

Main Library Renovation  
Open Meeting for the Campus Community  
April 22, 2003

Youngmin Jahan (YJ): The initial planning stage began yesterday and will last for the next five months. Have some information from staff; now must get more details. Programming includes understanding what the building is at present—engineers checking everything; looking at significance of building from the outside—how it fits on the oval—what the massing of structure should be to reinforce the current fabric of the campus; try out concepts—fit the program in the envelop and go back to the staff and others to identify consequences of different alternatives. This will be done over the summer. In October come back with up to three alternatives with different balances of needs. Community input will then be used to arrive at a final programming choice; then move on with schematic design.

What is the mission of the library?

Graduate Student: View this library as their primary research tool. Greatest concern of History graduate students is being able to get to the books and journals and the need to browse; continue to use as a research tool.

Faculty: They (Humanities) have been very much involved over the past few years. They want beautiful space to work in the library, but want that beauty to be balanced with having as much collection present as possible. They also want a clearer commitment to multiple uses of the library to reflect the changing world and knowledge base. Many of the folks have become more favorable to the Depository but want a better selection process and providing access in an easy way. We need to pay attention to disability issues and need to make sure that all resources have a clear means of disability access.

A library of this order is responsible for the preservation of resources, but should be a resource that is as easily accessible as possible. Should be not only for the academic community but also the community at large.

Faculty: One of the missions is to remind students of the mission of the university. In favor of the restoration of the Grand Reading Room--excellent opportunity for students to become impressed with the "academic atmosphere".

In favor of a café combined with group work areas; not in favor of retail space.

Undergraduate: She uses space for individual study rather than group projects, and thinks areas should be clearly marked as to whether they are quiet or group spaces. She likes the grand architecture; it makes her proud to go here.

Undergraduate: He comes here to browse the stacks, not to study.

Are study rooms made available in dormitories, etc? When you're around other students it's hard to study for some students. The library also provides a place for commuter students to study.

OIT Personnel: Today's students want a quick answer on the computer rather than finding a physical object or going to a library even if it is very close and convenient.

Undergraduate: She does most of her studying in a computer lab. She wants meeting spaces—gets people into the library; would be beneficial to student organizations to meet here. She wants to see the tradition brought back into the library (she works in archives and wants to have that information made available to students).

Faculty: We need to make choices to achieve appropriate balance. How much importance should be put on quiet study, group study, and meeting spaces?

Browsing needs to be done here. Meeting rooms and study space will bring folks into the library, and then they may become interested in what's here. How we balance services with the collection will be very important.

Joe Branin (JB): We need to coordinate with the renovation of the Student Union (brought up at yesterday's Open Meeting).

Undergraduate: There isn't study space elsewhere on campus; former study rooms in dorms have been turned into bedrooms. There is essentially no study space in the dorms; if you care about academics the library is the place to come. Study space very important.

There are 19 other libraries on campus; the Science and Engineering Library is used as is Geology; students use other libraries, not just Main, and we need to keep that in mind.

A library should not be defined only as a place to house the collection; making use of that intellectual capital is very important. Students need to come in and use the collections and services.

Think of the collection as being as rich and full as possible but usable; should be esthetically pleasing, but usable. Preservation of special collections and the reading rooms around them is very important.

We need to communicate better on how the network of libraries work; Main Library is not isolated; it's one of a network of libraries on campus.

The renovated building should hold as many resources as possible and be as accessible as possible

The building should be a living collection with people flowing in and out; as opposed to the Book Depository.

24 hour study space very important; the Science and Engineering Library is used heavily by both undergraduates and graduate students. Even though this is a research library, undergraduates need to be introduced because they'll be the graduate students of the future. They'll learn how the library and university work. They don't come now because it's a very intimidating place; we need to make it a living space to make them want to come in and stay.

Faculty: Libraries are more than collections of books; they are places for an exchange of ideas. More teaching should take place within the library and take advantage of the Special Collections--teach within reach of the resources. This building needs to be the intellectual center of the campus as opposed to the stadium as center.

Allocate some space designed to reflect the importance of the exchange of ideas.

JB: We're trying to predict the future of information technology. What has been the impact of digital in the past few years; digital scholarship is becoming more important in some fields. How do faculty and students see things happening in the next few years? Will we retain paper production of publications?

This will have an impact of spatial design of the library. What do we see happening to the basic technology of information services?

OIT Personnel: When his daughter was in the first year of high school, she called him to find a map on the Web, rather than go to a nearby library or call her mother who was in charge of a school library.

Faculty: We're worrying about digital pushing print aside, but print pushed manuscripts aside earlier. We'll be seeing more than scholarship going online; cultural production is moving online as well. Should we be concerned with the medium or what's being captured?

The medium changes; what doesn't change is the human contact that is needed to access the information. Come for inspiration and carry the academy on.

Lots of students study in cafés; we'll need wireless access there as well as in the Grand Reading Room. We need to make accommodations for cell phones—places where they can be used and not disturb others.

We need to maintain the opportunity for human contact.

Remember that what we do will be influential throughout the country; it's an opportunity to make a statement about what's important in education; how we influence our own students, but also elsewhere. Human exchange of ideas is important whether face to face or electronically. The more contact the more they will learn and contribute to society.

Libraries' Personnel: Prioritizing functions and space is important. Hold collections and provide for their use—access and help are crucial. We need to be teaching use of the collections.

Libraries' Personnel: Teens are comfortable with technology. Many come from a large high school environment but are intimidated by OSU and the impersonal appearance of the place; they're afraid they'll disappear and become a number; not friendly and welcoming. An intimate, welcoming environment would draw them into the library; currently they don't get a feeling of the importance of the individual. There have been technical impositions that separate folks from collections etc. There needs to be a more personal space; there's a lot of potential here.

We need to think creatively about what could be moved out of the library. Much of the Humanities materials are now in JSTOR, and the print back volumes could be moved to the Book Depository; if printing were as cheap as copying we would not need to have the print stuff here. JB: Disciplines vary widely in their use of primary materials and have different ideas about what can be moved to the Book Depository.

Undergraduate: Computer stations take up a lot of space; has the university mandated that folks should bring in their own computers? OIT Personnel: It has been considered, but the broad range of economic status and the broad range of academic needs has obviated it so far.

More and more folks do have their own computers, though, and eventually we'll need fewer. Space must be flexible to accommodate hardwired, wireless, and those not supplied by library.

Libraries' Personnel: Small turnout again; open meetings are not an effective way to get information. Need to use more creative ways—WOSU town meeting or call in radio show. Laptops—magnifies need for teaching folks how to use the laptop most effectively; continuing professional education for the rest of their lives. Must get a broader input.