Falmouth Memorial Library

LIBRARY SPACE PLANNING

Jay K. Lucker, Consultant

This report summarizes the consultant's analysis of the key issues affecting space planning for the Falmouth Memorial Library and makes recommendations regarding how the library building could meet current and future program, collection, and service needs. The report includes an overview of public library space planning in the 21st century; a summary of current local statistical information affecting library space needs: collection size and growth, population projections, and circulation; a comparison of how the library meets current public library standards; existing space utilization and deficiencies; possible short-term steps; and a proposal for an addition to meet long-term space needs.

PROCESS

The consultant made an extensive tour of the library and then met with the library staff and several trustees. The staff meetings were by functional area: administration, children's services, adult services, technical services, and circulation. The report incorporates information provided by the library director and obtained from printed and electronic sources:

- Library web site.
- Circulation and collection statistics.
- Maine Public Library Standards.
- Analysis of "Strategies for the Future", June 2003.
- Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, Standards for Public Libraries.

This report also draws upon the consultant's recent experience with a number of other public library building projects including those in Mamaroneck (NY), Manhasset (NY), Augusta (ME), Milton (MA), Providence (RI), and Hartford (CT).

PLANNING ENVIRONMENT

This building program has been developed at a time of dramatic changes in the nature and role of public libraries, in publishing, in education, and in the role of the government in support of public institutions. The years immediately ahead and into the next two decades present both opportunities and challenges in the planning of public library facilities. The following is a set of planning ideas and assumptions that are the basis on which the program for an addition to the Falmouth Public Library has been constructed.

What are the opportunities?

- A decreasing cost of digitization, data storage, and electronic access.
- Ubiquitous ownership of personal computers, laptops, and digital notebooks.

- A growth in the number and extent of information delivery networks at the local, regional, and national levels.
- A geometrically increasing amount of information available through the Internet and the World Wide Web at relatively low cost.
- An emphasis on developing information access skills beginning in elementary school and continuing through high school and college.
- The recognition that being able to understand how to identify and evaluate information in all of its forms is an essential skill for living in the 21st century.
- Increased awareness through society on the importance of <u>reading</u> in brain development, educational success, and life skills.

What are the challenges?

- There are unrealistic expectations of what is available in electronic form as compared to the total amount of information and knowledge that exists. Everything is NOT in the computer.
- The Internet lacks quality control as well as authentication and verification of information.
- The Internet is lacking in organization and searches produce too much that is irrelevant. It is difficult to locate useful information.
- The increase in use of online resources requires that libraries pay more attention to the ergonomic issues involved with access: screens, keyboards, displays, lighting, furniture, and compliance with the ADA.
- There is a significant percentage of the population that do not own computers and need instruction as well as physical access.
- The cost of subscriptions to electronic resources is high as compared to print. In addition, there are licensing provisions that often limit a library's ability to provide access at a distance as well as the number of simultaneous users.

Where will electronic information storage and delivery lead the public library?

- Linkages with regional and national networks will provide access to bibliographic and full text files including serial lists, union catalogs, government information, journals, newspapers, and encyclopedias and other reference tools.
- Public libraries will need to develop mechanisms for communicating electronically with patrons, including the use of networks for patron-initiated interlibrary loan and document delivery. Email can also provide the means for online reference assistance and reader's advisory services.
- The growth and complexity of what is available electronically requires that public libraries provide training for patrons in how to access, evaluate, and use information.
- The Internet enables local communities to offer legal and consumer information and provide connectivity to public databases (e.g., voter information, real estate assessments, and census data.)
- Public libraries can use digital storage for the preservation of historical information like local newspapers.

What about books?

