SOUTH END BRANCH LIBRARY
Community Meeting #2
February 12, 2023
TRANSLATIONS

Translations for this meeting are available live in the following languages:

Chinese (Cantonese)
Spanish (Español)
AGENDA

Community Meeting #2
February 12, 2024

1. Introductions
2. Schedule and Process
3. Branch Service Area & Demographics
4. Building Program
5. Site Observations
6. Test Fits
7. Next Steps
8. Q&A Discussion
**ACCELERATED PROJECT SCHEDULE**

- **Feasibility Study**: 3 months
- **Design Phase**: 12 months
- **Construction**
- **Move-in & Opening**

**Community Input**

- Community Meeting #1: Jan 8, 2024
- Community Meeting #2: Feb 12, 2024
- Community Meeting #3: Mar / Apr 2024
- Future Community Meeting: TBD in 2024
- Future Community Meeting: TBD in 2024
BRANCH SERVICE AREA & DEMOGRAPHICS
CATCHMENT AREA DEMOGRAPHICS

Languages Spoken
English (only): 23.9%
Spanish (only, and in addition to another language): 7.8%
  29% increase in Spanish speakers since 2010

Age Groups
Largest: 35–64 years-old (30.6% of total)
Fastest growing: 65+ years-old (57% increase)

Racial Demographics
White: 49.3%
Black/African American: 13.7% (21% decrease)
Asian/Pacific Islander: 16.5% (30% increase)
Hispanic or Latino: 15.5% (8% decrease)

Greatest decrease since 2010: White (-6.3%)
Greatest increase since 2010: Asian/Pacific Islander (+3.8%)

Median Household Income (2022)
$78,970

Demographic Changes since 2010
*All demographic information is based on the South End Library Extended Catchment Area and comparing either an increase or decrease from 2010 to 2022 census data.
BUILDING PROGRAM
COMMUNITY MEETING #1 FEEDBACK

General
a. Building footprint and parcel is limited; therefore we need to prioritize multi-use
b. Services for a broad range of needs for the community
c. Relocate the main entrance closer or more visible from Tremont St.
d. The South End Branch should prioritize sustainability which could be a teaching tool for patrons

Collections and seating
a. Consider role of the Local History Collection
b. Provide a dedicated display for SE authors
c. Increased area for computer users (increased qty or additional seating at library tables)
d. Variety of seating for parents with young children
e. Additional high top tables for remote working and collaboration
COMMUNITY MEETING #1 FEEDBACK

Community Room
a. The existing community room is undersized for larger events
b. The community room should be designed to host a variety of activities and special events

Study Rooms / Classroom
a. Smaller, acoustically private spaces are desired to enable services such as tax and homework support, language and reading assistance, etc.
b. Consider providing a classroom that can accommodate a 10-12 person meeting for programs such as computer learning
Outdoor Spaces

a. The SE community would like to maintain as much of the Library Park as possible
b. Would be open to reducing the park in order to increase the building footprint and library programs
c. The SE has limited tree canopy and would like to preserve the park trees if possible
d. Reinstating Wi-fi in the Park is desired
e. Socializing, chess-playing, summer concerts, Easter egg hunts and children’s outdoor programming are well attended
f. Enhancing the summer concert program would be welcomed
g. Interest in blurring the boundaries between the library and the park.
h. Could the park remain open after hours?
PROPOSED SOUTH END BUILDING PROGRAM

SUPPORT
- Custodian Nook
- Custodian Closet
- Friend’s Storage
- Facilities Storage
- Stairs/Elevators
- Mechanical
- Server
- Electrical

COMMUNITY
- Community Room
- Storage Closet(s)
- Multi-Purpose Room
- Special Program
- Study Rooms
- Phone Booths

ADULT AREA
- Adult Collections
- Adult Seating
- Librarian’s Desk
- Local History

