



DURHAM PUBLIC LIBRARY - Introduction

It was supposed to have been a short-term solution. When the town voted in 1997 to move the Durham Library from a small area of the University of New Hampshire's Dimond Library into a storefront at the Mill Plaza with a 3-year lease, it was intended to be a temporary location until a more suitable site could be found.

Fourteen years of intensive research of more than 20 potential sites followed, including Town Hall, the Grange, the Mill Plaza and numerous private properties. Each was vigorously pursued, but all had insurmountable obstacles. Finally, in 2010, the library's Board of Trustees secured an outstanding property at a location and with the capacity to meet the needs of the Durham community for decades to come.

With non-taxpayer funds given to the library Trustees over the years specifically for a new building – and with the unanimous endorsement of the Town Council – in September of 2010, the town purchased the handsome home of Dr. Arthur DiMambro along with 2.8 acres of land. With the construction of a two-story addition, all told, the new library will provide approximately 10,500 square feet of much-needed space.

The attractive brick building and its park-like setting convey an impressive and inviting appearance, and a strong sense of place along the streetscape. Located at 49 Madbury Road, it is within walking distance of downtown and the middle and high schools, and provides a transition between student housing and adjoining family neighborhoods.

Growing Service to the Community

The library is a department of the Town of Durham. It is governed by a Board of Trustees of seven community members elected by voters and three alternates appointed by the Board and approved by the Town Council. The bulk of the operating budget is funded by the town. Additional support is provided by donations to a year-end appeal and a dedicated core of volunteers including the Friends of the Durham Public Library who support two semi-annual book sales, cookie sales, the popular children's Patch Reading Program, and the Humanities Book Discussion program, as well as special projects and events. (The Friends were recently recognized as the best such organization in the state.)

Despite the limitations of the storefront space, the library has experienced tremendous growth since the move to the Mill Plaza. In just the past five years, for example, usage has increased steadily each year by 10-12%. Today in a facility of only 3,000 square feet are squeezed 30,000 items: books, audio books, music CDs and DVDs, newspapers and magazines. During the same period, computers, copiers and a large collection of audio books, videos, DVDs, periodicals and the like have been added, but the size of the storefront space has not expanded accordingly! Since 2005/2006:

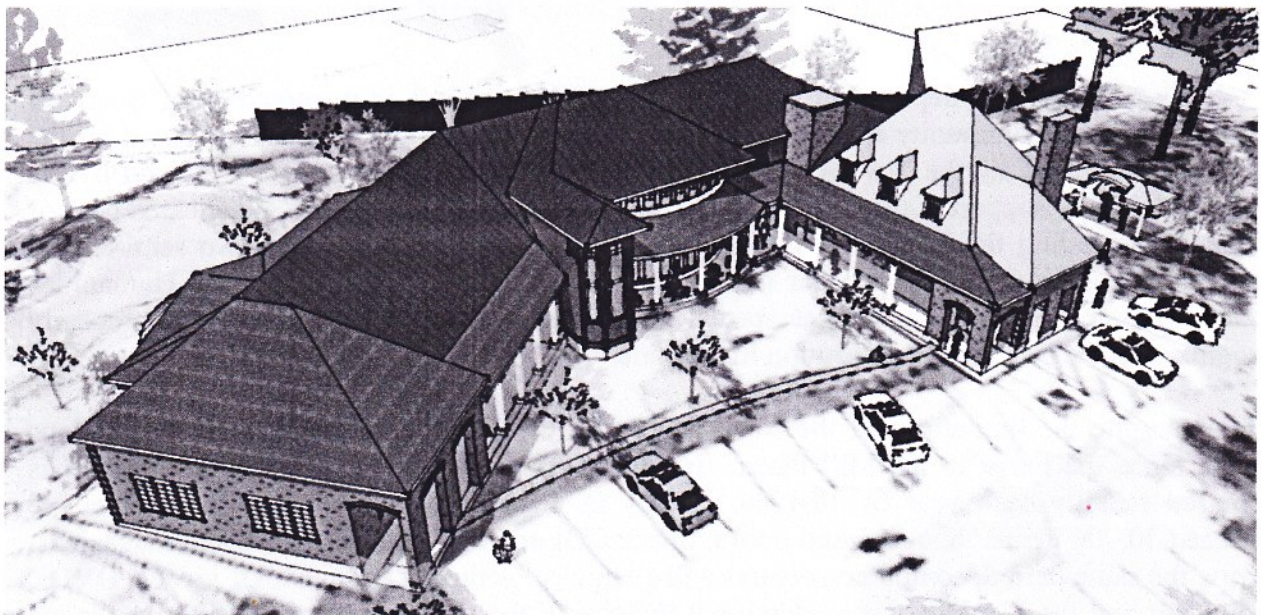
Patron visits are up by 77%	(30,146 to 53,551)
Materials loaned expanded by 65%	(29,824 to 49,233)
Library Membership has grown by 74%	(3,162 to 5,475)
Participation in Children's Programs increased by 35%	(3,493 – 4,739)