- Public libraries in the 21ˢᵗ century will have to continue to exist in a bimodal – print and electronic – environment. Libraries will have to continue to acquire and store printed material so long as that is a principal means of publishing and disseminating information, especially for the general population. There has not been nor will there be in the near future a significant shift in the publication of *books* from print to electronic. Indeed, in each of the last five years, the number of books published worldwide increased by around 5% over the previous year. This represents about 25,000-30,000 *more* books. While it can be expected that electronic books will eventually emerge as a format for the consumption of some popular fiction and non-fiction, evidence to date suggests that a combination of economics (high cost), the equipment required, and the unwillingness of people to read extensively on the small screen of hand-held device (nor for that matter on a computer monitor) makes this technology an unlikely substitute for books of all types.
- Books have a number of attributes that are difficult to replicate including their relatively low cost and portability – books can be read without any additional equipment or furniture. They can be transported from place to place easily. The tactile relationship of reader to page is unlikely to be reproduced in an electronic mode.
- Electronic publishing has and will have an impact on public libraries in areas like abstracting and indexing services, full text of journals, reference works, and government publications. The growth of library networks provides individual libraries with a number of opportunities: (1) they can share the cost of supporting online catalogs and circulation systems; (2) they can organize their holdings into union catalogs, and, through reciprocal borrowing and interlibrary loan agreements, provide patrons with access to greatly expanded collections; (3) they can establish agreements for long term retention of low use materials by distributing the responsibility for keeping them throughout the network; (4) and they can maintain weeding programs with the expectation of having access to all of the resources of all of the libraries in the country.

Why do we need library buildings?

- To provide access to the wealth of information presently owned and that will continue to be published in printed form including books, maps, graphical images, and archives.
- To provide access to materials in other formats that can be read, viewed, or listened to by individuals and that can be conveniently acquired by libraries and loaned – videos, DVDs, CDs, and audio books.
- To be a place for learning and relaxation.
- For the serendipitous exploration of the history of civilization.
- For access to librarians who serve as guides, educators, and evaluators.
- For access to equipment needed to access information.
- As a place for collaboration and discussion and for public presentations and meetings.

- For children, a place to learn about books and about learning. A place in which to be exposed to the joy of reading by reading and by being read to.
- For the presentation of cultural programs and activities for the community.
- For recreational, leisure, and entertainment opportunities for all ages.
- The public library is the most democratic and most open institution we have for these purposes.

What are the implications for library buildings?

- Collections will continue to exist in both print and electronic format.
- We will continue to need stacks, seats, and staff space that are physically and environmentally appropriate.
- Libraries will need to provide means to connect people to the new technology.
- The uncertainties of future technological change mandate that buildings be flexible and modular in design.
- Public libraries should continue to be architecturally attractive, secure, and protective of our cultural heritage.
- Turning information into knowledge requires the intelligent merging of print and electronic information, of librarians and readers, of direct and remote access, and the integration of information literacy into all aspects of life from kindergarten through adulthood.

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Falmouth Memorial Library is to enrich the community by providing resources and services that foster a love of reading and inspire imagination, curiosity, and an open exchange of ideas and information. (June 2003)

CURRENT STATISTICS

Collection Size

	2003	2002	Increase
Books			
Adult	23,703	22,535	1,168
Children and Young Adult	16,085	13,185	2,900
Reference	950	894	56
Total books	40,738	36,614	4,124
Periodical subscriptions	88	88	--
Media			
Audio books	1,032	893	139
CDs	698	525	173
Videos	1,643	1,309	334
Total media	3,373	2,727	646
Total collection	44,111	39,341	4,770

If collection growth were to continue as it did between 2002 and 2003, the book collection would double in size in ten years and the media collection in six years. This is clearly not feasible in terms either of space or budget.

Total Circulation

2003	145,583
2002	146,130
2001	129,106
2000	121,150
1999	107,110
1998	100,644
1997	87,996

Circulation by Type of Material

	2003	2002
Adult fiction	30,005	27,756
Adult non-fiction	14,179	14,598
Juv Picture books	40,259	44,175
Juv Non-fiction	10,771	10,132
Juv Fiction	14,043	17,382
Young Adult	2,576	2,353
Juv Audio books	2,868	3,096
CDs	3,205	2,687
Audio books (adult)	6,056	5,463
Videos	16,654	14,440

DVDs began circulating in the middle of 2002. The average monthly circulation in 2002 was 116.5 and in 2003 it was 304.6.

