

Town of Atherton
Community Workshop on New Library
Tuesday, March 6, 2012
Atherton Public Library
2 Dinkelspiel Station Lane
4:00 – 6:00 PM

NOTES prepared by PCRC

Mayor Bill Widmer welcomed participants and introduced other elected and appointed officials in attendance as well as Thomas Fortin and Carine Risley from the San Mateo County Library.

The Mayor outlined the purpose of the meeting as a community meeting to envision the design of a new Atherton town library. He gave a brief history of the Library project and the work of the Library Steering Committee. He stated that the public comment period would be limited to 10 minutes and turned the meeting over to Library Steering Committee Chair, Denise Kupperman.

Denise set the context of the workshop providing additional details on the Library Steering Committee, as well as background and materials covered at previous community meetings. This meeting is the 5th meeting dedicated to discussing a new Library in Atherton. Denise mentioned that the City Council had voted to locate the library at at Holbrook-Palmer Park and the EIR would also study other potential sites.

Denise introduced Shauna Wilson Mora from the Peninsula Conflict Resolution Center and David Schellinger of lowercase productions as the facilitators of the meeting.

Shauna reviewed the agenda for the meeting and some group participation agreements before turning the meeting over to Carine Risley, Manager of the Atherton and Brisbane Libraries.

Carine gave a brief presentation on the Library and interest in public input on the new library for Atherton.

Shauna opened the meeting to questions and comments, and mentioned there would be an additional opportunity for questions and comments following the visioning/charrette exercise.

Question/Comments

- Is library designed for Atherton residents or for the entire County?
 - *Library will reflect Atherton Community*
- Is service area size including unincorporated areas of Menlo Park
- Was Redwood City Library not included in consultant study because Redwood City is not park of the Joint Powers Authority? Why not addressed? Service area overlap
- Redwood City and Menlo Park libraries are huge. What service is Atherton going to provide that these libraries don't already provide?

David Schellinger showed a video referencing two new libraries on the Peninsula; the Millbrae and (I FORGOT THE OTHER LIBRARY) public libraries. MENTION SOMETHING HERE ABOUT SQUARE FOOTAGE, ETC. before guided participants in a visioning/charrette. Participants also filled out surveys about the types of spaces, collections, programs and library design they would like to see in a new Atherton Public Library.

Four separate groups created a collage of potential ideas for a new library. Each group reported out highlights from the visioning exercise.

Group 1

- Library is a welcoming space with warm, beautiful setting
- Comfortable chairs
- People come and stay
- Tactile/sensory space and fragrant garden
- Small theater designed for presentations/multi-purpose room. Place for classes

Group 2

- Space should have historical context with focus on cultural heritage and tradition
- Comfortable outdoor setting
- Novel lighting techniques which communicate with the outdoor space
- Homey, peaceful and practical
- Attentive to children

Group 3

- Light and airy/experience nature
- Children's space - wing for children's activities
- Funding for technology. Don't spend all the money on the building
- 2 small conference rooms
- Space should be flexible

Group 4

- Educational space/particularly for children
- Space for strollers to be parked
- Horticultural garden design
- Wall space for art displays
- Bookcases easily accessible particularly in children's area. Consider having having the face of the book displayed - not just the spine

Second Question/Comments segment

- Are we getting a broad response at workshops? How are Library uses being surveyed/reached?
 - Library Steering Committee is seeking input from all stakeholders
- Consider inviting families with children to shorter meetings, maybe on weekends or after school.
- Consider computer survey
 - Library Steering Committee has set up email address through town albscfeedback@ci.atherton.ca.us

Denise outlined Next Steps in the process:

- May plan another community meeting to target families with small children, maybe at a school
- Input/feedback will be incorporated into report to City Council
- Draft EIR will be available in late March/45 day comment period
- Another community meeting this evening and on Thursday, March 22nd.

Denise thanked everyone for their participation and feedback and said the information collected would be reviewed by the Library Steering Committee and assembled into a report to City Council.