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Hello friends of the downtown library ~

Yesterday (7/11) saw the formal launch of a new group to sell a library in a parking garage to Santa Cruz residents. A flyer billed the event as a Press Conference & Launch. Check out their new web site [HERE](#).

Almost 60 individuals were on hand at Abbott Square's Secret Garden area, including a dozen of us, who support an upgraded, reconfigured, revitalized, "green" library branch right where it's 44,000 sf of useable space currently sits.

Attending were Cynthia Mathews, Robert Singleton, Vivian Rogers of the FSCPL, Library Director Susan Nemitz, at least four former DLAC members, two of whom spoke at the event, lots of business folks, including many young employees or student interns (hard to distinguish). There were three press individuals that I recognized.

Also attending but careful to say they were not advocating, only there to learn, were former County Supervisor (and former chief-of-staff to Sam Farr) Fred Keeley (who now lectures at San Jose State University, among other activities) and Jimmy Panetta's Congressional Aid Emmanuel Garcia.

Russell Brutsche unveiled his latest painting and it is a pip, showing a downtown of parking structures with one wee green tree left on one street. We'll be installing this picture on our DBTL web soon. For now, here is a sneak preview:





A special thanks to Michael Lewis, who got lots of pictures of the event, some of which we'll be posting later on our website.

Most Important Take Away of the Event

The [Downtown Forward](#) message delivered by all speakers was this: ***The current library is a shabby mess, unsafe for children to use, riddled with asbestos, containing antiquated ... well, everything.*** According to DLAC member Martin Gomez (now the FSCPL new president!) the only way to have a "first class" library is to build an "architecturally stunning" new library in the proposed 5 - 6 story Mixed Use Project that will miraculously also provide parking, affordable housing, street level business opportunities and a permanent downtown home for the Farmers' Market.

There you have it. Two Choices -- either live with the shabby, miserable library ... or build a new one in a multi-story mixed use behemoth. No mention whatsoever of a restoration option. In one fell swoop they tossed that idea into the trash bin, made it disappear altogether and cut to the chase.

Add to that the FSCPL flyer that the blatantly bends the truth by stating: ***Measure S pays for the construction of 10 buildings.*** How many of those almost 60 attending even noticed that revisionist history?

Update on Library Subcommittee News

Through the city's Economic Development Office, which is providing staff for the recently formed [Library Subcommittee](#) (now on vacation until its next meeting on August 6) a Request For Proposals (RFP) was issued to find an architect that would look anew at a renovation option within the Measure S \$27+ million budget.

I wrote to EDD and asked to whom the RFP was issued. A quick reply from staff listed 1) Noll & Tam, 2) Group 4 (the city's existing consultant on all things architectural) and 3) [Jayson Architecture](#).

Probably the only reason Jayson was included is because on June 24 we provided a slide show to the Subcommittee to view Jayson's creative renderings for the Branciforte and Garfield branches as examples of exactly what has been needed for the downtown branch for almost two years!

I immediately replied to EDD that limiting the RFP to two of the usual suspects would only serve to strengthen the ongoing controversy of what the city has been doing to undermine any serious consideration of a restoration option! I included the names of five **local** architectural firms. Lo and behold ... an immediate reply thanked me and informed me that all five had been forward the RFP.

Unfortunately the RFP was issued on June 26 to the first three, then on July 9 for my list of five, with a deadline of July 18 to submit any proposals. I pointed out how lame that was and asked that the deadline be extended to July 30. Not sure if that will happen. The other unfortunate thing about the [RFP](#) is it is very confusing and doesn't really want to know any more than what the firm will

charge per hour to think about doing a real proposal if they are chosen. That's an exaggeration, of course, but take a look at the RFP and see if you can come to any other conclusion. Also, look at the [Q&A](#) that had to be issued because of questions from the firms contacted.

Action

The best thing any of you can do, during this fluid situation, is to continue to watch the print (or online) media and be prepared to write LTEs with your request to give renovation and revitalization of the downtown a real chance to be considered. We need lots of different names in the paper, so it is obvious that DBTL is not just a few of us, that there really are 130 on this e-distribution list and that there are probably at least twice as many who feel as we do who are not subscribed.

Also, use [our website](#) as the library of information it is! Check it frequently. We will be adding a refutation to the myth of asbestos soon, so anyone can shoot down that tired excuse for abandoning our downtown library.

Laugh of the Day

Over heard at the Downtown Forward Launch event apparently Vivian Rogers made a point that they (Downtown Forward) have supporters and ... how much money can we raise?? As though money is the master of a successful campaign. Had I been in on that exchange I would have probably replied we have passion and we are right, things that money can't buy.

Jean