

The Provincetown Public Library Board of Trustees held a Special Planning Meeting on Saturday, April 5, 2008 at 10 AM at the Public Library. Attending were Trustee Chair Mick Rudd, Library Director Debra DeJonker-Berry, Assistant Director Karen MacDonald and members of the Planning Committee. There was no quorum and no votes of the Library Trustees were taken.

The Meeting began with a recap of the first meeting. Since the first Planning Committee Meeting, both the Trustees, and the Library Staff have met. The staff did the same SWOT analysis, came up with their priorities in general, and explored #17 very thoroughly (Visit a Comfortable Place) since it ranked for them as #1.

## NEW BUSINESS

Following are some general points made in a “conversation” that Debbie conducted with the assembly: A comment from one committee member, that “the Library should operate as a living room” started a discussion about the various perceptions we have of “living room.” Some thought it was too cozy a term, that it evoked visions of eating pizza and “hanging out.” Others thought that it suggested a safe and quiet place to read, to study, to use a computer.

Debbie was asked to comment on the initial plans for the physical space, before changes were made due to financial constraints. She told of glass partitions that were to surround the Rose Dorothea in the children’s library, and that there was to be another quiet area on the top floor, which would be the arts and literature department. Each of these areas was to have climate control, (as the lower level, in fact, will). The “quiet” room where we were seated had been planned as a meeting room with separate access to the street. The lower level would be for serious reference work, there would be access from the lower level directly to the basement of the “bunker.” The cement “bunker” is now used as a storage area. A committee member remembered that there were plans to build a bridge to that building, which is in good shape, and has a full basement, so that it could be used as a periodicals room and/or as a quiet space. Debbie invited the assembly to visit the “bunker” during the break or after the meeting. There was to be a young adult section in addition to the children’s room.

Debbie emphasized that the Library is far from complete, and that there might indeed be many changes in the future, some of which will, as we experience the building more, give the mix of quiet and not-quiet spaces that will satisfy developing needs. It was mentioned that the current philosophy of library usage is not to “shush” visitors, but to welcome them. It was also recognized that on balance, there does need to be quiet space. Some libraries have done things like host belly-dancing classes, develop extensive CD music and video-game collections, and other non-traditional things to draw people, especially youth, into the building, with the idea that once there, they will stay to experience the other treasures that the library offers.

It was pointed out that the Library is not on the Town’s highway sign listing our cultural attractions. There was a discussion about who our customer is, how that customer and others perceive the Library and its use, and that marketing might be needed to deliver a message about the Library to the public. Questions were raised about the number of kids who use the Library, and the percentage of the total number of kids they represent. The Library is central to the culture of the Town, operating as a repository of history and information, as a home for the Rose Dorothea, in preserving the building itself, and as a gallery that showcases the Town’s art collection. The Library would like to be able to offer docent tours of the building, the boat and the art collection.

Comments were made about the need for landscaping, for a reading garden, the desirability or undesirability of a gazebo or other outside gathering space and about wheelchair accessibility to the Library. It was suggested that if Center Street was one-way from Commercial to Bradford it would be easier for any driver who also uses a wheelchair to get into and out of her or his vehicle. The fact that Center Street is a hill was also noted, and there were suggestions that a path be planned into the landscaping which would afford a gentler approach to the building entrance.

The Town, with so many resources—the non-profits, arts, town agencies--would be much more successful if

we learned to cooperate better with each other. The Library could be a facilitator to bring resources together. She spoke of the Business Development Center as a model that worked very well, especially on a drop-in basis, helping many members of the community. When they lost their space, they operated on a limited time schedule from the Library, but weren't able to meet the same demands. There is no other similar grants-writing and business help between here and Cape Cod Community College but it was suggested that we might operate as their satellite in the grants application process, by buying into their database. (We did have a subscription to their system at one time.) The Library is planning a new web page.

The Library has a small staff, not nearly enough to implement these Other plans. The Library buys the best headphones we can; users are very hard on them and we go through about 30 pairs a year. The Library needs to come more into the community, especially galvanizing community resources. As example, the Chamber of Commerce took it upon themselves to organize the lighting of the Monument. After several years or so doing, the Monument assumed the project and the funding for it themselves; a community initiative evolved into a sustained program. The notion that the Library could organize and maintain a central clearing-house of Town information came up several times. The Library, as neutral space, could produce that one web space, that one thing, that is really good, and could do it well.

Debbie said that the Library Staff is "flat out" and not able to do much in the way of Programming. What is done is: Born to Read program, meant more as a support for parents than as a literacy program for the kids, and which is very popular (As a wonderful example of community cooperation, St Mary's of the Harbor, recognizing the lack of parking during the summer months, donates their space to this program every Tuesday & Thursday for July & August. The kids have a wonderful time, using the parish hall and beach.) Heritage Day --Access to Town's rotating art collection--Lipton Cup display --Special Celebrations, eg, Margaret Mayo's recent 100th birthday --Rose Dorothea film. The Library has no budget for advertising, marketing or programming. It was suggested that volunteers might organize no-cost programs such as short-story readings, reading of Shakespeare or Dickens, travel slide shows and talks, all of which could bring new people into the Library. The volunteer committee could conduct these events during off hours. To foster cross-participation with the Library, businesses could be solicited to sponsor one of these events, possibly pairing a business with a related topic. It would be good to have a volunteer do a weekly column in the Banner, highlighting new books, events, displays, etc. A committee member told about an event in her childhood library. Were asked to dress a pet up as a favorite literary character and to bring that pet to the Library on a particular day. She will remember it always, and suggested it as a way to have kids participate. The issue of the Patriot Act, and filtering was discussed. One member, who attended high school in Pakistan, and therefore has a ".pk" address for her alumna association winds up on a federal list of those who contact Pakistani organizations every time she connects with her alumnae group online. Debbie noted that the Library deletes all borrowers' records on a daily basis, simply to avoid having any information on file.

