



APPLETON PUBLIC LIBRARY
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**TO: Members of the Appleton Public Library Board of Trustees
Members of the City of Appleton Common Council**
**FROM: Dean Gazza, Director of Parks Recreation and Facilities Management
Colleen Rortvedt, Library Director**
DATE: July 14, 2021
RE: July Library Building Project Update

City staff continue to work with architects Skidmore, Owings and Merrill (SOM) on the library project. The following progress has been made in the past month:

1. SOM recommends a renovation/expansion of the existing library building.

While the decision was made in fall of 2020 to focus on the library's existing site, in seeking architectural and engineering services there had not been any decisions about whether the library project would be a new facility or a renovation to allow the selected architects to provide a recommendation after a thorough assessment.

SOM has shared the following reasons for their recommendation:

- Renovation is the right thing to do for the environment. The reduced waste and embodied energy of renovating an existing building is the most sustainable design solution, setting an example for the community.
- It is their belief that buildings should have a lifespan of at least 100 years. The current building, only 40 years old, is in excellent structural shape and its flexible floor plates allow for future adaptability, added programming, and improved functionality.
- The library is located within the heart of downtown and is an institution that represents Appleton's dedication to learning, knowledge, and social responsibility. Renovating, reimagining, and reviving the building reflects the values and strength of the library as the heart of the community.

SOM has demonstrated a passion and expertise in adaptive reuse. Staff are enthusiastic about the potential to meet the needs of the community in a renovation.

2. Additional Site Assessment Updates

Work continues on subsurface environmental investigations as well as additional inspections of the existing facility for lead, asbestos.

3. **Concept Design**

With the additional focus that the library project will be one of renovation/expansion, work continues with staff on the library building program. Additional virtual and in person meetings are continuing as we receive and prepare for additional public input and continued progress on concept design.

The architects came to Appleton for two days of workshops with library staff leading staff discussions and activities to continue to inform space planning.

4. **Community input**

- a. Appointments have been finalized for the Library Building Project Advisory Committee (LBPAC). This committee is composed of 28 community members who have volunteered to bring their expertise and experiences in an advisory capacity. Their first meeting was held virtually on Wednesday, July 14. The Library Board Building and Equipment Chair Nancy Scheuerman and Common Council Alderperson Katie Van Zeeland are serving on this committee as liaison representatives. The first meeting provided the committee with background and context for the project and began to solicit input about what they hope to see as an outcome of this project.

The Library Director has reached out to all applicants that were not selected for the LBPAC and offered to have personal conversations about what they are hoping to see as a result of the library building project. Several of those conversations have occurred or are scheduled and the feedback will be provided to the architects.

- b. A public survey was released and closed on July 9. Over 700 people completed the survey. This input is being reviewed by the architects.
- c. A public town hall is being scheduled to provide the community with an update.
- d. The architects will provide a status update to the Library Board of Trustees at the meeting on Tuesday, July 20.