The drop in circulation for picture books was due to a change in the school reading incentive program.

The circulation per capita for 2003 was 14.1.

The average number of circulations per item in one year for books was 2.73 (112,000 circulation of 41,000 items.)
The average number of circulations per item in one year for media was 8.47 (28,500 circulation of 3,400 items.)
All of these are well above the national average for libraries serving communities of comparable size to Falmouth.

<u>Population</u>

The town estimates for population through 2015 are as follows:

2000	10,344	
2005	11,698	+ 2.62%
2010	12,668	+ 1.66%
2015	13,405	+ 1.16%

A conservative growth rate of 1% for the next five years would put the population at around 13,500 in 2020.

Age distribution of population:

Under 5 years	6.2%
5-24 years	21.5%
25-44 years	31.5%
45-64 years	22.1%
65+ years	18.7%

Median age is 39.8 years.

The circulation of juvenile materials (excluding Young Adult) in 2003 was almost 48% of the total circulation. Assuming the population of Falmouth under the age of 12 is around 15% of the total, the proportion of library circulation for juvenile materials is about three times the proportion of children in the town. This is worth considering in thinking about where to put resources. In a number of recent studies, the percentage of juvenile circulation was around 40%.

COMPARISON WITH WISCONSIN AND MAINE STANDARDS

The Wisconsin Public Library Standards are considered the model set of standards for public libraries in the United States and have been adopted by most other states, Maine not being one of them. The Wisconsin Standards establish four levels of achievement for public libraries: basic, moderate, enhanced, and excellent. The chart below shows the Wisconsin levels, the current (2003) level for the Falmouth Public Library, and the Maine standards (where applicable.) Maine does not have specific standards for materials expenditures.

	Basic	Moderate	Enhanced	Excellent	Falmouth	Maine
FTE staff per 1,000 pop.	.7	.7	.8	1.0	**.7**	.6
Volumes per capita (print)	4.0	4.6	5.7	7.0	**4.0**	
Total collection including media per capita	4.2	4.9	6.1	7.6	**4.3**	3.5
Periodical titles received per 1,000 population	11.8	13.7	15.1	20.5	**8.5**	12.0
Hours open	56	59	62	65	**54**	50
Material $ per capita	$5.31	$5.37	$6.56	$9.07	**$3.87**	

Falmouth falls below the "basic" level for hours open per week and materials expenditures. It is just at that level for volumes per capita, total collection per capita, periodical titles, and staff size. For a population of 13,500 in 2020, Falmouth would need a total of 54,000 print volumes and 56,700 total items to meet the "basic" level. Staff would need to grow to 9.5 FTE to meet this level. In order to meet the Maine standards in 2020, the total collection would need to be 47,250 and the staff 8.1 FTE. Given the level of education of the Falmouth population – in 1990 44% had B.A. degree or higher and 71% had some college education -- and the fact that 90% of current high school graduates go to college – Falmouth should strive to exceed to minimum Maine standards.

The current State of Maine standards for public libraries recommend the amount of space that needs to be allocated to various library functions – collections, seating, staff, meeting rooms, and special use space, the last being internal circulation and service space associated with the other categories.

The chart below compares the present utilization of space in the library with the minimum standards and also how much additional space would be needed to fulfill the requirements of the Strategic Plan.

