

East Library Listening Session Tuesday, December 11, 2012

Station 1:

What do you want to see inside or around the library when you drive by or look at it from the sidewalk?

Lots of windows.

Outdoor seating-sit quietly alone & some for social vegetation-multiple heights – playful stuff – engaging with physical environment & inviting to people walking by.

Happy people.

Books & people.

Plants, flowers & trees.

People – welcoming design – accessible to all. Sustainable materials – design – recycled materials. Possibly solar energy. Tube roof lighting.

Windows, books, chairs, tables and maybe touchable Art. Some outside seating.

Seating with natural light.

Sidewalks wide enough so that people can easily pass each other.

Openness, easy to access.

Public Art or something enjoying on the North Ave side to engage patrons & let them know they are in the library zone. Entrance on Cramer is too far away from the action. Good example is the Public with the table out there. Street vendors would also be really nice. Make the library “the neighborhood” – spend more time here and use more of the resources. Create a happening here.

Design features similar to the Oriental Theatre. The East side’s landmark structure.

Request Rev video relay system... (Independence First). Technology for deaf/hard hearing. Don’t want the library to be quiet. Coffee for \$1.00 – sell it in the library.

Issue of access weren’t addressed in questions that were posted. Don’t forget about the aging - + issues. Counters are too high. Self checks are too high...

Some green space outside, good lighting with windows, quiet areas in library.

Trees, flowers, shrubs.

Open windows to showplace the activities & books & equipment. Place for bikes & seats to encourage a walkable community. A drive by drop box would be handy. A display on outside of upcoming events for the day/week. Wide enough sidewalks.

Trees and clear identity of a library.

Skylights; no airport waiting area/seating in groups; wasted vertical space; spatial variety. Movable exterior furniture (projects for public spaces) – NY; gathering spaces for classes/meetings/book clubs; comfortable seating/soft chairs. Local art display/prints; like Shorewood info desk; flexible interior spaces.

I would like to see this library and others to be totally accessible to people with disabilities and especially people with hearing loss (Deaf, hard of hearing).

Plants & places to sit or read on a sunny day (also access to internet). Light & colors. Sculpture coordinated with planting – plants as sculptures.

Should be identified as a library from North Ave.

Active windows, rotating materials.

Green fauna/trees; colors on & around building; people using the services; energy efficient lighting (LED's); attractive seating areas.

Green space between building & street; plants & flowers & trees to make an attractive look-not just a building.

More PCs.

Trees & plants and seating that encourages conversation.

Books displays, large windows, no graffiti, no trash from apartments above.

A few trees, perhaps blue spruce which loses no leaves. A seating area would be nice. I enjoy sitting in the sun come summer while I wait for the library to open.

Don't care about the external appeal. It's what is contained inside which is important. I suppose we should be able to tell whether the library is open or not from outside.

Seating along windows. Provide technology area – that is open & accessible. Keep librarians/staff at the same level. Keep librarians accessible. Is there an opportunity of balcony?

Internet access and printing capability. Meeting rooms.

Station 2:

What is your favorite library within the MPL system and why?

Tippecanoe is closer to my home. Easy access. Good summer reading program for kids. Good parking.

Central – beautiful. Bay View – part of my community – meeting place.

Downtown – Central – size. Building – architecture.

Tie: Downtown & East Library. Love the Downtown location & building & special departments. Love the “East” because it’s friendly & homey.

Downtown - because of the architecture.

Unable to judge – only been to East.

Central – don’t forget about the history – use it & multiply it. Tell the story of the community & of the library.

East – convenience, parking, location, familiarity, good hours. Villard – attractive inside, parking not so convenient. Bay View - great lighting, large meeting room, good layout, good selection/variety, parking is convenient.

Downtown – Ornate Architecture.

Central Library because of the specialty areas it can offer. The Shorewood Library is attractive. I have not visited many of the other libraries in MPL. Martin Luther King Library has a nice welcoming feel (but some sections seem too much space).

Central – it is so beautiful and respects knowledge. Its character asks for a polite behavior of patrons.

Just moved to Wisconsin from Chicago, IL and DuPage County (IL). Libraries were state of art & totally accessible. Libraries should provide video phone access for Deaf Library card users.

Bay View – generous dimension, lots of ambient light.

Central for space & sense of history. Bay View for modern.

Central – size; architecture; materials. Obviously can’t be matched.

