
Theme Wall Responses to Central Library Questions

Feedback From 4th Public Consultation Meeting September 30th , 2010

First Floor:

1.1 Accessibility

- Accessibility. Ensuring enough turn around room between tables, chairs, and other narrow areas and making sure all areas of the library are fully accessible to all.
- Plenty of computers with good access for the disabled is a must.

1.2 Acoustics

- Acoustics. Will sound travel between floors? Sound-minimizing materials/configuration. Live performances on main floor effect quiet areas on other floors?
- Acoustics? Food area. Hot café.
- Concerns about first floor having an echo.
- Possible noise problem with noise coming from café area into library service area and readers lounge (should be quiet). Retaining walls or screening needed.
- Drop box location. Second drop box at Queen's Street entrance.
- Drive by book drop.
- No escalators. Too loud!

1.3 Art

- A signature piece on first floor with local interest.
- Fountain or public art?
- Water feature (viewable from interior).

1.4 Book Drop

- Book drop off and parking. Explain.
- Book drop? Clarification on location and how it will impact look and feel of entrance.
- Will there be a designated "5 min" parking spot to allow for convenient drop off?
- Book drop.
- Ability to quickly pick up and drop off materials.
- Should drop off and hold pick up be closer together?
- Ground floor for quick in/out.
- Drive up/stop spot for drop off.

1.5 Café

- Readers lounge and café should be closer for warmer atmosphere.

- Potential concerns about the location of the front coffee shop.
- Café is great. Can it serve beer?
- Outside seating with the café.
- Connection between café and reading. Can they be corrected?

1.6 Collection/Reading Spaces

- Best-sellers section: there's no seating surrounding it. Could be closer to the front.
- Enough seating? Need some near best sellers and holds pick up area.
- Readers lounge in a too busy area?
- Two issues about the reading area:
 - Noise from all over the floor (internet, coffee shop.)
 - Nothing on this floor to grab and read.
- Best sellers/Readers corner. Include all interests and reading levels. Reduce intimidation.
- Good layout. Good location of bestsellers. Good internet hub.
- More books on ground floor.
- Connection between reading and book and seating.
- Reading room not in the right place. Seems forced.
- Readers lounge. Adjacent to best seller area rather than as you come in.
- Seating.
- Tables to sit and do work or read.
- Solitary spots for children to read (ability to browse books as well).

1.7 Entrance

- Entrance - provide visibility and orientation.
- Floors/circulation orientation needs to be visible from entry.
- Entrances. We like 2 entrances.
- Entrance.
- Nice open, good flow.

1.8 Green

- Incorporate a "warm" area into winter garden.
- More green. Expand plant/garden area.
- Garden on south side. Think carefully about maintenance and cost over time! Why not only outside with appropriate plant space eg. Holly, rhododendrons.
- Garden green.
- Winter garden:
 - Very important.
 - Develop.
 - Greenhouse fuel.
 - Look out on attractive space.

1.9 Internet Access

- Media area on first floor. Seating nooks “coziness.”
- More detail needed on internet hub as this may have to be expanded.
- Internet hub too close to the door and too small. We need these computers just for catalogue.
- The internet hub is too small for the ground level. Needs to be way bigger.
- Internet space too small.
- Internet hub.

1.10 Miscellaneous

- A welcoming gateway - touchstone - “living tree.” Building interpretive info panels/kiosk/ touch screens.
- All service care doesn’t need to be on exterior walls. Provide varying circulation paths.
- Maybe have a set of lockers/cloak room.
- Good signage/directory.
- Informal is good.
- Outside cladding on this floor should be glass-visible from street. Keshen Goodman.
- More access (all 4 sides). Consider existing pedestrian paths (old library to Clyde and Queen).
- What is the underlying concept behind the aesthetics - facade and interior - is it random/ scattered or driven by and underlying theme?
- Holds pick up and circ counter closer together.
- Hold/check out combined with circulation desk?

1.11 Performance space

- Acoustically sensitive to rest of building and designed to support multi function ie. AV people being consulted given southern exposure.
- Performance area. Sound deadening? Is this really adequate? Seating. Seats with backs.
- Theater should be far from windows so outside light does not interfere with the performance.
- Performance space. Most main elements are on the main floor.
- More comfortable seating in the performance area?

