

THE MAIN LIBRARY DESIGN CHARETTE

This session started Monday, August 19, and concluded with a final presentation Thursday afternoon, August 22. Providence Architecture led the effort, aided by staff from Lockett&Farley and three members of the consultant team.

The first order of business, following introductions, was a brainstorming session in which the only "rule" was that there was no such thing as a bad idea.

A host of ideas was generated. What follows are many of the ideas, presented in the general order in which the 30 participants mentioned them:

- The Library should form strategic alliances with other groups, e.g. Brown Theatre, etc.
- Provide a "friendly" entrance
- There should be noticeable activity, e.g. a Library café with both in- and outdoor space
- Children should be visible in space sized and designed for little people and their caregivers
- Provide inspirational space, perhaps including a mobile or some form of dramatic art piece
- It is crucial that customers experience understandable accessibility from one space to another
- Design service points that will result in "approachable" staff
- Technology should be visible, both from within the building and by those passing by
- Provide local history space, both in design and materials
- Provide an open courtyard, perhaps as a core of the building
- The resulting structure should be one that Louisville can be proud of, with the building as a destination place
- Books should be noticeable
- Provide quiet spaces
- The Main Library should be an interactive library
- Provide the ability to project images
- The Library Café entrance should be from the street as well as from within the building
- Good signage is important
- Reduce the number of service desks
- Provide staff with headsets, PDAs, etc.
- The design should convey a feeling of openness
- All of the spaces should be well defined
- Budget for great furniture and furnishings that look good over time
- Effective lighting, including natural light, is most important
- A water element should be considered
- Plants should be in the building
- There should be some "key" places in the building where one goes to look for something special and can be converted to other spaces as needs dictate
- Do not fail to consider the serendipity factor, never the same building, something different each time you are there.

Following the brainstorming session the consultant team developed three options for the Main Library. They were:

- Option 1 - Renovation of the existing complex with some additional space (add a fourth floor to the North Building, and provide an auditorium and Library Café/Bookstore at the street level)
- Option 2 - Renovation of the South Building, demolish the North Building and build a new addition
- Option 3 - An all-new Main Library facility.

The pros and cons of the three options, as developed by the consultants, are:

- Option 1 - Preserves the complex, the least costly of the three options, does not meet the 20-year programmatic needs of the LFPL, does not provide an opportunity for additional parking
- Option 2 - Preserves the historic South Building, allows for a new addition that could be more architecturally compatible with the South Building, the most costly of the three options
- Option 3 - Provides best opportunity for a building that addresses all of the needs of the Main Library, could provide for additional parking, leaves the South Building somewhat up in the air as to future uses.

Subsequent to the conclusion of the charrette sessions the consultant team refined the concepts and the capital cost estimates (see the next chapter of this report).