

Belmont Public Library

Executive Summary - Schematic Design Phase
The Library Building Committee, December 2019

Executive Report Summary

In 2017 the Belmont Public Library Feasibility Committee established that new construction would be the most responsible course of action for the Town of Belmont as the current building was not a good candidate for building renovation options. The Feasibility Committee analyzed options for renovation, renovation + addition and new construction and limitations on the existing structural system, undersized elevator cabs, loadbearing exterior brick walls, combined with additional space needs due to increases in library usage and ADA laws made new construction the prudent choice.

In the Spring of 2017, Town Meeting overwhelmingly approved funding for new construction Schematic Design. The Library Building Committee was appointed in 2018, Daedalus Projects was hired as the Owner's Project Manager, and Oudens Ello Architecture was hired as the Architect.

The Belmont Public Library, built in 1965, has served our community well but library usage has changed dramatically since then and the building has not had a significant renovation since it was built. Libraries in the 21st Century distribute books and other media but they also provide services, programs, support, museum passes, activities, resources and connection. At the time of this report, our library is ranked 10th in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in terms of usage.

However, the building systems are at the end of their expected lifetime, ADA laws and building codes are not being met and the space allocated for children and teen functions is grossly undersized.

Working closely with the community, town departments, stakeholder groups and the Design Team, the Library Building Committee has overseen the schematic design of our new library which engages the public by supporting their current and future needs with a building that is highly sustainable and is welcoming and accessible to all. The landscape design has been developed as a new green area in town in which to read and explore while rain gardens naturally filter pollutants from vehicles within the watershed of the Wellington Brook. The landscape enhances Belmont's green space while connecting walking paths to the Underwood Pool and the proposed Community Path extension.

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The new library anchors the cultural and recreational advancement along Concord Avenue and responds by providing resources that directly engage feedback voiced during six community forums and nearly 30 stakeholder meetings.

The Belmont Library Foundation will be undertaking a capital campaign to raise private funds to offset construction and project costs to Belmont citizens. A Town vote will then be required for a debt exclusion to provide the remaining funds. Once funding has been obtained, the Design Team will proceed with the final design phases to produce the construction documents. At that point, a contractor will be selected, and we will begin the next chapter as construction on our new library begins.