East side – it’s convenient.

East is my favorite because it’s convenient & has access to all the holdings of MPL. Central is my favorite too because of its architecture (We wouldn’t build like that today, but it has historic value).

I like the library down near K.K. and Dover for its airy spaciousness. I feel the eastside needs a larger library.

What is the best library anywhere which you have ever visited and why?

Downtown, large size, coffee shop, books & video/DVD, children's library.

Library of Congress.

Marquette – lots of esoteric information.

Library of Congress – because of the historical books.

Downtown – big, much to offer. Beautiful building.

Seattle's downtown library – it had an open inviting space; had accessible entrances & means to get to other levels. Architecturally interesting. The open space of the Soref Learning Commons at UWM is inviting – softer lighting, no walls in technology area.

Trinity College – Dublin (however-it is not well lit (see Pt. 3) nevertheless its history, architecture & collections compensate.

Woodridge, IL Library and the Harold Washington Library in Chicago.

Library of Congress (Jefferson Bldg). Seattle Public Library. [Not the San Francisco PL – interesting as architecture but space badly distributed for a working library] Also liked San Antonio Public Library with its rich colors and “textured” structures.

San Antonio Public – except for the sightlines. Seattle PL = circular walkway inside = provides accessibility in a subtle, usable way.

New downtown Minneapolis library – Attractive inside and out because of architecture; lots of visibility from every point because of layout; technology seamlessly integrated throughout.

New York City Central Branch – cause it's in NYC!

Central & East. Cleveland Central (Downtown) – John White Chess collection.

The one in San Miguel de Allende, Gto., Mexico – beautiful courtyard with café serving light snacks & coffee.

Library of Congress - Rare Book rooms, the idea that the written word is intended to last. It is not just a warehouse for storage of books, it's a shrine to the written word. Quiet.

The library in Minocqua, WI was a good one because they had newer books, also newer paperback books. I hope you won't do without paperbacks because they're easier for people with arthritis to hold than regular big books!

Station 3:

What would make a good library for the East side? What is your dream library?

A hub of activity for an area – kids, youth, adults, seniors.

Resources & good hours.

Accessible – periodicals; belong to Internet data bases.

E-books; video relay service; multi media – CDs-DVDs; rooms that can be used for various community activities and double as “relaxing” area for reading; comfy furniture. Get City to provide better crosswalk access at Cramer & North, including 2-way curb ramps at intersection. The existing one is not safe.

Bigger – more technology, access more computers & printers, more books – better children’s areas & bigger collection.

Computers – would like pod system like Houston or laptop specific furniture. Shorewood – libs are elevated – more welcoming. Important to keep kids & teens involved. Kids’ activities – lib tours. Community space. Desks chairs by windows. Faster independence with checkout stations. Mini checkouts. GREEN Library – rain gardens, rainspouts, recycled, solar panels, thermostats that quickly heat a room. A library, not a tech center. Standing desks – adaptor for people to be up higher. Power for charging. Grant materials for East side students library. Balcony around edge of 16’ ceiling as quiet deck space. Ergonomic furniture. Hours! – more books – traditionally library. Community meeting space. Sell coffee. What about glass in ceiling. Plants inside – or as divider between spaces. Beams above current used as benches. Clear indication that library is open. Bring diverse group in for a mix at one time. Still introducing people to books. Don’t let books get lost. Physical objects as inspiration – able to touch. Book Art – like at Woodland Pattern – can be inspiring. Programming makes it exciting. “Do something to make it not look like an airport”. Thoughtful details in materials – like in John Wayne Airport. Incorporate East side history? Nanjing Library – glass floor with archaeological details. Sense of place – through history enduring.

Continue multi media – books, DVD, books on CD, computer access free.

Windows, open, brightness, beautiful artwork, lower portion on check out area.

Structure beams – allow for 2nd Floor/Balcony addition.

Green certified; Oriental Theatre is focus building of the area; so copy some of the features; standing desks for patrons & staff. Lounge chairs.

Limit the modern design – and keep the history.

Plenty of parking, green space, good lighting, good range of hours, a couple of quiet areas for reading or study. Lots of computers for public use, including printers/copiers. Dream library would be open 7 days a week. Separate area for children’s reading & story time.

