

Donna Conkling

From: Mayor
Sent: Monday, February 29, 2016 11:18 AM
To: Donna Conkling
Cc: Steve Pappalardo; Robert Cole; David Lee (dlee.trustee@gmail.com); Bill Stern; dpekarek@verizon.net; Marc Samwick (marc.samwick@verizon.net); Carl Finger; Matt Callaghan
Subject: Fw: Fw: Library Renovation

FYI. JM

From: Mayor
Sent: Monday, February 29, 2016 11:16 AM
To: Max Grudin
Subject: Re: Fw: Library Renovation

Dear Dr. Grudin -- Thank you for your email.

Very truly yours, Jon Mark

From: Max Grudin <mgrudin@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, February 28, 2016 8:32 PM
To: Mayor
Cc: Overhill Association President; Patrick Tse
Subject: Fwd: Fw: Library Renovation

Dear Mayor Mark,

I have corresponded with you about the library renovation on behalf of my neighbors as the Overhill President, but now I would like to mention my own thoughts. I object to the scale of the proposal though I would support a much more limited update of the facilities. Furthermore, I would like to see the village leadership outline the scope of services the library is intended to provide.

1. I agree with my neighbor Patrick Tse who sent the attached letter to the Inquirer. Having spent two years on SNAP, I am aware more than most residents of the challenge the Village faces to remain independent. I remember discussions about merging the Police and Fire Departments with White Plains. It seems to me that any discussion of the library renovation plan should be a part of a larger budget discussion. I am not sure why often that is not the case.

2. The Inquirer wrote about a vision of the Scarsdale library being considered as "the third place" (home and work are the first two). The Starbucks CEO was quoted as saying that he wants his coffee chain to be the third place too - and it largely already is. I know many people who like to meet at coffee shops in Scarsdale - we have several of them in the downtown area

alone. Starbucks, Martine's, La Renaissance, Salzburg, etc. Given that Scarsdale has many commercial structures that traditionally (and successfully) fill that important role, what is the impetus for the Village to compete in offering the same service?

3. I do think that the library could use a limited update but I do not understand some of the proposed additions. For example, I understand that there will be conference rooms next to Scott Room. I heard that a partial (or primary) motivation for building those rooms is to be able to hold occasional business meetings there; we discussed that in detail at the latest library presentation on Feb 24th. Why does the village intend to fill the role of providing business facilities? Why should the taxpayers shoulder that burden?

I think the Library Board is managing an important process. The projected costs have come above expectations, and we will all understand when the Library Board introduces modifications that keep / improve the core services provided by the library and leave the non-essential facilities to competitive commercial vendors.

Thank you

Max Grudin, Ph.D.
4 Overhill Rd

From: Patrick Tse <patrickytse@yahoo.com>;
To: <Editor@ScarsdaleNews.com>;
Cc: <mayor@scarsdale.com>;
Subject: Library Renovation
Sent: Sat, Feb 27, 2016 6:32:43 PM

The Village Board of Trustee should not approve the \$18.5 million library renovation expenditure proposed by the unelected Library Board without presenting its full financial implications to and seeking the consensus of the citizens of the Village.

The project requires a borrowing of \$12 million and a debt service payment of \$1 million per year for the next 15 years. This increases the total debt of the Village from the current \$24 million to \$36 million and the debt service payment from \$2.3 million to \$3.3 million. It is totally out of proportion to the current financial situation of the Village.

The project also proposes to make the library from a place for scholarship and research into a social, a community center with expanded service for the aged, the youth and children. This will mean addition operational cost for maintenance, staffing, energy, all of which have not been taken into consideration in the proposal or anticipated by the Village Budget.

The Library Board mentioned that other Westchester Towns have libraries of similar cost. The Greenberg Library cost \$20 million. The Ossining Library cost \$16 million. The population of the Greenberg is 88,000. The population of Ossining is 37,000. The population of Scarsdale is 18,000.

The 2015-2016 Tentative Village Budget mentioned that “The increases and high costs for pension benefits, healthcare, wages and debt service cannot be sustained without reasonable increases in the Village non-property tax revenues. The only option is to tax ourselves at a greater rate or to accept a reduction of current service levels”. “The limited growth in our tax base, constraints on property tax levy increases, repercussions from unfriendly State and Federal policies and continued mandates from higher levels of government will all challenge the Village’s effort to remain independent. In order to successfully manage this challenge the Village must reconcile the demands for increased services from residents and the critical needs for the multi \$ million capital improvements (roads, public safety building, storm sewers, modern fire apparatus, modernization of our three fire stations, building improvements, recreation facility improvements and the acquisition of more open space) with the amount of development and growth to be tolerated in the Village and the level of property taxes that is acceptable to residents.” “The overall recommended 2015-2016 Capital Budget totals \$4,563,000, not all of which is funded”.

In the light of all these, an \$18.5 million capital expenditure for the library is an unwarranted expense the Village can ill afford. It has to be scaled down in view of all the more pressing priorities and the financial challenges that are facing the Village in the years to come.

Patrick Tse
22, Circle Rd
Scarsdale