	Current Minimum	Current Actual	Recommended Strategic Plan	Increase
Books 41,000 @ 10v/sq.ft	4,100	3,990	4,715	15%
Current Periodicals 88 @ 1/sq.ft.	88	88	88	--
Back periodicals for five years	132	-----in basement-----------------		
Media 3,400 @ 10 items/sq.ft.	340	240	425	25%
Computer workstations @ 50 sq.ft.	400	250	600	33%
Readers 20 children and 34 adults @ 30 sq.ft.	1,620	540	1,620	200%
Staff 13 @ 150 sq.ft./person	1,950	762	2,400	+ 3 staff
Meeting rooms (large @ 900; small @ 350)	1,250	1,290	1,290	--
Special Use Space	1,430	1,360	1,910(1)	40%
Non-assignable @ 25%	2,500	2,380	3,066	29%
Total	13,810	10,900(2)	16,114	

(1) Includes adding an instructional lab @ 200 sq.ft., quiet study area @ 180 sq.ft., and s space for technology support including servers @ 100 sq.ft.
(2) Not including the mechanical space in the basement.

The existing gross square footage in the building as taken from the plans is as follows:

Historic building plus 1966 addition	2,910
1995 Addition	7,130
Basement	2,326
Total	12,336

Based on the Maine standards, the building is around 1,500 GSF below minimum requirements. To meet the requirements of the Strategic Plan and to accommodate a growing collection and growing population, the library would need to add at least 3,800 GSF.

The current square footage numbers are somewhat deceiving in that the space in the basement represents primarily non-assignable square footage as defined in the standards.

In addition, there is a significant amount of "non-assignable space" on the main – major corridors, mechanical space, the several lobbies and entrances. Based on a conservative estimate of 80% of the main floor being actually programmable, the space "gap" is more like 3,500 GSF rather than 1,500.

STRATEGIC PLAN ISSUES AFFECTING LIBRARY SPACE PLANNING

The following issues seem most relevant to facilities. The consultant's comments in italics indicate the impact on each issue of building an addition.

1. Increase the size of the collection with an emphasis on non-book formats. Additional shelf space is needed to accommodate the existing collection. Part of the collection, including Maine Collection items, is stored in a damp basement. *The added space proposed provides sufficient shelving to move those books that are in the basement that should be part of the main floor collections (Maine Collection.)*

2. Expand existing programs and develop new programs. Requires additional staff in youth services and administration. *Space is provided for additional offices.*

3. Professional reference librarian available during all open hours. Space for desk and reference collection in a highly visible and accessible area. *Could be accomplished by moving functions.*

4. Increase technology within library. *Plan calls for a 50% increase in the number of public workstations as well as a new computer lab with 12 workstations.*

5. Quiet study area for students. *Plan calls for space for six readers in this area.*

6. Offer formal opportunities for lifelong learning. *Computer lab and new programs.*

7. Library to be a welcoming and inviting community center. Adapt the building to conform or exceed Maine and ADA requirements. Change front doors to more easily accommodate handicapped and baby carriages. *This can be accomplished through renovating existing space and adding space.*

ASSESSMENT OF EXISTING BUILDING

The following comments reflect the consultant's analysis of existing building deficiencies and problems. The Library has identified many of these as part of the strategic planning process and review of current space utilization.

- Basement is not air-conditioned or humidity controlled. It is not an appropriate space for book storage.
- The 1995 expansion plan did not anticipate the impact of technological needs or provide sufficient space for collection growth.

- There is no office for the Children's Librarian nor is there adequate workspace away from the public.
- The library has eight public workstations and should have at least 12 based on the population served.
- The reference collection and Internet stations are remote from the reference desk. The desk is practically invisible, too small, and in a bad location.
- The Assistant Director must share her office with another staff member.
- There is no staff lounge.
- Part of the Maine Collection is in the basement.
- Additional space is needed for the existing staff as well as for any new staff that will be hired. This includes staff work spaces for technical services, a separate office for the Assistant Director, work space for volunteers, and work space for an administrative assistant to be responsible for programs, publicity, and development.
- The space for new books is totally inadequate and there is no space to display new media.
- In the Children's area, while the service desk is highly visible, it is too close to the door. The location of the Children's area creates noise that migrates into the adult collection, to the circulation desk, and to the reference desk. Aisles are too narrow for children; should be a minimum of 42", and preferably, 48". Traffic must pass through the Children's area to get to the restrooms, meeting rooms, and storage room.
- Young Adult area is poorly located and not well defined. Area lacks computers and group study space.
- Pre-school area is good. There is no place for children to study; no window seats; no comfortable chairs.
- The children's stacks are full.
- Some technical services work is done behind the circulation desk. Book repairs are done both in this area and in Technical Services. The lack of sufficient space causes problems with workflow. There is competition for access to computers and there is no space for volunteers to work. Technical Services needs: mail opening space; catalog workstation; processing workstation; shelving for gift books; two volunteer workstations.
- There may be a need to provide additional parking if the library adds space. Assuming the library fits under section 5.5 (8) of the building code: "offices, professional and public buildings", there needs to be one parking space for every 200 square feet of gross leasable area exclusive of cellar and bulk storage areas.