Adequate space for technology. Also include a teen, pre-teen, kid section to encourage library youth to come. Include some interesting art work that be a showcase for the space & encourage visitors to stop in. Include a community space & possibly small study/quiet spaces. Have some desks near the windows. A coffee shop access would attract patrons. Some comfortable chairs would help. Have librarians sitting at a higher level so they are at eye level with patrons. Patron check out.

Light, open spaces, well ventilated, friendly, helpful librarians. A good display of something I might not know about.

Internal space that can be re-arranged as needs & interests change. False floor for wiring technology unobtrusively. Materials in many formats for ethnic groups in the city. Meeting rooms of various sizes for group projects & study.

Vibrant, busy. Good sightlines – for users & staff; cozy corner in which to read; good light at all times of day (not blinded by the sun or feeling it is too dark).

Hours and ability to request materials most important to me. Computers and/or internet access for community. Fan of getting to see new materials.

Well utilized by all ages.

A friendly & comfortable place where new books are showcased, (adult & children's); a place where librarians & aides reach out to make people feel valued.

More educational programs.

1-comfortable reading area with good light; 2-comfortable chairs for those with laptops; 3-more exciting use of space.

A place where people learn to love the written work, book, audio or screen, where people have the opportunity to share items. Free WiFi, laptop charging stations (as East has now). Free internet access stations (as East has now).

One with more handicap restrooms; one that offers books on Kindle; one that offers longer hours (opening most days at 10 AM).

I hope East will continue to have the warmth it now has. I also have librarians will not be rotated through. It's nice to develop a personal relationship with the librarians. I'd like to see comfortable seating areas.

What would make a library exciting enough that you would bring a friend from out of the area to see it?

Special design features. Sustainable – interactive environment – coffee shop inside. Art or unique design.

I take people to Downtown library all the time!

Attractive inside & out, good selections, friendly & helpful staff, separate areas for children's activities, meeting rooms for community group, environmentally conscientious construction & energy use.

"Green" Roof over library – flat roof spaces.

Unique art work.

Architecture & collections – maybe one great highlighted collection.

Library assured providing both interpreter, CART access for any presentations that this library has to offer community.

Sculpture inside & outside. Room for lectures & presentations (the community's living room). A good coordination of floor coverings, lighting, furniture & fixtures.

Interesting architecture – distinctive. Would love an outside area incorporated into the design.

Architecture, unique/temporary collections. Significant art (painting, sculpture).

A great children's book area with a friendly librarian. New books would be highlighted & changed as new ones come in. Exciting programs that bring the Eastside community together.

Educational programs.

Books & bookshelves, conversation areas, video screening area, Free WiFi, Internet stations, novel writers group, book club. Programming that includes readings by visiting authors. Computer classes (as MPL has now). Tutoring for kids – homework help (as East has now).

Maybe if it had an aquarium with different fish to watch.

I don't expect a library to be exciting. I have brought people to see Central Library because of its architectural beauty.

Not modern...; create cozy area...; nice library chairs... Keep space for community artwork. Why would you bring a friend – art work changing (??)

Station 4:

What places on the East side are doing something so well the library should learn from them?

Urban Ecology Center.

Urban Ecology Center & some churches – These entities have ‘large vision’ and have “opened” their places to “other” activities which make them very community friendly.

Many of the “Shining Stars” are commercial – totally different situation. Library is a service; a public service.

Alterra on Lake – mix old with new – retail too.

Pay Attention to Access issues

Milwaukee Public Market. Boswell (with Starbucks right next to it).

Dental office on Farwell – Dewall ? (across from Maryland Ave School)

Like Alterra-a great gathering space & inviting. Wants to see activity & child thru windows. Urban Eco Center – defacto com center because community events happen there. People feel like it belongs to them not generic – a sense of place. A sense of permanence that you can engage with; like climbing the willow tree or the slide – people grow & change but it will be there – can talk to her friends about the slide. The publicness of it has conversation pieces & common inference (pts) that everyone interacts with but with changing exhibits that draw uou back. Capitalizes on the variety of users so intergenerational mixing. Kids use Shorewood Library because they like the collection more. Make it a place where kids want to come like U.E. Center – good class mixing a very special space place open to all.

UWM & Shorewood Library.

There is a buzz in Riverwest – has a kind of youthful vib – not sure how it is achieved.

Great neighborhood – great places to go & dine & activities.

Alterra Coffee (both Prospect & Lincoln Memorial Dr.) = interesting use of space.

