

Library Advisory Committee

Third Meeting
June 13, 1996

Minutes

The meeting was called to order by Co-Chair Nancy B. Woods at 6:37pm at the Valente Branch Library, 826 Cambridge Street, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Committee Members present:

Nancy Woods, Co-Chair
Richard Rossi, Co-Chair
William Barry
Ruth Butler
Karen Carmean
John Gintell
Karen Kosko
Connie Muolo
David Szlag
Emily West
Robert Winters
Susan Flannery
Susan Clippinger
Pat Murphy

I. Review minutes from May 30. Our title "Library 21"?

The minutes of the 30 May 1996 meeting were approved with minor changes. Copies of the minutes will be available in the Main and Branch libraries, as well as electronically on the Town Crier and the City Home Page.

The Committee unanimously agreed on a new title: "Library 21".

II. Schedule, Plans, Goals for next 3 meetings

Co-Chair Woods reviewed the tentative agenda of topics for the evening and future meetings.

June 27 Main Branch

- A. A behind the scenes tour of the Main Library
- B. A look at the park. Overview of the park from the City's point of view. History of the site.
- C. A look at high school resources, such as the high school auditorium and library. (not definite)

July 11 Collins Branch

- A. Develop an inventory of library services and buildings.
- B. Draft a plan for a public process to educate, engage and solicit comments. Identify potential audiences.

July 25 Central Square Branch

- A. A discussion of the high school and other resources.
- B. What other libraries in the United States are doing in terms of library services, roles and fundraising.

Goals for the next 2 months:

- A. Understand the Cambridge Public Library
- B. Get familiar with other libraries in the United States.
- C. Begin discussion with the School Department.
- D. Address the issue of membership.
- E. Develop a plan for the public process.
- F. Decide what the committee's relationship with the architect should be.

III. Discuss and Finalize "Opportunity" Statement

The Statement of Opportunity, drafted by David Szlag, Charles Sullivan, Karen Kosko, and Nancy Woods was read aloud by David Szlag and discussed. The committee came to the consensus that the draft captured the spirit with a few modifications. Further, the committee agreed that the mission and the objectives of the committee would remain flexible but still following the program and services first, then address physical requirements. A copy of the revised statement is attached.

On another matter, Co-Chair Woods, reporting on the meeting of the Central Square Neighborhood Coalition on 12 June, stated that the Coalition was concerned that the Library Advisory Committee was not representative of the community. Co-chair Richard Rossi said it was difficult to make "perfect" appointments. Furthermore, expansion of the Committee would not be desirable. Mr. Rossi said the Committee's Statement of Opportunity is based upon a participatory process of allowing the public to have meaningful input and dialogue.

IV. Discussion of Library Services for 21st Century

Library Director, Susan Flannery, followed-up on the roles of the Cambridge Public Library and gave examples of current services and programs in each area.

A. Community Activity Center

The Central Square Branch is performing this role. Activities at the Central Square Branch include:

- A room for meetings and events
- Writer's of Color workshop
- Community meetings
- Ceremonies

B. Community Information Center

- Four branches (Central Square, O'Neill, Valente, and O'Connell) elected to sustain this role that involves compiling and updating information about neighborhood services, events, programs and activities.

C. Formal Education Support (Elementary and High School) - Main and Branches

- Provide research materials and information to children who need to do homework.
- Provide afterschool tutoring programs.
- Supplement the high school library.
- Class tours of the library and instruction in use of the library.
- Special ethnic support (e.g. English as a Second Language classes).
- Two branches (Valente and O'Neill) are attached to elementary schools and have developed strong cooperative relationships with attached schools.

D. Independent Learning Center

- Provide government (civil service) examination books and manuals.
- Provide test books, e.g. GRE, SAT, ACT, LSAT.
- Provide English as a Second Language (ESL) programs.
- Provide literacy programs.
- Provide how-to materials in many areas of interest.
- Provide materials in French, Creole, Portuguese, Greek, German, Russian, Italian, and Spanish.
- Provide college and career information.
- Provide travel books.
- Provide guidebooks and other resources.

E. Popular Materials - Main Library and Branches

- Provide "speed-reads" (Best-sellers).
- Focus on young adults for life-long reading.
- Story-hours for children and toddlers.
- Provide audio-visual materials and magazines.

F. Child's Door to Learning - Main Library and Branches

- Provide drop-in programs.
- Provide telephone reference.
- Provide yearbooks, almanacs, handbooks, manuals, and directories.

- Provide dictionaries.
- Provide bibliographical sources.
- Provide geographical sources.
- Provide up-to-date encyclopedias.
- Provide electronic resources, periodical indexes and full-text retrieval of information.

H. Research Center (Not a CPL Role)

- Scholarly research.
- On-line search services.
- Special concentrations.

Co-Chair Woods asked the audience and the Committee what additional services are wanted and needed. The Committee and the audience proposed the following:

C. Formal Education Support

- provide services to home-schoolers (Karen Kosko stated that this should be added to the list of services currently provided).
- Quiet, comfortable place to read and study.
- Symbiotic, relationship with public and private schools.

D. Independent Learning Center

- Provide space for working on college prep exams.
- Provide space for groups to meet and discuss.
- Provide parenting guidebooks and other resources.
- Provide personal computers for library patrons.
- Provide access for Cambridge history.

E. Popular Materials

- Provide musical scores.
- Provide access to art, films, books on tape, etc.
- Provide readers' advisory service.
- Provide book discussion groups (Karen Kosko stated that this should be added to the list of currently provided roles).

F. Child's Door to Learning

- Provide a safe place for latchkey children.
- Provide a Baby-sitter Club.
- Provide a Chess Club.
- Provide a Science Group.
- Provide a film series for children.

G. Reference

- Provide LAN/WAN for Main Library.
- Provide medical information.
- Provide accessibility to information and materials held by other libraries.
- Provide accessibility to information electronically (e.g. CD-ROM, Internet, Database searching).
- Provide guidance and direction in the pursuit of information.

V. Introduction to the Valente Branch

Susan Flannery read an introduction to the Valente Branch, site of the meeting, written by Karen Brown, Valente Branch Librarian. A copy of the introduction is attached.

VI. Committee Reports:

- John Gintell reported on the Library Advisory Committee's Web Page. A copy of his report is attached.
- Library Systems in the United States; Bill Barry and Ruth Butler will meet next week to develop an approach for finding out what is happening elsewhere.
- Public process to educate and engage the public; Nancy Woods, Robert Winters, Richard Rossi, Karen Carmean and Ted Burton and Fran Wirta (audience members) will meet on June 18th.

VII. Public Comments:

Gustavo Hernandez, speaking as a Valente Branch user, alerted the Committee to the need for a quiet study room or a quiet, comfortable setting to read. He applauded the Valente staff and Susan Flannery, Director of the Library, for doing an excellent job of providing services to the Valente Branch community.

Fran Wirta of Erie Street, representing the Central Square Neighborhood Coalition, suggested that the Committee establish a sub-committee to gather input from geographical areas and neighborhoods not represented by the Library Advisory Committee.

Doane Perry of Cambridge Street, stated that the library should look to the universities for innovations. For example, MIT provide Cambridge with its Home Page on the Internet. He further intimated that the library is an attractive Internet access place because of

the speed of its cable hookup.

VIII. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned by Co-Chair Wood at 8:45pm