

Norwell Public Library Building Project

Frequently Asked Questions

Updated July 14, 2017

What is the proposed plan?

A proposed preliminary design has been completed for a new construction, 22,300 gross square foot, one story building. Visit the *Building Project* page at norwellpubliclibrary.org to view the floor plan.

Why do we need a new library?

The current library building, now over 40 years old, is only 8,500 square feet. It is one of the smallest library buildings in the state in Norwell's population group. The new, larger, energy efficient design provides more space, not only for the collection, but for library users. Some of the benefits of a new library include a larger meeting room that can be used after hours, a spacious Children's Room with its own program/craft room, a Young Adult room, a Local History Room, small quiet/study rooms, a Makerspace Lab, and additional seating for all library users.

What is the proposed design based on?

The new library design is based on the vision articulated in Norwell's master plan 2005-2025, Norwell Public Library's Long Range Plan 2015-2020, the Final Report of the Library/Town Hall Study Committee and the Library Building Program.

The Library Project Committee, Library/Town Hall Study Committee, Board of Library Trustees, NPL staff, and volunteers from the community have collectively been working toward this goal for several years.

"A library building program is a document, based on data collected from the community, that serves as a guidebook or set of instructions from the library director, trustees and staff to the architect." (See: <http://guides.mblc.state.ma.us/construction/building-program/getting-started>)

Why not just add on to the existing building?

An addition/renovation is simply not the most cost effective solution to addressing the deficiencies of the current library.

Over the past year, the Library Project Committee has conducted a feasibility study for a renovation/addition or a new building. A number of issues exist in the current building, including structural problems that require a complete upgrade to the lateral bracing, a lack of accessibility, the need to replace original rooftop mechanical units and the need to remove asbestos. The building would also require upgrades for the electrical and plumbing systems to meet current codes, along with a roof repair and replacement of the insulation.

Also, the proposed design is based on the library building program, dated October, 2015, that Norwell submitted to the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners. In order to obtain a construction grant, the proposed design must be based on that building program. A smaller project would likely not address all of the deficiencies of the current library and would not be grant eligible, which means that the town would have to fund the total cost.

After extensive consideration, the Library Project Committee concluded that a new construction library project, based on the space needs identified in the library building program, would be the most cost effective solution to meet the needs of the community.

Where will the new library be built?

If approved, the new library will be built on the site of the existing library at 64 South Street. After an extensive study of several sites, it was chosen as the best site for a new library. The Board of Selectmen, Library/Town Hall Study Committee, and the NPL Board of Trustees all voted in favor of 64 South Street as the preferred site for a new library. It offers a beautiful wooded setting, close proximity to Norwell High School and Norwell Middle School, and easy access to main roads.

Would the library remain open during construction?

The library would continue to operate during construction but most likely would need to move to a temporary location. The temporary location is still to be determined.

Will there be more parking?

Yes. The parking plan includes 65 parking spaces, which will more than double available parking. Additional spaces may be added as the project moves forward.

How will the project be funded?

The total estimated project cost is \$15.4 million. On July 13, 2017, Norwell was awarded a provisional construction grant of \$6,360,764 through the Massachusetts Public Library Construction Program. The grant would cover roughly 42% of project costs. The balance would come from a capital campaign, a library trust fund, and local funding.

How long will it take to complete construction of a new library?

Contingent upon approval of local funding by January 12, 2018, a new library could be completed by June of 2020.

What happens next?

The provisional grant awarded on July 13, 2017 is contingent upon approval of local funding by January 12, 2018. This will require a special town meeting and special election in the fall.

How can I learn more?

Visit the *Building Project* page at norwellpubliclibrary.org

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