1.12 Spaces

- Flexible spaces are good.
- It would be great to have moveable, non-structural parts so you can move the desks/stacks to transform the space in the future.
- Central empty space.
- Empty space hangout.
- Looks more like a hang out area (thru-fare) than a library.

Second Floor:

2.1 Acoustics

- Sound. Acoustics. Noise.
- Ensure acoustics are considered.
- What about noise in the work shop area? How is it to be contained?
- It is great that all the childrens areas are together but we worry about noise.
- Use of a sound cone to project sound in a specific area.
- Keep sound in general away from staff areas.
- Concern over sound diffusion vs. the necessity of allowing light-flow.
- Sound attenuation - don't want the atrium to direct the sound up.
- Will the quiet zones be handled acoustically to manage sound from other areas?
- Story telling corner quieter? Seems noisy place.
- Sound transfer from first floor performance area up thru atrium. Will this be an issue?
- Noise adjacent atrium. Quiet program space near atrium with children spaces to perimeter.

2.2 Adult Bubble

- Line of sight to children.
- But also available materials like magazines/newspapers, display or parenting books.
- Seating conducive for conversation.
- Adult bubble area. Are the view planes to watch children adequate?
- Hanging bubble space or hanging chairs.

2.3 Books/Collections

- Reading and books.
- Hang out space is good but lets not forget that we want books too. There doesn't appear to be enough books for whole childrens department especially since there aren't books on first floor either.

2.4 Children/Parents

- Parents and kids.
- What about areas for parents where they can interact and watch their kids while having a bit of quiet from the rest of the activities?
- Childrens floor. Landmarks/color coding in children and parents to refer to if a child gets lost.
- Keep site lines for kids under 10 - clear and connected for parents. Story corner?
- How will parents keep track of their kids? ie. Make sure they don't wander off downstairs? Idea: elevate the adult bubble? Keep the bubble rear the entrance/exit?
- Need tables at kid level for writing, drawing etc. Kid size furniture that's functional not just funky.
- Integrating adult seating throughout the whole floor; allowing parents to stay close to

families.

- A “crying room” or “mom’s feeding area” would be useful.
- Cubbies? Snow boots/coats etc.
- Storage closets for strollers etc.
- Washrooms. In more than one area for children.
- Concern with need for semi-enclosed areas for creative imagination - arts/crafts - or reading books - low walks for adults to see. This would help children who might be easily distracted.
- Childrens. Need to clarify space more visually. Feels scattered.
- Childrens terrace is cool!
- Kid-centric quiet spaces.

2.5 Furniture/Layout/Design

- Can the windows open? Generally lay out ok.
- Ensure there is adequate seating with tables as well. Not always comfortable to sit on the floor.
- More comfortable seating for reading. The look/feel of the big box bookstores that (still) have lots of seating.
- We want a big staircase or stairs with escalator half and half). Don’t want an escalator that is noisy and doesn’t encourage stopping to chat - people can take the elevator) to go fast - also stairs are enviro-friendly and promote health.
- An interesting staircase. Seating areas. Interaction with space. Integrate ramp with stairs/ escalator.
- One of the help desks should be closer to elevator.
- 2 Help desks excessive - takes up space - why not just 1? What does staff do when no visitors?
- Move rooms from Queen Street elevation. More sunlight!
- “Closet” space for coats/boots etc. like with the stroller space.
- Entrances. We like 1 main entrance.
- Proximity of workshop IT area could get messy. Also, washrooms should be close by.
- More open facade.
- More articulation of space using the columns maybe.
- It seems like #3 is not the best use of “prime real estate.” A corner view with 2 windows should be accessible to library users.
- Windows take up usable book shelf areas.
- Shelving for books. It appears there should be a lot more, perhaps along some of the outside walls/along the office areas?

2.6 Media Centre

- Disjunction of programmed activities for different age groups particularly at media center.
- Separation of kids and adults in media centre.
- Childrens media zone - are there individual spaces?

2.7 Miscellaneous

- Public water fountains.
- Looks attractive.
- Clean, accessible washrooms are very important.
- Would like to see some greenery or flowers or a living wall to make it look more exotic.
- Natural lighting for second floor.