The library has 1 full-time and 7 part-time staff that provides a wide range of services:

- Free loan of books, periodicals, movies, and audio books
- On-line book reservations and information at www.durhampubliclibrary.org
- Durham and New Hampshire history collection
- Computers for public use with internet and wireless access
- Fax and photocopy machine services
- Statewide inter-library loan services
- Reference volumes and assistance by telephone and in person
- Computerized card catalogue and automated circulation management
- Cooperative projects with the schools, other libraries and organizations
- free loan of passes to 10 museums
- *And* dozens of events and activities including weekly Children's Story Hours, monthly children's book discussion groups, and a popular Summer Reading Program for all ages; Craft Activities for grades 1-6, Young Adult events for grades 7-12, including a new Young Adult book discussion group, monthly adult book group, New Hampshire Humanities Council programs and book discussions, local author talks, and more...

The range of materials and services the library has been able to offer has been possible only by the staff's inventive utilization of virtually every inch of space. There is not enough room in the current space to store the books and materials needed by our community, let alone to provide the kinds of educational and cultural activities requested by our residents and visitors.

At last! A proper – and very special – place



The 2.8 acre property will have attractive plantings, off-street parking for up to 50 vehicles (and additional street parking nearby), and room on the site to expand the building as the Town's needs change and grow in the future.

Improvements to the house and grounds, and the construction of the addition, will create a unique blend of architectural features and the most forward-thinking “green” elements. All told, the new facility will provide 10,500 square feet of space (compared to 3,000 sf in the current space) and will address the many deficiencies of the storefront facility.

Many months of intensive planning included listening sessions with residents and business owners, needs assessment work with an experienced library consultant, a volunteer Building Committee and design/build team, and sessions with a Citizens Review Committee. The building has been designed for a 100-year life span with energy-efficient digitally-controlled mechanical systems, lighting systems with occupancy and day lighting sensors, durable exterior and interior finishes, and a highly insulated building envelope. Windows will provide abundant natural light with views to the surrounding landscape and will be well insulated.

In addition, the Trustees have carefully planned the facility to minimize future operating costs. With the savings of the annual rent payment and the highly efficient design, the operating budget the Trustees developed for the new building indicates **there will be only a \$15,000 net increase in operating costs, based on the same number of hours** the library is currently open (38 hours per week) This projection includes additional staffing, technology, maintenance, and energy costs, most of which are offset by no longer paying \$56,000 in rent.

The new Durham Public Library will be an active, vibrant cultural center that connects the people of our community to information, resources, enriching activities – and each other. In the 1989 and 2000 Master Plans, as well as in the 1995 Community Development Plan, the new library, based on its appearance, location and much-needed meeting spaces, was cited as a critical factor in the realization of the Town’s vision of its future, including the need to strengthen its image, sense of community and identity as distinct from the University.



At the top of the list of problems with the current location is that it is rented. The \$56,000 paid in annual rent, representing 23% of the library’s operating budget, could be better spent to support programs and services.



Shelf space is extremely limited, with no room to add more. Even allowing for possible future conversion of materials to electronic formats, one-third of the new library will be allocated for the collection. **Two-thirds will be “people space”** reflecting the vision of the new library as a primary gathering place for the community.



Within the current building there are only 10 chairs where people may sit and read. In the new library **there will be a designated Durham Heritage Reading Room** (with a fireplace) and there will be groupings of seats in numerous locations for both comfortable reading and more focused work.



Presently there is no meeting room for larger groups, only a grouping of chairs at the front window and a table at the back of the building. Activities are limited to 30 people.

The new library will feature a Community Program Room with a seating capacity for up to 100 people. It will be used for library events such as lectures, discussion groups, larger children’s programs, films, exhibits and recitals, and will be available for activities of other community groups. The Community Program Room can be partitioned to create an extra meeting space and will have access to a range of audio-visual equipment, a kitchen and restrooms, and can be accessed when the library is closed.



