the collection in the existing facility would require the elimination of seating (which is already limited) or public access computers (the number of which is also substandard for a community of Cape Elizabeth's size).

The public also consistently made the case for more and improved meeting space. Many expressed the desire for more programming on a variety of topics of interest for adults as well as meeting spaces that could be used by community organizations. The Library's existing meeting room is inadequate and is extremely unattractive. Accessibility is poor, the ceiling height is substandard, air quality is poor, and noise from the adjacent mechanical room often makes it difficult to hear the content that is presented in meetings.

The accessibility issues that were detailed in the Phase I Report coupled with a limited amount of quiet, comfortable reading and study space means that very few residents of the community see the library as a destination where they are likely to spend an entire afternoon or an evening. Instead, visits are routinely 30 minutes or less with many consisting of no more than picking up materials that have been reserved online.

Finally, residents expressed a desire for the provision of exciting, engaging space for children and teens. A colorful, whimsical children's space that engages youngsters as they are introduced to the world of books and reading was a high priority even for many residents in households without children. Providing quality space that attracts teens was also seen as a community need.

The Thomas Memorial Library is already a "good" library. It offers a standard array of services and meets the basic library and information needs of many Cape Elizabeth residents. However, community demographics, which are extremely favorable for heavy public library use, indicate that TML could be a GREAT library. The existing facility severely limits the Library's ability to extend and improve its services.

Space Needs

The existing TML complex provides approximately 15,000 square feet of space. This is not exceptionally small for a library serving a community of less than 10,000 people. While many example of larger libraries serving similar populations could be cited (and some, in fact, are in the peer comparisons presented in the Phase I Report), many smaller libraries can be identified as well. What severely limits TML's ability to provide expanded and enhanced services is a combination of factors. They are as follows:

1. The existing space is fragmented and inefficient. The design of the structure demands that many square feet be devoted to corridors connecting the various components of the building.
2. The demographics of the people of Cape Elizabeth are exceptional for library use. Significantly greater use is predicted if enhanced facilities are provided.
3. A portion of the existing facility is devoted to ancillary services (Cape Elizabeth Historic Preservation Society and gallery space used largely by the Art Commission.

The consultants developed a spreadsheet detailing the space needs of the Library at five year increments for the next 20 years. In fact, nearly all the space deficit discovered is "near-term." The stability of the population and projections that show little or no significant population growth means that if the community were to build a library facility to meet near-term (five-year) needs, the resulting structure would very likely be sufficient in size to meet ten, twenty, and thirty year needs as long as a relatively open plan that could be reconfigured to meet changing priorities was implemented.

The consultants calculate that a facility of approximately 19,500 gross square feet (GSF) would be needed to meet core library needs. Providing adequate quality space for the Cape Elizabeth Historic Preservation Society and space for both three dimensional and wall-hung art displays would require an additional 2,000 – 3,000 gross square feet of space.

The additional space envisioned would be distributed among many different identified needs. Space for collections would be increased modestly as would space for public access computer workstations. The entire children's services area would increase significantly in size. The space allocated for teens would increase modestly. However, both the children's space and the teen space would be designed to provide the targeted audiences with an experience that entices and encourages use by school children of all ages.

Both study seating and leisure seating for adults would be increased, albeit, rather modestly. What would change more dramatically is the environments within which these types of seating will be placed. Space designed for quiet, solitary study and for collaborative learning and social interaction would be provided.

The quality of meeting room spaces would be enhanced and both the size and variety of types of meeting spaces would be increased. Finally, staff workspaces would be improved and both "off-the-floor" workroom space and appropriate storage spaces for supplies, equipment and gift materials would be included.

Concepts

Reprogramming Existing Space

A reprogramming of space in the existing facility and no fewer than seven separate design concepts were considered by the Library Study Committee. After careful consideration, the path of reprogramming existing space was rejected. It was determined that the configuration of the existing footprint of the building simply cannot support the range of services that were envisioned by the public. Futhermore, the expense involved in updating the current facility was seen as producing a poor return on investment. In short, considerable money might be spent to solve a few problems but many other problems and inefficiencies would remain.