2.8 Sound Lab

- More functionality to "Sounds room." Other performing arts functions?
- Childrens. Concern about sound lab above reaching. Best place.
- I like the idea of the sound lab. Kids don't always learn the best from books or computers. We should explore different ways of learning. Learning by doing, by being shown how to do something ex. Hands-on gardening or learning drama through creating a play from the ground up.
- Is the Sound lab on the wrong floor? Should teen floor and "kids" floors be flipped.
- IT Sound lab and Media room for this floor or easy to get to on the other floors.
- Sound room moved to more age appropriate floor "teen."

Third Floor:

3.1 Adult Learning

- Adult learning #1 enclosed? Quiet space too.
- Adult learning program seems much too small.
- It is not a self confidence booster for adult learners to go to the teen section for learning.
- Furthermore, the small group space for one-on-one learning seems incredibly inadequate, more space is needed! Adult learners and their tutors take up a lot of space and need lots of private room!
- Concern over the nature of the adult learning area. Will it be acoustically separate from the atrium or the adult quiet study space right next door.
- Assume internet on this floor? Internet is large part of "adult learning."
- Suggest adult learning combined with adult floor on more "enclosed" space.
- Seating and light. Tutoring space important.
- Please ensure space for the adult literacy program.
- Adult literacy space planning
 - Give a sense of privacy as well as a sense of community.
 - In terms of materials, ones that absorb sound.
 - Generally have individuals reading aloud and doing quiet reading at the same time - can be difficult to concentrate when sounds echo.
 - Lots of tables.

3.2 Computers

- "Catalog" should be separate from other computers and should be near help desk.
- We are worried about the lack of computer services - both for search functions and for research purposes. This space (for digital support) should be distributed throughout floors.
- Need more computers, computer spaces, "card catalog," search machines and Playstations.
- Not clear that there's enough computers. Where will computers be located? What will be the dedicated uses - catalogue?
- Computers online catalogue.
- Plugged in area to charge "toys" - laptops, cell phones, internet hub - other devices.

3.3 Lighting

- Circles could be 2 way to control light.
- Lighting and shelving.
- With everything pushed against the outside walls, how much natural light will come in?
- Lighting. Meandering path. Take advantage of light from Queen Street - more permeations to perimeter.

3.4 Meeting Spaces

- Can we see flexible walls (in places like the program rooms) that we can move to create small meeting spaces and study rooms? Halifax is in need of spaces for community groups to meet!
- Public/community meeting space.
- Have an area for small spontaneous meeting with big tables, like the one's we're sitting at now. And internet. Plug-ins/ or WiFi.

3.5 Miscellaneous

- Where are the DVDs? Do patrons have to go to the 4th floor for DVDs?
- Books +
- Food friendly area.
- Sculpture/focal point.
- Maximize flexibility of types of uses.
- Are there openable windows?
- Floor space demographics - is ratio correct?

3.6 Reading/Work Areas

- More place needed for collaborative working areas. Tables to sit as a group and work on projects etc.
- Variety of chairs and furniture to accommodate people of different sizes and shapes.
- More tables and chairs for collaborative spaces.
- Please ensure table space for homework, private tutoring in the community and reading the newspaper.
- Accessibility. Tables you can slide into with wheelchairs. Clearance. Desk heights at check outs, etc.
- Quiet spaces. Include more private spaces to read.
- Please ensure quiet space for reading that is not on the floor.
- Worried that it may be too open for "in house" reading/writing. Walls maybe.

3.7 Shelving

- Curved shelving is an excellent idea - more organic.
- Design. Variety in form of book shelves ie. gentle curves too rigid now soften the edges.
- Shelving is too low. You are taking away shelves at eye level, where people need them.
- Traditional lay out for shelving.
- Organic Stacks. There is a real need to keep things organized and easy to find ie. condensed and linear.

3.8 Stairs etc.

- The stairs could be more of a focal point!
- Do the escalators come up through the atrium?
- Step down floor/s for view of Spring Garden.

3.9 Study Rooms

- Adequate number of study cells?
- Study rooms:
 - Need more.
 - Are the study spaces too close to noisy spaces?
- Study cells should not be next the teen area.
- Study space. Increase study space for this floor. There should be opportunity for small groups to get together. Private and flexible.
- More study area needed.
- Group study area needed. Flexibility of space.
- Do we need more study cells?
- More independent study cell to be lined along the perimeter of the building.

