

Library Director's Report February 13 – March 6, 2014

Main Library Update

Following the most recent occurrence of ceiling slat failure on February 15, the Library did not re-open after the Monday holiday. Tim Bonfatti of Compass Management and Architect Al Russell used a small crew of carpenters to assist them in examining designated sections of the first and second floor ceiling. Approximately fifty ceiling slats were stored inside the Library for further inspection.

Based on information they provided to the Permanent Building Committee, Compass Management was asked to draw up a scope of work for removal of the entire wood ceiling. The metal grid system was left in place. The document was used to solicit three bids and Colantonio was retained to do the work. They began on Thursday, February 18 and are scheduled to finish by Friday, March 7. Electricians have removed the track lights in the gallery area. Library staff will re-install all public and circulation desk computers and related equipment. Following an inspection by the Building Commissioner and the Fire Department we hope to open on Saturday, March 8.

Insurance inspectors representing the Town and the bonding company have been on site to examine the ceiling and slats. Inspectors have been given reports produced by Al Russell and Finegold's building plans. Westwood Fire and Building Department staff have visited the Library to observe the work. Slat not retained are being stored in a trailer in the parking lot.

The Branch Library started a six day a week schedule on February 18. All reserved materials have been delivered to the Branch at least once a day since that time. Publicity on the closing and Branch schedule was posted on the Library and Town web pages, and on the Friends Facebook page. A FAQ document is being prepared for the re-opening that will give library users more information about the ceiling issues. This and a general press release will also be distributed to all media outlets.

I held several impromptu meetings with all Main Library staff during the first week. Staff stayed in safe areas of the building and handled materials returned in the book drop and the daily inter-library loan deliveries. The staff will restrict their comments to the information contained in the FAQ document and refer all other questions to me or the Board of Library Trustees. We all understand that it is important to listen to the public and assure them that this problem will be addressed and corrected.

Finance Commission Meeting

Mary Beth Persons and I met with three members of the FinComm's Municipal Sub-Committee on February 25 at the Main Library. We discussed the FY.2015 budget request, Main Library ceiling and Islington Branch.

Municipal Task Force Meeting

The latest Task Force meeting took place on March 1. The group decided to request planning money from the Annual May Town Meeting, but felt that it was too soon to recommend one option for an expanded Fire and/or Police Facility. There has been discussion about having a library presence as part of a community facility if the land where the Branch now sits is used for another purpose.

Permanent Building Commission Meeting

The next meeting of the PBC will be Wednesday, March 12 at Town Hall. Ver-Tex shades have been on site to install their control system. The shades are no longer controlled through the lighting system so we should see an end to the out of sequence opening and closing. Griffin Electric and Reflex Lighting will be on site on March 13 to correct outstanding problems.

Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners Grant Requests

I served as a grant reader for the MBLC's planning and design submissions. These are applications for funding for consultants and architects to do studies leading to schematic designs for the next construction grant round. I joined with two other Library Directors and two MBLC staff at Foxborough to review five applications. I was paid for my time and took the day off to participate.

Other Meetings

I gave a presentation on the new library at Fox Hill Village on March 5. I also attended Executive Function Group and Town Department Heads meetings the first week of March.

Respectfully submitted,

Thomas Viti, Library Director