



MEETING NOTES

Faneuil Branch Library Renovations

Community Meeting #1

October 21, 2019

Attendees

Oudens Ello Architecture: Conrad Ello & Noel Murphy

Boston Public Library: Priscilla Foley, Eamon Shelton & Lissa Schwab

City of Boston Public Facilities Department: Alistair Lucks

35+ community members

Agenda

- Project Team
- Process and Schedule
- Project Goals
- Existing Conditions Assessment
- Community Input

Community Comments

General

- Small size and intimacy are qualities that make this library special.
- Explore layout and furniture that incorporates cozy, quiet nooks to curl up with a book or laptop.
- Desire to maintain a central staffed circulation desk that fosters personal interaction; not everything should be self-checkout.
- Desire to have art gallery shows with artwork spread throughout the reading areas rather than confined to one space.
- Emphasized importance of non-group, non-scheduled activity: visitors coming to explore or read on their own, studying individually or in small groups, tutoring.
- Expressed need for operational flexibility and spaces that can thoughtfully accommodate movement and storage of strollers, tables and chairs, wheelchairs.
- Expressed need to not only incorporate current technology but also plan for the next 25-50 years.

Community Room

- Library hosts a wide range of activities and special events including book club, garden club, maker classes, music lessons, music concerts, writer performances, one-man historical plays, trivia night, funky auction.
- Some expressed that library does not need to be all things to all people, there are other venues nearby that can accommodate larger groups. Others expressed sentiment that there is an emotional attachment to the library (history, architectural qualities of spaces) versus other venues.
- Desire for room be welcoming at all times, for example incorporating built-in benches and classics books around perimeter so it can be used at all times without impeding flexibility for meetings. Should feel like a library not a different type of space.

- Desire to maintain acoustics for music programs. Current space has good acoustics for live music with hard surfaces, high ceiling, good proportions.
- Explore opportunities to maximize flow between spaces for special events.
- Explore seating capacity. Current room has accommodated 70-80 people for popular events.

Collection

- Some expressed desire not to diminish collection size, maybe increase volumes? Others noted that collection size should be balanced with shelving heights and overall feel of the library spaces.

Historical Features

- Desire to incorporate historic details including furniture (a number of original wood tables and chairs are still in use).
- Explore whereabouts of original painting over fireplace. Can it be located? Could it be reinstalled?

Friends of Library

- Desire for more dedicated storage.
- Is it possible to provide dedicated space for Friends meetings (20 people)?

Outdoor space

- Desire to retain green space and trees wherever possible.
- Suggested landscape that is low maintenance and compliments recent improvements in Oak Square. Could coordinate with Garden Club.
- Consider green roof to offset loss of green space.

Other

- Is CPA funding available? Could be explored if could benefit project.
- Keep construction schedule as short as possible to minimize displacement of staff.

Next Steps

- Community Meeting #2 planned for Winter 2019/2020

END OF MEETING NOTES