3.10 Teens

- Make more teen seating clusters. Spread them out.
- Teen lounge facing Spring Garden Road street view (place for them to hang out).

3.11 Teens/Adults

- More blending of third and fourth floors - less segregation of teens and adults.
- Instead of keeping teens and adults separate, put the quiet areas next to each other and noisy areas like elevators, adult learning and teen space together.
- The mix of adult learning and teen space may not be ideal.

Fourth/Fifth Floors:

4.1 Café

- Less café! (one is enough)
- Debate over the location of the café. Move to top floor to include better use of the atrium etc. vs. leaving on the 4th floor.
- Put café on 5th floor not 4th.
- Local fair trade coffee.
- Not Starbucks .

4.2 Computers

- Computer area the size of Local History area - banks of computers (for those without computers ie. Seniors, the not so rich).
- More computers.
- No computers or tables for adult use.
- Public computers?
- Catalog stations for searching? On each floor?

4.3 Furniture/Seating

- Variety of seating options.
- High back Canadian built furniture comfortable for reading.
- Tables and chairs.
- Not sufficient seating.
- Seating furniture.
- Are there windows that open? Fresh air?
- More books/seating.
- More private seating on edges.
- Quiet; chairs.

4.4 Green Roof

- Garden space instead of just grass on green roof.
- Public access and use of green roof. Extensive green roof with large shrubs, trees. Area would be used in a similar way to existing library lawn.
- Community garden on roof - has a learning by doing aspect to it - keep the living room on the roof.

4.5 Layout/Design

- The living room - more social space; less business-oriented.
- Move the local history area to the first floor and perhaps change the name to Local Interest to show off Halifax/NS to newcomers.
- Offices (Staff from 5th) moved to another floor.
- Keep office space/meeting board rooms in lower levels. Don't close off any of the floor to users.

- There is not enough space in the library as a whole to serve the function this floor is meant to serve (adult section should be large).
- More public space on 5th floor to take advantage of great views!
- We feel that the cantilevered “box” is the gem of the building. It shouldn’t be a conference room, but rather a very active space. Everyone will want to experience this “moment” in the building. Perhaps it can be a reading room, but can be booked for private functions if need be. But in general, should be always accessible by the public!
- Make a large magazine lounge up there.
- The whole 5th floor should be publically accessible/useable - not office space.

4.6 Living Room

- “City living room” - keep open to people to read, work, enjoy the views!
- We are concerned that the Halifax living room might be in high demand and booking should be carefully coordinated.
- Conference room:
 - Give more space to the staff to enjoy their day.
 - The public will likely never go up there to see if it is available.
 - Open to the public?

4.7 Miscellaneous

- Try not to make the fifth floor look too corporate.
- As much local product/materials as possible.
- What we like:
 - Indoor/outdoor area.
 - “City living room”
 - Quiet zone.
- Fireplace - propane?
- Staff lounge - large enough for staff to eat? Tables?
- If lounge area is created on the 5th floor, escalator should go to the 5th and not stop on the 3rd or 4th.
- Lack of sun on northern side of the building (hinders enjoyment of terraces).
- Window space not being well utilized, perhaps washrooms should be moved inwards so seating area can be put along the windows. Also, shelves in History section are against the windows. Why? Bad use of window space! Window space should be for the public.

4.8 Program Room

- More than one program room on level 4 or is this room adaptable to create more rooms - meeting space?
- Program room on the fourth level looks small (adult program rooms on third is larger).

4.9 Reference

- Reference collections, periodicals, AV collections - where are they?
- Where is the reference area (desk)?
- Where is the reference section?
- Where's reference?
- Archives/microfiche? Is there an area for this type of research?.

4.10 Shelving

- We like traditional shelves lay out. We need to find books.
- Compact shelving - make sure that it is visible for people to see easily.
- Shelving. More books.
- Books, shelving. More books! Don't care about the fancy shelving. Tall stacks.
- Orderly stacks - not curves.
- The stacks need to be traditional for ease of use for the public.

4.11 Spaces

- Work space for grown ups.
- Study space, reading space, etc.
- Extensions of "adult" space.
- Enough adult space? 5th floor for adults.
- Fifth floor should have more open space all public?
- Need some cosiness. Modify the open concept by having big dividers or semi-walls (not to ceiling).