

04 June 2021

MEETING MINUTES

PROJECT NAME: Newport News Southeast Resource Area Master Plan
QEA PROJECT #: 42025320
MEETING: Library Programming Meeting
MEETING DATE: 06.01.2021
ATTENDEES: Sheila McAllister, City of Newport News
Anita Jennings, Newport News Public Library
Cynthia Temple, Newport News Public Library
Watina Clarke, Newport News Public Library
Deloris Thomas, Newport News Public Library
Chuck Wray, Quinn Evans
Shannon Wray, Quinn Evans
Allison Powell, Quinn Evans
Allie Jarett, Quinn Evans

MARCH 2019 LIBRARY STUDY

- Study was limited to existing Pearl Bailey Library location
 - Library has no issues relocating from current location to new site just north a few blocks
- Library needs to be larger to support the community
 - Pearl Bailey is the smallest Newport News branch library, currently 12,400 square feet
 - When Pearl Bailey was built in 1985, West Avenue Library served people across 664, and when West Avenue closed, Pearl Bailey picked up that population
- Study recommended 20,000 square feet for a new library
 - Independent view of what was needed
 - May still be too small with West Avenue population and social distancing practices
 - 20,000 SF is tight for two-stories
 - More staffing needs if space divided into two stories
 - Increase in square footage would be for program space, not collection space
 - Collection is decreasing

DESIRED PROGRAM SPACE

- Independent study/meeting rooms
 - Rooms spread throughout adults, teens, childrens (capacity for 1-2 and 4-6 people)
- Enclosed maker spaces
 - Currently have had to move out on to main floor due to space issues
 - 10-12 people in a maker class
- Large meeting room - ideal capacity 150 chairs
 - Shared spaces with other organizations could allow for more/larger meeting rooms
- Storage space - furniture is stored in meeting room now due to COVID
- Dedicated Childrens Program room is currently very popular: 25-30 capacity
- Conference room space desired (medium size): 16-20 people for meetings
- Space for tutoring
- Computer lab, classes aren't full now
- Would like more computer space that is not closed off in a room
- Outdoor programming space
 - Shared community garden
 - Relaxation, recreation
 - Recently purchased an outdoor inflatable movie screen
 - Patio for music
 - Secure perimeter for children
 - Outdoor reading space
 - Do not have many areas for this now, outdoor spaces are not comfortable
- Teaching kitchen, full kitchen ideal

04 June 2021

- Healthy Newport News initiative
- Classroom space
 - Would be nice to have, potential for shared classroom space with other organizations
- Main Street Library had a business center, but it did not get much use and was converted into study rooms
 - Still have those resources at Main Street Library
- Family computer area, space for parents with children
- Family restrooms and wellness rooms (lactation for nursing mothers) within Childrens space
- Staff space
 - 30 staff at Main Street Library, some are part time and have shared workspaces
 - Do not have separate Childrens and teens staff, they are referred to as Youth Services
- Dedicated space for one-on-one appointments with a librarian
 - Technology incorporated
- Book return
 - Aspirations to have a drive-up window with AMH (automated material handling)
 - Could be walk-up window/station to not encourage drive-thrus in this walkable community
 - Staffed window would be preferable
- Spaces for display of history of community

COMMUNITY USE/ACCESS

- Library is free
 - Scott Center and Doris Miller Rec Center charge for some of their programs
- Can book an appointment with a librarian
- Meeting space is free to schedule
- High use of public access computers: 1-hour limit during COVID, normally 2 hours
 - People walk in and see availability of computers
 - No laptop lending
- Pearl Bailey is the most active branch with youth engagement
 - Children of Newport News Public Schools get a library card when they register with their school
 - Their student number serves as their library card number
 - Teens
 - Bus drops off teens at the library after school (20-30 teens)
 - Teens use library for hang out space, socializing, technology
 - Teen lounge space
 - Gaming area for teens, ends at 6pm
 - Library has some specific teen programs
 - Library has some tween programming (balance between Childrens and Teens for middle schoolers)
 - Summertime: teens typically come in after 12pm, stay possibly all day
 - 12-17 considered age range for teens
 - 12 and older can participate as teen volunteers
 - Teen Advisory Committee
 - Teens will often go back and forth from Doris Miller Rec Center to Library
- Senior programming
 - Currently occurs in the meeting room
 - Library holds a senior day to share about different resources offered
- Multi-generational families do come to library
- Walkable community
- No formal meal support program
 - People leave and come back for meals at local churches (Scott Center provides meals too)
- Digital divide in the community
 - There are a number of people who don't have internet access
 - Divide in online learning
 - Library has acted as a resource for access to online programs and scheduling appointments during COVID
- No major issues with homeless population at Pearl Bailey
 - Main Street Library has high levels, it is located next to train tracks
 - Homeless do use library during day, do not camp out at Pearl Bailey
 - Outdoor benches at main entrance have been converted into planters

04 June 2021

- Library will provide resources to homeless if needed
- Off duty police officer has a station at library entrance
 - Summer hours: 12pm-closing, School year hours: 4pm-closing
 - Acts as a community resource and security
 - Promotes more interaction between community and police in non-confrontational way
- Say It Loud: Collaboration program with Main Street Library
 - Posters and display of community history
 - Program works to show off history and people of community
- Active Friends of the Library Group
 - Operates out of basement of Grissom Library
 - No direct face for the Friends at Pearl Bailey, could sell books at new space

COLLECTION

- Circulates frequently
- Have been weeding out collection, but it could be bigger if the library is bigger
- Teen collection is hopeful, hope to have enough material to entice them
- Good African American section with high use
- Entire collection is RFID (radio frequency identification)

SHARED SPACES OPPORTUNITIES

- Opportunities
 - Like the idea of a campus with easy access and convenience to see and get to library
 - More communication between schools and public library system could result in collection to support different units in schools
 - Recreation Center shared opportunities
 - Promotion of healthy living
 - Library has yoga classes
 - Opportunities for multi-generational programming
- Current collaborations
 - Library currently considers Downing-Gross Cultural Arts Center meeting rooms as resources (adjacent to existing library building)
 - During the summer Doris Miller Rec Center & Scott Center bring groups of kids to the library
 - Wickham Avenue Alliance
 - Summer calendar for programming between different resources (Downing-Gross Cultural Arts Center, Scott Center, Pearl Bailey Library, Doris Miller Rec Center)
- Largest concern is safety issues that need to be addressed with co-location of organizations

FOLLOW UP

- Collection size for Childrens, Teens, Adults
- Staff numbers for the new library, full-time and part-time (could look at Main Street Library's staff model)

END OF MEMORANDUM

Prepared by Allie Jarrett, QE

If there are any questions or comments regarding this Meeting Memorandum, please contact this office within ten (10) days or it will stand as correct.