Addition Scenario

Several addition concepts were considered. Most reused the Pond Cove building and several attempted to preserve the old Pond Cove and Spurwink schools while eliminating the more recent "connector addition. After lengthy deliberation, the study committee selected an addition concept that would preserve the old Pond Cove building but would move it forward on the Town-owned property and would place it on a new, somewhat deeper foundation. The concept presented on the next page is comprised of

CONCEPT D DRAWING GOES HERE

a two story section (the upper level of the old Pond Cove building on the new foundation) and a single story addition.

The single story addition would provide 15,744 GSF of new space. A new, far more usable basement would be placed under the old Pond Cove building and would provide an additional 3,129 GSF of space. A total of 3,129 GSF of the main level of the old Pond Cove building would be renovated.

Clean Slate Scenario

The “clean slate” scenario would remove all existing structures and a new single story library of approximately 21,624 GSF would be built. This structure is slightly smaller than the addition scenario in part because the addition scenario would require space for “vertical transportation” (elevator and stairs).

A drawing of the clean slate scenario is presented on the next page:

CONCEPT B-1 DRAWING GOES HERE

In both instances, portions of the Spurwink School could be incorporated in the design. In the “clean slate” scenario, architectural elements of the old Pond Cove building could be used in the new structure.

Following are comparative costs for the two approaches. An explanation of how costs were calculated is presented first.

A NOTE ABOUT COSTS

Costs for constructing and equipping libraries vary widely based on a host of factors ranging from prevailing wages for the construction trades and shortages of building materials to the type of construction and the quality of materials and equipment used. The best source of data on library construction costs comes from ***Library Journal*** *(LJ)*, one of the major professional journals in the field of library science. Each December, Library Journal reports on library building projects that have been completed during the previous year. While not every new library and/or renovation is listed, the sample is large enough to be instructive. The December 2008 issue of LJ reported on 95 new library buildings and on 88 Addition, Renovation, and Remodel (ARR) projects.

Construction costs for the 95 new buildings ranged from $76.19 to $607.42 per GSF. However, a relatively small number of projects reported construction costs of less than $200 per GSF and average construction costs per GSF was $241.12. Average equipment costs for the 95 new construction projects amounted to $32.86 per GSF. It is important to note that these costs reflect only construction and equipment. Site acquisition costs, and a host of other project costs, are not reflected. When these costs are added, the average cost for projects in 2008 was $ 328.92 per GSF.

Costs for addition and renovation projects are variable as well. As can be imagined, it is particularly hard to track unit costs when projects may have different mixes of new construction and renovated space and widely differing levels of renovation. Nevertheless, costs per gross square feet for the 88 ARR projects in 2008 was $187.90.

To provide some guidance regarding relative costs, we will report new construction costs as a range from $200 - $325 per GSF and equipment costs at $ 35 per GSF. An amount of $ 190 per GSF will be applied to renovation costs in areas that would undergo significant renovation (this cost includes equipment). A cost of $ 125 per GSF will be applied to areas undergoing moderate renovation and a cost of $ 100 per GSF will be applied in areas receiving minimal renovation. All costs will be expressed in 2009 dollars. An inflation factor should be applied to determine more accurate costs when a construction schedule is established.

ADDIITION SCENARIO COSTS

Applying the cost ranges mentioned earlier, this option would cost between $ 5,139,110 and $7,498,235.

Low End of Cost Range

New Construction (at grade)	15,744 GSF	$200	$3,148,800
New Construction (basement)	3,129 GSF	$200	625,800
Equipment	22,000 GSF	$35	$770,000
Extensive Remodeling (upper)	5,000 GSF	$190	$594,510
			$5,139,110

High End of Cost Range

New Construction (at grade)	15,744 GSF	$325	$5,116,800
New Construction (basement)	3,129 GSF	$325	$1,016,925
Equipment	22,000 GSF	$35	$770,000
Extensive Remodeling (upper)	5,000 GSF	$190	$594,510
			$7,498,235

The above costs DO NOT include costs for moving the old Pond Cove School or for demolishing the current structures.

CLEAN SLATE SCENARIO COSTS

Applying the cost ranges mentioned earlier, this option would cost between $5,094,800 and $ 7,797,800.

Low End of Cost Range

New Construction (at grade)	21,624 GSF	$200	$4,324,800
Equipment	22,000 GSF	$35	$770,000
			$5,094,800

High End of Cost Range

New Construction (at grade)	21,624 GSF	$325	$7,027,800
Equipment	22,000 GSF	$35	$770,000
			$7,797,800

These costs DO NOT include costs for demolishing the current structures.