

Dear Friends of the Downtown Library ~

By now, most should know that the City Council voted (4 - 2) to approve the \$240,000 contract with Griffin Structures, its project manager for the block long, 6 probably 7 storied concrete behemoth on Cedar Street (aka the mixed-use project). The Taj Garage still breathes.

It is sad but true that in terms of our campaign of the past 3 years and 10 months, the downtown library was *buried* first by a parking garage, and ultimately by housing. And for all of us who worked so hard these past years, as one who opposed the project just wrote: "*Opponents of the crushed library are also now crushed.*"

That said, we applaud those of you who sent emails to Council last week, as it received 240 individual emails, not just from DBTL but from the Downtown Commons Advocates (DCA) and CFST, all opposing the contract with Griffin and thus the project. Compare 240 to the 68 supporting it. Alas, added to those 68 emails was the litany of supporters that appear on the Downtown Forward website, which was sent as one email to Council from Vivian Rogers, a staunch supporter of the project from the get go, who constantly misrepresented both the venerable existing downtown library and the Taj Garage library.

Thanks to Sandy Brown and Katherine Beiers for their NO votes

At Tuesday's Council meeting, in answering Katherine Beiers question about Measure S ballot language, Renee Golder happily told Katherine (as though Katherine was not smart enough to know) that the ballot language is "On the public libraries' website, they have the ballot language there."

But Renee Golder did **not** quote the Measure S *ballot question* that included "[construct/expand where necessary](#)". Instead, she quoted the Fiscal Impact statement by the County Auditor-Controller-Treasurer-Tax Collector, which only referenced "new construction" *as defined by the ballot question* (which includes "*where necessary*").

Beiers other very pertinent questions of **how** it was determined "*necessary*" to build a new downtown branch and **when** exactly it was planned to be put in a parking garage went unanswered. Martin Bernal attempted to answer Katherine, but in doing so he used a [2013 Library Facilities Master Plan](#) to **imply** that we, the voters, knew all along that the downtown branch would be newly built in a mixed-use facility. However, that 2013 document only referred to replacing, rebuilding or building new and maybe a joint-use facility with other public or private partners **on its current site** (see page 24 of the Master Plan). Besides, abandoning the existing library and putting it in a parking garage was never addressed in the public arena during the campaign. Clever of them, yes?

Bernal revised history. Again. Continuing the pattern of subterfuge by the city began in the spring of 2016. Before we voted on Measure S.

Is this over?

Probably not. Ahead of us lie the City Council elections. If we are not successful in electing Brown, Hill and Kumar, then there still remains the fact that no matter what City staff presented in their feel good report to Council last Tuesday, funding for the behemoth is not guaranteed. Government decision-making by hope is a crap shoot. Sometimes it works, mostly it doesn't.

For now, it may appear that the library is indeed buried, but if government can operate on hope, then maybe we'll join them. We're down, but most assuredly not out. We'll continue to send updates as the months go by.

Jean Brocklebank

On behalf of 163 others of [Don't Bury The Library](#)