The existing children's "room" is a tiny 16x20 square foot area enclosed by shelving. The area is too small for the number of children who would like to participate in activities such as the popular Story Time and Summer Reading Program. Children are an important focus of the Durham Public Library and, as such, a significant area of the new facility will be devoted to them. **The new building will include a designated 2,900 square-foot Children's Room with a separate Story & Activities Room, Toddler & Parent Area and an adjacent family-friendly restroom.**



In the current library, there are no rooms or areas for quiet study or small group meetings. The one table at the back serves as the staff work space, lunch table and for small group gatherings. **The new building will include two Quiet Study/Small Group Meeting Rooms** for study, tutoring, reading skills instruction, listening to music or audio books, etc.



Currently there is no area designated for middle and high school students working on homework or on-line research projects. The library is an important complement to the classroom experience and is the only resource for students in the afternoon, evenings, on weekends and during the summer when the schools are closed. **The new building will have an area specifically for Young Adults** with age-appropriate books, DVDs, videos, and computers. This age group also will have wireless access to the internet and the study rooms as well as to seating and tables in the Adult Wing area for quiet reading and assignments.



There are only eight computers with public access in the current space, all placed at the same table with no privacy. **There will be 24 computer stations in the new building and wireless access throughout.** All citizens – regardless of their ability to afford costly equipment and connections – can have access to the internet, an assortment of useful and informative software programs, and guidance by the knowledgeable staff.



It is difficult for individuals with mobility challenges and parents with children in strollers to maneuver through the front doors of the current space and past the jam-packed shelves and furniture. **All public areas of the new library will be universally accessible and an elevator will provide convenient access to the second floor.**



Currently, there is no work or office space for the staff which makes it difficult for them to catalogue and process materials efficiently (the present work area is that same single table). What functions as an "office" is a shared grouping of chairs and desks clustered against the back wall. **The new library will provide offices for the director, assistant director and children's librarian as well as a designated work area.**



Today, in the current building, there is only one uni-sex restroom which doubles as storage. **Restrooms in the new building** will be located centrally on the first floor, as well as in the children's area and adjacent to the Community Program Room.



Currently, folding chairs, seasonal decorations, program supplies and other items must be stored in a small shed behind the building. **The new library will have multiple storage areas that are all easily accessible.**






And, responding to citizens' requests, **cookies will continue to be available as well coffee and tea in two Café Reading Rooms which also house the periodicals collection of newspapers and magazines.**

It Takes a Far-Sighted Town to Build a Library

The project is a partnership - a combination of public support and donations from a variety of private sources. The cost to purchase the property (already accomplished), to renovate and add onto the existing building, including all site development, furnishings, equipment, and design fees is budgeted at \$4,800,000. The goal of the *New Library Campaign* to raise \$900,000 in additional private gifts and grants has now been exceeded (as of December 31, 2011 over \$1,000,000 has been pledged). These monies will be added to \$1,200,000 previously received by the Trustees specifically for a new building. This will cover at least 45% of the total project costs. Voters will be asked to approve a bond in March 2012 for the remainder, as the town's portion. The tax impact of this bond is anticipated to be no more than a 1% increase, and depending upon bond interest rates and further fund raising could be significantly less.

In recognition of the generosity it takes to exceed the fundraising goal, the Trustees will acknowledge all those citizens, businesses and organizations that help to make the new library a reality. All donors will be recognized in a *Book of Benefactors*. Contributions may be given as a tribute or memorial to a person whom donors wish to honor. Donors of \$2,500 and up will be recognized in a permanent, prominent display in the library. Donors of gifts of \$5,000 or more also may choose to designate their contributions to sponsor specific rooms, areas or items in the new library. The Trustees continue to encourage donations to the *New Library Campaign*, which are tax-deductible and may be pledged and paid in installments through 2013.

Summary of Primary Benefits

-  The new building will create a more efficient and comfortable experience for patrons and will enable the library to offer a wider array of materials, services and programs for all ages and segments of the community.
-  The library will continue to provide traditional programs and services in the future while also offering access to the very latest tools to help our citizens keep pace with constantly evolving technological innovation.
-  The new building will bring the community together to enjoy an array of wholesome educational, cultural and social activities. Moreover, the new library will strengthen Durham's *identity, image and sense of community*, key elements of the town's vision in the Master Plan, and will contribute significantly to the characteristics that make Durham a desirable place in which to live and work.

This is the Time to do it

Over the past 3 years great momentum has been established beginning with a major bequest from the estate of Margery Milne, followed by the acquisition of the property at 49 Madbury Road, the selection of an experienced design/build team, a thoughtful design process, and now a successful fund raising campaign. It is critical to approve a bond referendum this spring as construction costs and bond interest rates are extremely reasonable now, and are only expected to rise in the future. We will get the best value for our money if we can start construction this summer.