

## ***Collins Branch Discussion of Use of the Library October 17, 1996***

To provide access to all the people of Cambridge and to insure that we manage our resources well, Library 21 is gathering information from as many groups as possible about what the people want.

### ***What would you like in the library?***

#### ***A. Community Activity Center***

- Quiet study
- Public reading: I gave my first public reading here (I am a writer) and it meant a lot of me to have it here.
- have two areas: one for quiet study and one for meeting
- I used this library in '90-'91 and kids were running around and it was difficult.
- Discussion groups are of value to those who are blind.
  - Senior citizens had a ceramic workshop in the basement
  - Book club

#### ***B. Community Information Center***

- Assistive technology: resource for information on
- Teenagers: Libraries could provide up-to-date information for teenagers on topics of special interest to them.
- Currently Collins library gives out
  - income tax,
  - driver education,
  - register to vote information and
  - Kindergarten applications.
- Display city, library, senior, and center for adult ed.

#### ***C. Formal Education Support Center***

- Videos: services I can use like
- Resources for my classes on subjects like China and science.
- The city librarians visit every classroom to tell them about the summer reading program.
- Librarians give book talks in front of the classrooms but because of staffing limitations we can't do this much.

#### ***D. Independent Learning Center***

- Quiet and I can find
- Places to sit.
- We need staff to support and train people in their use.
- We need lots of instruction on the machine.
- We need a coordinator to coordinate any volunteers who help train people on computers.

#### ***E. Popular Materials Lending Library***

- Periodicals: I go to the Main Library primarily for
- Books on tape: that I am legally blind I use the Main Library for
- Assistive technology.
- Disk recorders which play magazines which are recorded and then there could be discussion groups on these topics
- Service to access specific materials to help the blind and those who can't see well, or who can't read for some reason.
- Easy reading books which have
- Easy reading: topics at a level for teenagers to read and which also
- Easy reading: look like teenage books and not children's books so that teenagers with a easy reading level can carry around books which make them look like other teenagers
- Books on tapes definitely need expansion. Blind people need them and now lots of people are using them for commuting as well so they are very popular.
- Books on tape are very expensive so they take a large amount of the small amount we have to spend on books.
- Books on tape are useless if one tape breaks or becomes missing, and there is no inexpensive way to replace them.
- A Cantabridgian, Bud Sorenson, is an owner of a book on tape company. Maybe he could help influence a change in that policy.
- Books on tapes need criticism. Some readers are good; some are not.
- Books in large print have only a limited selection- mostly romance. There is almost no non-fiction
- Furniture to allow people to work on resumes on computers
- My son thought that libraries only had old-fashioned books on old-fashioned topics. He didn't know he could get the books from the library and not have to buy books from the book store all the time
- Computers to write resumes
- More contemporary poets
- Cambridge has already purchased and distributed some computers.
- Computers in the library are important for equal access in our society.

#### ***F. Preschoolers Door to Learning***

- There are two preschool programs and one after-school program. We had 20 children and 18 adults this week.

#### ***G. Reference Library***

#### ***H. Research Center***

#### ***I. Other- important functions missing from list***

- It is a quiet place and it is easier to focus and no one disturbs me
- I use primarily the Main Library, also the main libraries in Arlington, Lexington, and Newton. My favorite is the Main library in Cambridge because it is I quiet and I can find places to set. C. Main seems more user-friendly.

- Space
- Furnishings are antiquated.
- City budget this year includes roof, wall and floor repair.
- We have a handicap lift in the back, but there is
- no bathroom on this main floor and
- no running water. There is
- no public phone or
- No drinking fountain.
- If we were open longer hours we absolutely would have to have more staff.
- Cambridge residents would never have enough hours. People in their twenties sometimes just get started working at 10 p.m.
- There are no weekend hours and that would require more than one person because of union issues that one person couldn't be on all the time on weekends.
- Why couldn't Collins library move into the Haggerty School if more space became available there? We are concerned about people who have
- School phobia and would like to have a separate location. The library can be a haven from the public school.
- My teenage son didn't realize that he could get the books out of the library that he can find in the bookstore.
- Are there really no young adult librarians in the system? There are no young adult librarians but there are special book groups and this summer there was a separate reading program for young adults.
- Young adult librarian: Cambridge needs a
- Young adult library space
- Teenagers don't like going into the children's library.
- Haggerty School's librarian was this branch's librarian and we work closely together and she is in my book club.
- Access to the main library is not good by public transportation.
- Money must be allocated for increased staff and hours and equipment and less money to only brick and mortar.
- We need more staff and evening hours at Collins
- No one disagrees that repairs to the heating, a-c and water damage need to be done.

### ***J. An Important Civic Building.***

- Collins is primarily D, Independent Learning center, E. Popular materials lending library and those with lasting value, F. Preschoolers door to learning.
- Also Collins does A. Community Activity center for neighborhood;
- C. Formal Education Support Center. We do answer question for students. No tutoring because no space; but have had 2 tutors because they had difficult space at home to work and needed to work in the library
- H. We do lots of interlibrary loans for researchers
- and also provide a friendly face in the neighborhood to chat