

Update #21 July 7, 2018

Hello Friends of the Downtown Library ~

Here is an Update with a Call to Action at the end!

June 19 Study Session and Next Steps

It has been almost three weeks since the City Council held its Study Session on the Library/ Parking Garage proposed a year and a half ago by City Public Works Director Mark Dettle and the Countywide Library System's Director and championed by City Manager Martin Bernal ever since.

Thanks to all of you who were able to be there, as well as to those of you who sent emails to the Council. The place was packed (standing room only). The Library Director and members of the DLAC were given premier seating in the first two rows.

If you followed the news accounts then you know that *nothing was decided* at the June 19 meeting. The meeting was close to two hours of listening first to accolades for the ad hoc Downtown Library Advisory Committee, followed by a tedious presentation about parking and potential parking rate structure fee schedules. The public spoke at hour three, for over an hour. Then Council was next, asking questions and stating their personal opinions.

If one wants to watch the entire 4 hour meeting, go here: <http://scsire.cityofsantacruz.com/sirepub/mtgviewer.aspx?meetid=1091&doctype=AGENDA>

At this Study Session, there wasn't any studying of what could actually be provided by revitalization and renovation of the downtown library, as compared to a newly built library. Council simply accepted the DLAC Report, which contained their last minute straw dog, Option A (Partial Renovation), which was soundly criticized as soon as the public caught sight of it late last year. The DLAC called Option A "irresponsible." We agree, but for very different reasons. None of which the Council studied.

At the end of that marathon of a meeting, which seemed to be more about the parking garage (euphemistically called a Mixed-Use structure to deflect the issue of building a new library in a parking garage) was a slide of **Next Steps**, including:

- Direct staff to conduct additional outreach on the proposed Downtown Library Mixed-Use project.
- Direct staff to conduct additional outreach on proposed parking rates with Downtown Businesses and workers.
- Return to Council in August.

Of that first step (additional outreach), it should be noted that at the end of the meeting, Council

member Martine Watkins' made a point to value the importance of the outreach in "*educating the community and hearing from them as well.*"

Several days after the June 19 meeting Council member Chris Krohn had this to say about both the June 19 Study Session and the likelihood of Council meeting again on this issue in August:

*"Only Councilmember Richelle Noroyan, despite the 30-plus voices pleading with the council to 'decouple' the projects, or just simply use the \$23 million bond money to fix the current library and leave the Farmer's Market where it is, she alone was looking to make a motion to say yes on the library-garage atop the Farmer's Market/garage site. She was quickly dissuaded from making the motion, mainly because staff had said the 'parking rate strategy,' as they called it, had not yet been worked out. So, will it come back in August? Unlikely. I emailed around the day after the meeting to find out, but no definitive answers were offered. **Maybe September**, one staff member emailed, but not sure."*

We're not sure why Council would think that there is enough time in the middle of summer vacations for anything other than perfunctory outreach anyway, so "*sometime in September*" sure makes more sense. But as with this entire process (or lack thereof), nothing surprises us and we all must be prepared to act quickly.

Has Outreach Begun?

It most certainly has and we all need to be there to make sure that the misinformation that has plagued the library in a parking garage since it was first proposed is not spread farther and farther. Below is an email from [Friends of the SC Public Libraries](#) Executive Director, Vivian Rodgers, apparently sent to all library volunteers on June 21st and again on July 5th. Note the promise of providing food as an enticement! What's up with that? Also note that this is ***not outreach to the community***, as envisioned by Martine Watkins. If it was truly outreach to the community, then FSCPL would have posted the meeting notice on its public Facebook page or its public web site. Did Vivian misunderstand the purpose of the "outreach?" Here is her email:

Hi,

The Santa Cruz City Council delayed their vote on the mixed use library option till August. They're delaying, in part, so that we can provide clarity on some of the conflicting information floating in our community.

Susan Nemitz and I would like to invite you to join us for a discussion. We'll provide updated information for the Downtown Branch and its future, and would like to hear your concerns and thoughts about the process.

AND we'll provide food and drinks!

Please let me know which date works for you, or if you are unable to attend any of these hour-long conversations.

Tuesday, July 10, at 11:30 a.m. in the Upstairs Meeting Room of the Downtown Library

Thursday, July 12 at 9:30 a.m. in the Upstairs Meeting Room of the Downtown Library

Thursday, July 26 at 5 p.m. in the Upstairs Meeting Room of the Downtown Library

Thank you!

Vivian Rogers

Executive Director

[Friends of the Santa Cruz Public Libraries](#)

Wait a minute! "... ***provide clarity on some of the conflicting information floating in our community?!!***" This comment seems to be linked with Council member Richelle Noroyan's comment on June 19 that those of us who have had legitimate concerns about the DLAC process and decision-making had created a "*conspiracy*" theory, thus attempting to dismiss the Don't Bury The Library campaign, its key spokespeople and other residents opposed to the library/ garage plan.

Call to Action!

Please plan to attend any or all of the meetings listed in Vivian's email. It is the only way we can know what is being said to library volunteers. We're convinced that Vivian and Susan set up these "*discussions*" with FSCPL volunteers because they heard DBTL spokeswoman, Judi Grunstra, state to the Council on June 19 that it should not accept that all Friends of SC Public Libraries or even all librarians supported the proposed project.

Hoping to see many of you who share our goal to keep the Downtown branch in its current location - revitalized and renewed on either July 10, July 12 or July 26. Let's keep the pressure on for transparency and honesty.

Jean Brocklebank
on behalf of DBTL

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