

Town of Amherst Public Hearing

Expansion of Audubon Library

Audubon Library

June 5, 2018

7:00 PM

Attendance: Brian Kulpa-Town Supervisor, Roseanne Butler-Smith-Director, Amherst Public Library, Jeffrey Voelkl-President, Amherst Public Library Board of Trustees, Mary Jean Jakubowski-Director, Buffalo & Erie County Public Library, Francina Spoth-Amherst Public Library Town Liaison, Penny Wolfgang-Trustee, Marjorie Franknecht-Trustee, Marilyn Feuerstein-Trustee, Philip Casilio-Trustee, Donna Kerr, Jackie Berger, Joe McManus, Marsha Buehlman, Eileen Cassidy, Cindy Weiss, Steve and Anita McKea, Jonathan Makely, Patti Ross.

Roseanne Butler-Smith introduced the Board members, Ms. Spoth and Supervisor Kulpa.

Mr. Voelkl starts off the meeting with an explanation of the library needs and improvements necessary. Mr. Voelkl expressed the library's role in bringing the next level of service to the community. The Library Board of Trustees has ideas of the purpose and use that they would like to see in the new addition. This meeting is for the public to express their views on a future expansion. Mr. Voelkl determined that this public hearing would center on brainstorming ideas and leave financial aspects of the addition to another time.

Mr. Kulpa introduced himself with a short bio of his architectural specialty-library design. Mr. Kulpa mentioned that Audubon Library was built in 1988 and is has the second highest use in the system. The Town of Amherst wants a community plan for this library that includes a center for innovation, a center for life -long learning and a center for higher education in Audubon Library.

Presentation by Mr. Kulpa-

Noted that there are 4 higher education campuses in Amherst.

Image shown of West Seneca's new Library/ Community Center.

Images shown of new library spaces-conference rooms,computer ares,spaces with higher ceilings, inside gardens, kids/adult areas separate, café, teen areas, family area, collaboration spaces, maker space, etc.

Café area similar to West Seneca Library-would be a revenue source.

Outdoor spaces to tie into the Senior Center.

Maker spaces –robotics, 3D printers, computer elements to plan for the next generation of library users. Mr. Kulpa mentioned the Boston Public Library has a gaming platform to attract teens that becomes a social space and a collaborative area-no books but they can borrow tablets.

Public Input- What does the public want?

- \*Playground
- \*New screens for community room
- \*Food as a revenue source
- \*Barnes and Noble type areas for books to then take to the café
- \*Front facing bookshelves
- \*Create different size spaces within one larger space
- \*Specialized library
- \*Ropes course (outside)
- \*Comfortable seating
- \*Openness- areas that are open but private
- \*Dedicated areas for quiet time.
- \*Bird houses
- \*Outside amphitheatre
- \*Teen room
- \*Maker spaces
- \*Music area (outside)
- \*Sound studio for recording
- \*Video editing area
- \*Additional small study rooms
- \*Larger meeting room that can be divided into 2 smaller meeting spaces. (Wall that slides)
- \*Dedicated bookstore space.
- \*4 season spaces
- \*Wireless charging stations.

- \*Larger playroom
- \*Fountain
- \*Amphitheater wall (outside)
- \*Iron sculptures that are functional (able to sit on)
- \*Make it a destination place-read, play, make something, eat.
- \*public art space/art activities.

The public in attendance did ask questions about impetus for this meeting. Is there money for this project at this time?

Mary Jean Jakubowski explained that there is a bigger pot of money from the State Assembly this year for library construction grants. Also Audubon Library has the second highest user rate and is an older library so a construction grant makes sense. Ms. Jakubowski also noted that there is \$1.5 million in funds that get divided up within the Buffalo & Erie County Library system.

Ms. Butler-Smith informed the attendees that the Town of Amherst will provide matching funds so 50% is from the Town and 50% is from the grant.

Mr. Kulpa expressed the need for attention to the Audubon Library building. He stated that the Town's Capital Improvement Plan for the next 5 years should include the library.

Ms. Jakubowski spoke about the SAMS grant and fundraising as additional ways to get money for this project.

**Public Comment-** The people in attendance felt we should narrow down the above list of ideas pertaining to this project to what can be done only in libraries. The public comment felt that books are the primary need of a library. The question that should be asked is –What is the future of libraries?

Ms. Butler-Smith noted that the business of libraries has changed. Informational programs are being held all the time through many different ways-such as books, lectures, programs, computer training,etc.

Public Hearing concluded at 8:45 pm.