Bruegger’s rotation art. More and more pedestrian-friendly urban design.

Alterra; East side B.I.D.; UWM.

Beans ‘N’ Barley – quality items.

Bruegger’s – they open early.

Most popular 1st you see – should be other staff – broaden their mind; wants kids to learn how to use-not have librarians do everything themselves; room for community use, computer space, more interactive use of space eg. Shorewood – round info desk in middle of everything – Central

info desk; keep doing what we do – eg. community papers, notices; art shows; *photograph the stained glass; growing children population – need more for kids & activities in the neighborhood – possible more graduate students with families; skylights possible; green space not just for apt. resident; computer classes.

(Which?) the East library is doing so well, that architects can learn some grammar here. Maybe architects should go to libraries more often & then they would know. The courtesy and kindness of the East Library librarians should be learned by businesses in the area.

(Hm?), too many bars around here (THAT wouldn't count). Some books stores have coffee shops, but then you better keep it separate from the book area. Perhaps a coffee area would be a means to raise extra \$ for the library??

Station 5:

What needs does the East side community have that the library could fulfill that are not currently being met anywhere else?

More public meeting space.

Something appealing to youth & 20 somethings – lots of students live & work go to east side.

Better access for persons with mobility disabilities. No stairs, accessible restrooms. Easy access to the books. Much of the East side needs better access. The library could lead by good example. Easy, open, accessible after-hours drop-off box.

Drive the better balance between an entertainment district and a neighborhood area.

The library should be a library – it cannot be all things to all people. This in an information resources – that alone is a huge mission (no coffee shops, no dry cleaners, etc.)

Computer access/WIFI access.

Public information board visible from street.

A Community Center.

Earlier hours; quiet areas.

English language classes for immigrants; Spanish classes for monolingual English speakers; health checkup days.

The Eastside does not have a Senior Center. Yes it's a young crowd on the eastside, but "some of us are pushing 65 and have no place to hang out except the library. It would be nice if something were done to give us Eastside oldsters a meeting place!"

Station 6: What don't you like about most libraries?

Male, 40s

No personality – institutional look. Just books. Wants to be drawn in, curious about what's inside. Mentioned the entry to the Betty Brinn Children's Room. When you see it from main street you want to go in there and see what it's about. More color, lighting, interesting. Was somewhat involved during the building of Wauwatosa Library. Thought it would be different but it ended up looking like every other library.

Female, 50s

Restricted hours. Her branch isn't open when she's available. Wishes all libraries would be open the same hours, but understands it's a budget issue. Also prefers libraries that are easy to navigate. Likes Bay View and Villard – walks in and knows where to find books, CDs, Large Print. Zablocki and Mill Road hard to navigate. Can't figure out where things are. Likes M.L. King but the parking is bad. If there's no place to park she just keeps driving and doesn't go in. Likes the staff at M.L. King. Likes the staff at Villard but the hours it's open aren't good for her so she stopped going there.

Female, 70s

Doesn't like the fact that you have to be quiet everywhere. Would like to be able to talk books or visit with a friend without feeling you're intruding on other people's quiet. Some area apart from study area where some reasonable talking would be allowed. Also a more defined space for children. Feels bad that they are shushed – they should be able to make a reasonable amount of noise so they feel welcome at the library. Also feel their area should be better defined. Sometimes they wander into adult section of library looking for books because they can't see that their section ended and the adult section started. Also children's computer section should be separate from adult.

Also more comfortable and varied seating. Chairs are not comfortable – especially at the computers. But would like an area with stuffed chairs or more inviting furniture. Fireplace seating like Villard.

Female, 30s

Does not allow her children to come to the library anymore. Only popular series books are available on the turning racks. She wants her children to expand their horizons and read more than popular fluff. Everything is geared toward popular literature not important literature. Also wants children to learn how to use the library. Librarians do everything for them instead of teach them. Wants her children to be consumers, not customers. Until these things change her children are not allowed in the library.

Expectation of quiet/like interaction – activity.

Lack of private space.

They are not all accessible to people with disabilities. The TTY machines are not answered.

Nothing!! I love libraries!

Florescent lighting.

Closed up feeling. Unnatural light. Small inaccessible restrooms. Counters * checkout areas too high for a person using a wheelchair.

Restricted/limited hours, inconvenient parking. Many libraries hard to navigate for first time or occasional users – where are certain items located? Need better signage, map/layout of library.