TEEN AREA
- Teen Collections
- Teen Seating

CHILDREN AREA
- Children’s Collections
- Children’s Seating
- Early Literacy Area
- Librarian’s Desk
- Tween Area
- Stroller Parking
- Family Restroom

STAFF
- Workroom
- Librarian’s Office
- Staff Break Room
- Staff Restroom
- Storage

CENTRAL SERVICES
- Borrower’s Desk
- Satellite Desk
- Centrally Located Services
- Men’s/Women’s RR
- All Gender Restroom

ENTRY
- Vestibule
- Lobby
- Exterior Book Drop
PROPOSED SOUTH END BUILDING PROGRAM

Community - 2,290 SF
- Community Meeting Room, seating capacity of +/- 125
- Multi-purpose meeting room, 8-10 seats
- (2) Study rooms, 4-6 seats
- (2) "Phone room" nooks, 1-2 person capacity

Adult Area - 3,200 SF
- 12,500 - 13,000 volumes
- 36 seats
- 12 computer stations
- Includes Local History

Teen Area - 835 SF
- 3,000 volumes
- 12 seats
- 4 computer stations

Children Area - 2,760 SF
- 13,250 - 13,750 volumes
- 30 seats
- 3 AWE computer stations
- Includes tweens area, story time area and crafts

Staff - 970 SF
- Work room, break room, staff restroom and storage
- Branch librarian’s office

Central Services - 1,480 SF
- Borrower’s desk
- Holds shelving, Friend’s book sale, community bulletin board and display areas
- Restrooms

Entry - 415 SF
- Vestibule, lobby and book drop

Support - 2,090 SF
- Friend’s and facilities storage
- Mechanical and electrical rooms

Grossing Factor (+/- 15%)
- Circulation between program areas and shaft spaces

TOTAL - 15,500-16,500 SF
PROPOSED SOUTH END BUILDING PROGRAM
SITE OBSERVATIONS
NEIGHBORHOOD CONTEXT

RUTLAND SQUARE

TREMONT ST

parcel boundary

LIBRARY PARK

ALLEY

Building Footprint:

6,400 SF

Existing South End Branch of the Boston Public Library
Most buildings along Tremont street are set back 4-8 feet from the property line, with a few exceptions being set back further, and a few with no setback at all.
Typically, the space between end caps along Tremont street compress to a distance of 50 feet, while the faces of buildings along north-south streets expand to 60 or sometimes 80 feet.
Heights along Tremont Street typically range from 50 to 60 feet, with some exceptions. Heights along the north-south streets are typically lower at 40 feet. Particularly north of Tremont street.

Facade of existing library at 11' with pop-up reaching 31'.
NEIGHBORHOOD CONTEXT - ARCHITECTURAL VARIETY
OPPORTUNITIES FOR EXPANSION

Parcel Size: 16,100 SF

Building Footprint: 6,400 SF
IMPACTS TO THE ADJACENT PARK AND TREES

Approximate Tree Canopy

2017 Pavement Footprint ± 2,900 sf

1971 Pavement Footprint ± 2,570 sf
SITE DEVELOPMENT HISTORY

1826: Planning for the filling of the Back Bay begins
Image: 1826 Boston Annin & Smith Map

1835: The cap-block condition is proposed as filling continues
Image: 1835 Boston South Cove Pendleton Map

1852: Parcelization begins as blocks are filled
Image: 1852 Boston Slatter Map

1888: Townhomes, streetcars, and residential “squares” define the South End’s boulevards and streets
Image: 1888 Boston Bromley Atlas

1968: The Branch site noted in a BRA Urban Renewal plan that demolishes cap blocks and neighborhood swaths.
Image: 1968 BRA Boston South End Illustrative Site Plan

1968: The Branch site noted in a BRA Urban Renewal plan that demolishes cap blocks and neighborhood swaths.
Image: 1968 BRA Boston South End Illustrative Site Plan

2023: Today's branch has returned to its original site, but challenges to meeting community needs remain.
Image: Google Earth 2023
FLOOD RISK - STORMWATER

Near-Term Stormwater Flood Risk

Source: Climate Ready Boston Map Explorer
FLOOD RISK - STORMWATER

Long-Term Stormwater Flood Risk

Source: Climate Ready Boston Map Explorer
FLOOD RISK - COASTAL FLOODING

High Tide 2070 (takes into account a 36-in sea level rise)

The existing South End Library parcel has a 10% annual coastal flood risk, meaning that in 2070 there will be a 1 in 10 chance of a flood event occurring in any given year.