Several people wondered if illegal immigrants and their kids feel comfortable availing themselves of the Library's services or if they are intimidated because they fear being asked about their status. The Town had an Early Learning Preschool program about 20 years ago. It does not, now. The Mormon Church under Ferguson once did an in-depth study and notation of Provincetown's cemetery. There are plans to scan Provincetown's historic books and other records, and to make them available on-line. Special needs, eg. old bibles & books that would be damaged by using ordinary flat-bed methods of scanning would require a grant for other equipment.

TheTown owns two large scanning devices, one of which will be at the Library. It is expected that community members will be able to use the scanner at the Library for their own projects, with the hope that that information, if pertinent, will be shared with the Library. The committee recognizes the historical genealogical significance of church records, cemetery records, and oral histories. The Registry of Deeds in Barnstable houses valuable historical and genealogical records.

Several members said they needed education about the services that the Library offers, and ways to access them, eg. CLAMS, Virtual Library, MassAnswer etc. An info packet for the frequent and for the casual visitor would be desirable. Also useful would be a "wishlist" of available volunteers, what they can offer, and a corresponding "wishlist" of the Library's needs. HandsOnBoston is an existing, functioning website and should be referenced as a model for our needs. The Library unofficially teaches English as a foreign language. (The Nautilus Club used to do something similar, on a volunteer basis.) A collection of electronic materials would enhance our ability to be effective.

The Library is sharing in an exciting project of downloadable books-on-line. There will be many audio books, and eventually, videos available. Rosetta Stone, a foreign language teaching system has been available through Clams, but will be discontinued as of July 1, 2008. There are, however, other language courses available through the downloadable books-on-line program. An on-site café was suggested, though Debbie emphasized that cleaning and maintenance concerns would require that refreshments not be enjoyed in the Library itself. It was also noted that there is a commercial coffee-shop directly across the street, and that the Library should not compete with it. It was noted though, that the commercial business might be the one (or one of several?) enterprises that owns and operates the Library café.

Since committee members had a chance to reflect on the last meeting and think about the priorities that we had decided upon for these three weeks, Debbie asked that we raise our hands again to determine if we still held the same opinions, and in the same order.

This selection process was quite exciting with committee members lobbying for their favorite top Service Responses and then negotiating with other committee members as well as with Debbie and the Chair of the Trustees. Of course, in typical Provincetown fashion, Provincetown's plan will be unique from other public libraries in the commonwealth because the committee is recommending combining service responses thus acknowledging that the online environment is a basic library service--as basic as the provision of books and by combining Early Literacy with Lifelong Learning, expressing their strong opinion that Lifelong Learning represents all ages. The selected Service Responses in priority order are:

> #1 Visit a comfortable Place: Physical and Virtual Places:

Residents\*\* will have safe and welcoming physical places to meet and interact with others or to sit quietly and read and will have open and accessible virtual spaces that support networking

> #2 Stimulate Imagination: Reading, Viewing and Listening for Pleasure:

Residents who want materials to enhance their leisure time will find what they want when and where they want them and will have the help they need to make choices from among the options (Combined with Connect to the Online World: Public Internet Access. Residents will have high-speed access to the digital world with no unnecessary restrictions or fees to ensure that everyone can take advantage of the ever-growing resources and services available through the internet.)

> #3 Satisfy Curiosity: Lifelong learning:

Residents will have the resources they need to explore topics of personal interest and continue to learn throughout their lives. (Combined with Create Young Readers: Early Literacy: Children from birth to age five will have programs and services designed to ensure that they will enter school ready to learn to read, write and listen.)

#4 Know Your Community: Community Resources and Services: Residents will have a central source for information about the wide variety of programs, services and activities provided by community agencies and organizations

#5 Celebrate Diversity: Cultural Awareness

Residents will have programs and services that promote appreciation and understanding of their personal heritage and the heritage of others in the community.

The Library Trustees and Library Director would like to thank to the Committee members, Mick Rudd, Cheryl Bryan, Assistant Administrator for Continuing Education and Consulting Services, Southeast Mass. Regional Library System) and our facilitator, Bill Schneider

Respectfully Submitted,

Jackie Kelly

\* Library Services Responses are taken from the National Public Library Planning model used by Massachusetts Public Libraries by Sandra Nelson: "Strategic Planning for Results," American Library Association, 2008

\*Please note that Residents in our community is a very broad term and includes services to Year-round residents, part-time residents and visitors