SHORT TERM BUILDING IMPROVEMENTS

There is really nothing that can be done within the parameters of existing space to create more functional space. The library building is being used beyond its design capacity and there is no obvious way to install additional shelving, furniture, or equipment. There are, however, a few things that could be done to provide some short-term benefit at low cost:

1. The Historical Society is planning to move. The space they presently occupy could be used as a teaching space employing laptops. This would also enable the library to use the room for meetings. This room is not appropriate for the installation of PCs.

2. The library is not presently using the sixth shelf in the adult non-fiction stacks. If the sixth shelf were used where feasible, additional shelving space for around 1,200 volumes would be made available.

3. Replace the shallow wall shelving behind the circulation desk with standard, single-faced bracket shelving for the storage of gifts.

4. Create an interlibrary loan workspace in the alcove behind the circulation desk. Install a counter with storage cabinets below, and space for two stools.

5. Consider switching the reference desk to the media room so it would be adjacent to the reference collection and computers. Move videos and DVDs to the front room.

6. Remove the carrels in the Children's Area. Remove the sink. Add wall shelving. Replace the three-high shelving for juvenile fiction and non-fiction with five-high shelving. Rearrange the stacks to provide wider aisles, better visibility, and better traffic flow.

LONG TERM SPACE GOALS

The following are the consultant's priorities for what needs to be accomplished in an addition and renovation project.

- Provide adequate shelf space for the existing collection and for collection growth.
- Provide sufficient space for readers using Maine standard of 30 sq.ft. each.
- Add space for four more public computers.
- Provide space for a computer lab, quiet study room, and server room.
- Enlarge the space in the front entrance between the two sets of doors. Consider replacing the swinging doors with sliding doors.
- Provide sufficient work and office space for existing staff and space for additional staff in programming and youth services.
- Provide adequate and efficiently designed space for Technical Services.
- Create a staff lounge.
- Create a circulation/interlibrary loan workroom or work area.
- Create an office and workroom for Children's services.
- Expand the Children's area into what is now the adult collection and move the adult books into the addition.
- Expand the Maine collection space.
- Create a more attractive area for current periodicals and new books.
- Leave the meeting room as it is.

BOTTOM LINE

There is no way for the Falmouth Public Library to fulfill its current mission much less to meet the requirements of the Strategic Plan without adding to the existing building. There is space on the site for an "L" shaped addition on the south side of the building that would cover the adult services wall and run over to the steps leading to the 1966 addition. There is approximately 3,900 gross square feet of available building space on this site. This matches up well with the projected space needs outlined above. While some interior rearrangement would be necessary to link the existing space with the new, there does not appear to be any need for any structural change. Moving furniture and stacks could do most of what would need to be accomplished. The only physical change that might be desirable would be pushing out the front entrance.

The new public library in York, Maine, cost $188 per square foot to build in 2002. A 20,000 square foot addition to the Belfast Public Library cost $115 per square foot in 2001. An addition in Falmouth of 3,900 gross square feet might cost between $125 and $150 a square foot. Some additional costs would be incurred depending upon how much rearrangement is done within the existing building.

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