

# **Report of the Haddonfield Library – Architectural Study Committee Spring 2010**

## **Purpose of this report:**

This report has been written to document the activities of the Haddonfield Library-Architectural Study Committee and to share the group's work and informal findings with the Board of Commissioners and the citizens of the Borough of Haddonfield. Members of the committee hope it will be useful in the decision-making process on the future of the public library that will be undertaken by the Commissioners and members of the community in coming months.

## **Role of the Study Committee:**

This committee was established by the Haddonfield Board of Commissioners in the spring of 2009. The committee's role, as we understand it, has been to:

- Serve in an advisory capacity to any architect or architectural firm hired by the Borough to work on potential conceptual plans for making improvements or additions to the existing public library building;
- Serve in an advisory capacity to any architect or architectural firm hired by the Borough to investigate alternative sites, including new construction, for the public library;
- Represent the interests of Haddonfield residents and provide input and guidance on behalf of the community;
- Provide the Board of Commissioners with advice on the future of the library.

## **Members of the Study Committee:**

The following residents were appointed to serve on the committee:

- William Cahill
- Buntzie Churchill
- Steve Griffey
- Joanna McDonnell
- Mary Previty
- Kristin Redmond
- William Reynolds
- Kathy Tully
- Jeff Kasko, Commissioner

## **Meetings of the Study Committee:**

Committee members met with Anthony Iovino of Arcari & Iovino Architects on four occasions between June 2009 and February 2010. These included an initial meeting to discuss potential library renovation and expansion plans, a meeting to review concepts and choose among several alternatives offered by the architect, a meeting to review final concept plans and vote on a preferable option, and a 2010 meeting to review potential concepts and findings regarding two alternative library sites.

Others also attended some of these meetings, including: Mayor Colombi, Commissioner Borden, the Borough Administrator, the Library Director, Members of the Library Board of Trustees, Members of the Friends of the Library organization, and other interested citizens.

## **Summary of Study Committee work and input:**

The architect, Mr. Iovino, and members of the committee were charged with investigating the feasibility of three alternative improvement options to the library building:

- Option 1 – To make minimal changes to the existing building in compliance with the Americans for Disabilities Act (we ended up with Options 1a and 1b);
- Option 2 – To make changes to the existing building and add an additional 7,500 square feet of space;
- Option 3 – To make changes to the existing building and add an additional 15,000 square feet of space.

During the initial meeting, we reviewed the feasibility of several different alternatives for each of the options above. We provided input and weighed the pros and cons of each alternative, including costs, location of expansions, aesthetics, and service disruptions. We then voted to choose two alternatives for Option #1 (Option 1a “ADA-Only” and Option 1b “ADA-Plus”) and one alternative each for Options #2 and #3.

At subsequent meetings, we reviewed each option with the architect and provided guidance on the design of each one. We also reviewed the estimated costs associated with each one, including expenses for demolition, construction, elevator and stair installation, furnishings, site work, bonding, and architectural and engineering services.

Please see the architect’s presentation of October 7, 2009 (available from the Borough Clerk or on the Borough Website) for more details regarding these options and costs.

We also met once with the architect to review the feasibility of moving the public library to two alternative sites – at 117-121 Kings Highway and to the Allen Avenue parking lot. The architect has provided a report on these alternative sites.

## **Informal Findings of the Study Committee:**

While all of the options are architecturally feasible, we believe there are constraints involving size and cost, among others, that must be considered. This is especially true because proposed additions will alter the space in front of the existing library building and must be approved in a public referendum.

The probable cost for each of the three main options, as listed in the architect's presentation, are as follows:

- Option 1 – \$1.1 million for ADA-Only (1a) and \$1.86 million for ADA-Plus (1b)
- Option 2 – \$5.3 million for a 7,500 square foot addition;
- Option 3 – \$7.82 million for a 15,000 square foot addition.

It is our understanding that the possibility of acquiring the property at 117-121 Kings Highway is no longer under consideration, so we are not providing any findings regarding this alternative.

We are also not providing any comment regarding the Allen Avenue parking lot alternative, as there appear to be major constraints with construction logistics and estimated costs.

Based on the meetings and informal process conducted by this committee, it is our sentiment that the Commissioners should consider, with public input, pursuing Option #2 – for improvements and a 7,500 square foot addition to the existing library building. We believe that this option is feasible and represents a compromise between competing ideas for improving our public library. While it is certain not to please everyone, we believe it is a good option to consider as the Commissioners move forward in making a decision and is more realistic than Option #3 in terms of financing and approval at a public referendum.

*Submitted June 9, 2010*