

November 27, 2017

Hello All ~

After almost 6 months of meetings of the City's ad hoc Downtown Library Advisory Committee (DLAC), and with only one more meeting scheduled (12/13), the Library Director has finally scheduled a sort of "public meeting." Frankly, this public meeting is a little too late. Done after the fact, instead of at the beginning of the process, so our input would really count before options were set in stone.

Keep in mind that the City's original [RFQ](#) included the requirement that three community meetings be held ("*Plan and design a series of meetings [minimum of three] to engage citizens and stakeholders in meaningful dialogues.*") Rather than do that, the DLAC launched into its own inter-dialogue with the Library Director providing the agendas, herding the DLAC along talking to itself and dreaming big about how to build a brand new 21st Century Downtown Library.

DLAC members did not know that the City Manager and Library Director had co-presented a new library in a new parking garage to the City Council at its [12/6/16 meeting](#). Nor did the DLAC know they were to look only at a library in a parking garage. Nor did they know it was the City Manager who was charged (in the unanimous Council vote) with requesting "*an independent study to verify savings of renovation versus a new build.*"

Rather than have the DLAC craft a vision based on the budget (\$23 million) and ask the architect what can be designed around that budget, the DLAC spent months dreaming big and BIGGER. In the end, their visions were millions of dollars over budget. The result? Several DLAC members are disappointed and disillusioned, thinking that a renovation of the existing building means they have to accept some pitifully depauperate library project. Nothing could be further from the truth, of course. A renovated library, within budget, can be a Library of Excellence. But so far, the DLAC has not shown any inclination to see the possibilities of renovation and renewal.

Even though two of the four final options to be considered by the DLAC are \$37 million and \$49 million, the City still intends to trot them out for consideration at the "public meeting" on 12/3. The DLAC knows this. The disillusioned DLAC also sees their choice for recommendation is either a dismal renovation or a parking garage. I wonder what they are likely to choose?

Please try to attend next Sunday's meeting and speak to DLAC members one on one this time, lobbying for the Renovation Light option (described below). Here are the event details:

Sunday December 3
1:00 pm - 3:00 pm
Upstairs meeting room
Downtown Library

The four options are:

- **Renovation Light** (two new elevators, all new ADA bathrooms, skylight over stairwell to second floor, new electrical, etc.). Cost = \$23.9 million
- **New library in new parking garage.** Cost = \$26 million
- **Full Scale Renovation** (strip the existing building to its skeleton and rebuild the whole thing from the ground up, replacing all the innards and furnishings). Cost = \$37 million
- **New Two-Story library** in existing location. Cost = \$49 million

I know, you're asking why they are even considering the last two options since the budget from Measure S funds for the downtown branch is \$23 million. My gut tells me the two way-over-budget options are intentional *straw dogs*, meant to fall down to make room for the library in a parking garage, while bemoaning the depauperate Renovation Light Option.

The existing downtown library building is a substantial building, structurally. It is sound. The thing that is lacking is any vision toward beautifying it and making it a great library for the 21st Century. At a recent DLAC meeting, the condition of the roof was briefly discussed. The architect waffled in answer to a question and said he didn't know about the condition of the roof, that he was not a roofing expert. *In my opinion, this business about the roof is a red herring.* That roof is sound. The only thing it might need, and only for retrofitting solar panels on some of its east and south facing slopes, is new roofing material.

I am skeptical that the renovations proposed in the Renovation Light option (two new elevators, new stairwell skylight, new ADA bathrooms, new electrical upgrades, new carpet, new welcoming entrance, reconfigured spaces, etc.) will cost \$23 million. That means that a lot more renovation could be done than the stuff in the parentheses above. With a proper renovation, there is no reason the building won't last another 50 years. In fact, with proper maintenance, it should last another 100 years.

Even without any renovation work on that building and only maintenance it will still be standing and operating as a library 100 years from now. Had the City not demolished the Carnegie Library, and simply maintained it, that library would still be functioning.

So let's not allow the its-an-old-building bogey man scare us!

Please plan to attend the Sunday (12/3) event. If unable to attend, send an email to all DLAC members and state your preference for the Renovation Light option that is closest to the Measure S money allocated and also truer to the purposes of Measure S, as presented to the electorate in 2016.

If unable to attend, email your comments to the DLAC via the library's staff person Ivan Sumano-Vargas (sumanovargasi@santacruzpl.org). Put *Comments to DLAC* in the Subject line and ask Ivan to forward your comments the DLAC. You can direct copy the Library

Director, Susan Nemitz (nemitzs@santacruzpl.org) but my guess is that she automatically gets them anyway. Still, it would not hurt to copy her directly on your email.

Let common sense prevail!

Jean

<http://dontburythelibrary.weebly.com/>