Lack of private space – small room where a small group could meet & study. Counters are too high for wheelchair use.

Standard approaches.

Unfriendly librarians who act like it's a pain to help you. Clearly delineate – children's', video etc.

None at all.

Lacking of seating near electrical outlets – not enough outlets. Separate spaces while retaining sightlines—some of the AZ libraries used glass wall or open metal dividing.

Lack of end caps in the stacks. Thinking like retailers (end of the aisle most valuable space). Relevant materials on display at end of rows could make browsing more appealing. Better overall experience from that.

Limited hours of operation.

Not friendly librarians. Children's area not taken care of – new books not changed. No thought given to YA & Teen books. At East Library, no CD section for young adult & teen books – they are mingled with adult CDs.

Limited hours.

The “silence, no talking” rule that isn't much enforced anymore.

I like libraries – I live close to one because I need it. There is nothing I don't like about libraries. However, I am concerned that a library should also be beautiful. Currently East side library is functional but not beautiful. All the lines are straight – very masculine. We need more curves to make a library appeal to women & children.

The absolute worst library I was ever in was Rhinelander, WI! What made it the worst were the attitudes of the library personnel. You could only spend 30 minutes on the computers, but the librarians would start to hassle you off of them after only 20 minutes. Rude, uncaring, uppity SNOBS! NEVER AGAIN!

Station 7:

What would you like to be able to say about the library when it is complete?

A great place to be and the community had some 'say!' I wasn't planning on going in, but something drew me in! Something about the building that said, "I have to go there!"

Accessible. In terms of parking and the building itself. Easy access from parking area, wide aisles, accessible reference area.

It's a great addition to our community.

A beautiful building.

That I love the new space as much as I loved the old space and that I can find parking when I visit.

Neighborhood in transition. Library takes on that role. Take elements from oriental. Pull design features. Water Tower. Altera. New elements already captured in exterior. Public Art on the outside? Strip mall on Murray for temp location? Best of worst designs. Nothing much has changed. Why? Computer – kids separate from adult computer. All too centrally located. Separate Children's area. Like little area to have conversations like at Villard Square. Don't like kids come to the library (b/c) what's on the shelf is junk. Place where people who are different from each other meet each other. Flexible spaces.

Coffee shop/used book area like downtown. Automatic entry doors. Tables by the windows to be able to read & study by natural light. Wide curb cuts in the streets on all corners surrounding the library.

Accessible entrances for disabled; wheelchair accessible parking; Night drop box; Tubular roof, lighting skylight; Streetcar stop.

Adds to character & activities of the neighborhood.

It is beautiful, architecturally significant and I can find material readily.

Invite me over & be sure to have sign language interpreter available for either ribbon cutting or Open House. Also need to be well- (Thomas Benzige 262-290-4466 work phone (8:30 am-3:30 pm))

It's in our neighborhood and in our city! It's a good place to read. Would like counters lining the windows with chairs.

That all future libraries will want to emulate model.

They figured it out and did an admirable job!

It is a warm & friendly place filled with smiling librarians, the newest books, nice art on the walls, & people who care in charge. (not people glued to the computer screen)

That it is used more.

That it is clean & welcoming; that the people in the apartments above will not litter the parking lot & turn the librarians into janitors; that the people in the apartments do not dump their trash outside the library; that women & children feel safe entering & exiting our library.

That it's truly better than the old Eastside library.

I would say that it has a good collection & knowledgeable librarians and is welcoming.

Additional Comments & Observations:

Would have appreciated questions specifically addressing usability for aging patrons & people with disabilities. Also, any cultural friendliness.

When I think of my library, it takes away some of the sting of paying taxes. I love the access to Internet & books & periodicals & help doing research that the library gives to old & young, to poor & middle class, in short to all of us. It should be easy to "pop-in" and easy to use. So, we need parking & street access. And it should be easy for the staff to work in – easy to monitor & supervise & with the tools they need to do their jobs.

Library driving force to shift balance in North area for community vs entertainment.

Meeting space needs to be more generous than what we currently have.

Came before 6 pm- No sign language interpreter presented even though I called & request one – I understand that interpreter was "on the way" and I gave up waiting & left at 6:30 pm. The interpreter should not be paid for failing providing services.

Thank you for the survey! Happy 2013! Am looking forward to a new Eastside library.