The Base Flood Elevation for the SE Branch parcel is 18 ft

The existing library first floor elevation is 15.99 ft

The City of Boston Zoning Code requires the first floor elevation 1 ft above sea level.

If our project were to comply w/ the zoning code, then the first floor elevation will need to be at 19 ft (approx. 3’-3” above Tremont Street)

Source: Boston Zoning Code
FLOOD RISK - EXISTING BUILDING

DESIGN FLOOD ELEV.
EL. 19.00'

APPROX. 3'-3" ABOVE TREMONT ST.
TEST FITS
WHAT IS A TEST FIT

What is a test fit?

A three-dimensional test of the library program on the site.

Disclaimer!

- These are only tests used as proof of concept.
- These are not design proposals.
- Goal of this exercise is to illustrate how a specific arrangement of the program fits on the site.
- No conclusions have been drawn from these test fits.

- It is important to test many different options during the feasibility study phase as a form of due diligence.
RENOVATION + ADDITION OPTION - SITE DIAGRAM

(Need to be clear we are still doing research on easements so buildable area could reduce the full lot)
RENOVATION + ADDITION OPTION - FIRST FLOOR

Community Room

Multipurpose Room

Restrooms

Lobby

Central Services

Staff

EMR

Elev

Study

Study

Facilities / Storage

Adults

Egress Ramp

Community Room Exit

Main Entrance

Lift

Elevator

UP

UP

UP

UP

Extent of Addition

Adults: +1,070 SF

Community Room: +190 SF

Central Services: +190 SF
RENOVATION + ADDITION OPTION - SECOND FLOOR

Children: +520 SF (including bridge)
Teens: +120 SF
MASSING - EXISTING BUILDING
Opportunities:
- Preserves the existing building shape and facades along Tremont and West Newton Street
- Locates most (but not all) new construction above the floodplain

Constraints:
- The existing building and some new construction remains in the floodplain
- Headroom in the first floor of the addition is severely limited (approximately 8 feet ceilings); maintains low ceilings in the existing building
- Costly interventions when adding onto to an existing building
- Approximately half of Library Park is lost to the addition, including several mature trees
- Entrance is set back from Tremont Street
- Preserves the blank facades along Tremont and West Newton Street
- May require a second elevator in addition or variance for a motorized lift
- Ground floor is oversized for Adult collection but too small to accommodate other programs
NEW CONSTRUCTION ONE STORY OPTION - FIRST FLOOR

- Lobby
- Main Entrance
- Restrooms
- Central Services
- Community Room
- Multipurpose Room
- Study
- Egress Ramp
- Teens
- Mechanical
- Restrooms
- Staff
- Facilities
- Staff
- Adults
- Children
- Teens
- Study
- UP
- DN
- Egress Ramp
- Emergency Exit
- Elev
- Adult
- Children
- Teens
- Community Room
- Central Services
- Restrooms
- Elev
Opportunities:
- The main entrance is directly off of Tremont Street and West Newton Street.
- All program areas are located above the floodplain.
- All program areas are on one floor.

Constraints:
- Library Park is eliminated in order to accommodate the library program.
- Elevator still required to negotiate level change above floodplain.
- Additional costs to build a tall one-story building to meet requirements of South End Landmark District Commission.
NEW CONSTRUCTION TWO STORY OPTION - FIRST FLOOR

- Lobby
- Main Entrance
- Park Entrance
- Community Room Exit
- Community Room
- Facilities / Storage
- Restrooms
- Staff
- Multipurpose Room
- Elev
- Central Services
- Children
- Emergency Exit
NEW CONSTRUCTION TWO STORY OPTION - SECOND FLOOR

- Staff
- Restrooms
- Mechanical
- Study
- Study
- Adults
- Teens
- EMR
- Elev
- UP
- DN
- Teens: +90 SF
- Adults: +10 SF
Opportunities:
- Maintains the majority of Library Park
- The main entrance is directly off of Tremont Street and Library Park
- All program areas are located above the floodplain

Constraints:
- Enlargement of building footprint may impact the existing tree in Library Park closest to the library
- Two-story building relies on an elevator for access throughout the library
SUMMARY

Renovation + Addition - 17,100 SF

Opportunities:
- Preserves the existing building shape and facades along Tremont and West Newton Street
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New Construction One Story - 15,050 SF

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- All program areas are on one floor

Constraints:
- Library Park is eliminated in order to accommodate the library program
- Elevator still required to negotiate level change above floodplain
- Additional costs to build a tall one-story building to meet requirements of South End Landmark District Commission

New Construction Two Story - 15,845 SF

Opportunities:
- Maintains the majority of Library Park
- The main entrance is directly off of Tremont Street and Library Park
- All program areas are located above the floodplain

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NEXT STEPS
Feasibility Study

Jan 8, 2024
Community Meeting #1
Preliminary existing conditions report
Present typical BPL Branch Library building program
Understand community needs for South End Branch

Jan 2024
We are here

Feb 12, 2024
Community Meeting #2
Update on existing conditions findings
Develop preliminary South End Branch building program
Present preliminary test-fits of program in renovation and new construction options

Mar / Apr 2024
Community Meeting #3
Finalize Branch building program
Update test-fits in renovation and new construction options
Present recommendation of option for further design

Feb 12, 2024
Community Meeting #2
Update on existing conditions findings
Develop preliminary South End Branch building program
Present preliminary test-fits of program in renovation and new construction options

Mar / Apr 2024
Future Community Meetings
TBD in 2024

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TBD in 2024
FUTURE SITE ACTIVITIES

Geotech Borings

- Targeting early March (weather permitting) for drilling
- Geotech borings will help determine the subsoil conditions and makeup
- The drilling rig is the size of a garbage truck
- Expect the drilling will last 3 days to complete 4 borings
QUESTIONS & COMMENTS?
For written comments or questions:
Use the chat dialog box

To ask a question:
Raise hand and wait to be called on
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Opportunities:
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- All program areas are located above the floodplain
- All program areas are on one floor

Constraints:
- Library Park is eliminated in order to maximize the library program
- Program targets are not fully met due to the limitations of the property extents
- Elevator still required to negotiate level change above floodplain
- Additional costs to build a tall one-story building to meet requirements of South End Landmark District Commission

New Construction Two Story - 15,845 SF

Opportunities:
- Maintains the majority of Library Park
- Accommodates the target program
- The main entrance is directly off of Tremont Street and Library Park
- All program areas are located above the floodplain

Constraints:
- Enlargement of building footprint may impact the existing tree in Library Park closest to the library
- Two-story building relies on an elevator for access throughout the library
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  - Community Meeting Room, seating capacity of +/- 125
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- **Adult Area - 3,200 SF**
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- **Entry - 415 SF**
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- **Support - 2,090 SF**
  - Friend’s and facilities storage
  - Mechanical and electrical rooms

- **Grossing Factor (+/- 15%)**
  - Circulation between program areas and shaft spaces

**TOTAL - 15,500-16,500 SF**
QUESTIONS & COMMENTS

Feedback can be issued through the project page:
https://www.bpl.org/south-end-project/

Written comments or questions can also be directed to:
Priscilla Foley
Director of Neighborhood Services
617-859-2233
pfoley@bpl.org
THANK YOU!