



Library Building Program

On March 3, 2011, the Library celebrated its 27th year in the 115-year-old Highland School building. Since its relocation to the historic landmark in 1984, the community's use of the library has more than doubled.

The charm, livable scale, and coziness of the Library make it feel like home. But there are limitations to an old school building serving as a busy, high-traffic library: inflexible spaces due to inadequate infrastructure; no room to grow or update technology; no place to plug in a computer or laptop. The dark corners, dead-end stacks, and hidden areas make supervision of public spaces difficult and public safety and accessibility issues need to be addressed. Structural problems need to be fixed: the roof leaks; the basement floods and is damp; the gutters, masonry, and windows need major repairs; and the HVAC, lighting, and work spaces are inefficient and outdated.

The Reading Public Library Board of Trustees commissioned a study in 2010 to determine present and future facility needs in the light of continuous growth in service and multiplying facility deficiencies. The study concluded that a slightly larger and updated building was needed to address greater demands for services for all ages including outgrown meeting, conference and children's rooms; a lack of quiet places to read or study; and an out of date infrastructure.

The Trustees acknowledged the community's affection for this local landmark and interest in historic preservation and they determined to find a solution that would once again adapt this old school building as a library for future generations. The Trustees selected Beacon Architectural/Adams & Smith, an architectural team with extensive experience with historical buildings who have completed successful library projects throughout the state, to draft a design.

The Building Plan calls for rearrangement of existing internal space and a 7,596-square-foot expansion on the hill at the east side toward School Street. The two-story addition would align with the lower and main levels of the current building. Major structural repairs and substantial renovation are required to comply with current building codes.

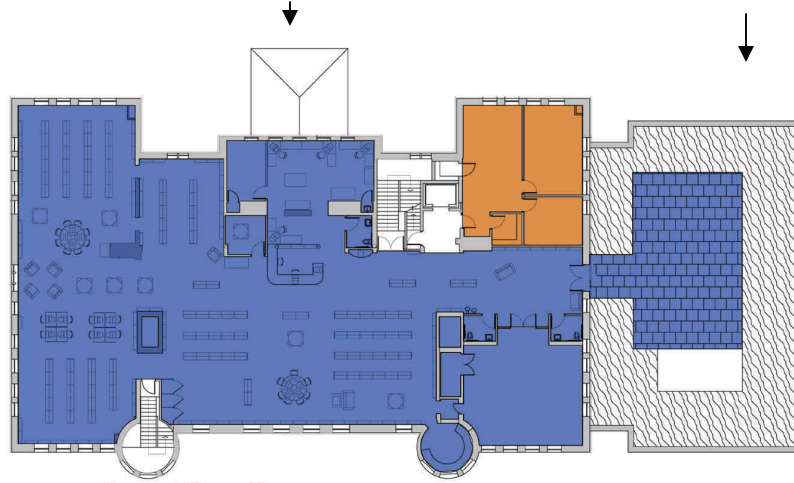
The Trustees are committed to preserving the character of the current library while enhancing its accessibility, functionality and adaptability. The plan also provides for a greatly expanded children's room and public meeting space that can be used after the library has closed.

The 2010 Fall Town Meeting authorized the Library Trustees to apply for a state grant through the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners, and the application for partial funding of a construction project was submitted in January. The Trustees are asking 2011 Town Meeting to approve the design as shown.

Existing Building

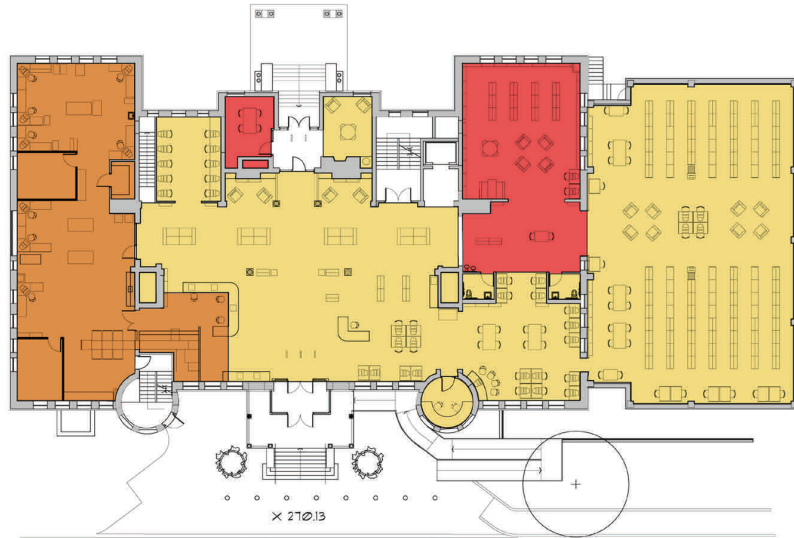
Proposed Addition

- Children's Space Doubled
- More kids' computers
- New Early Learning Center Program / Classroom
- Rooftop Garden Room



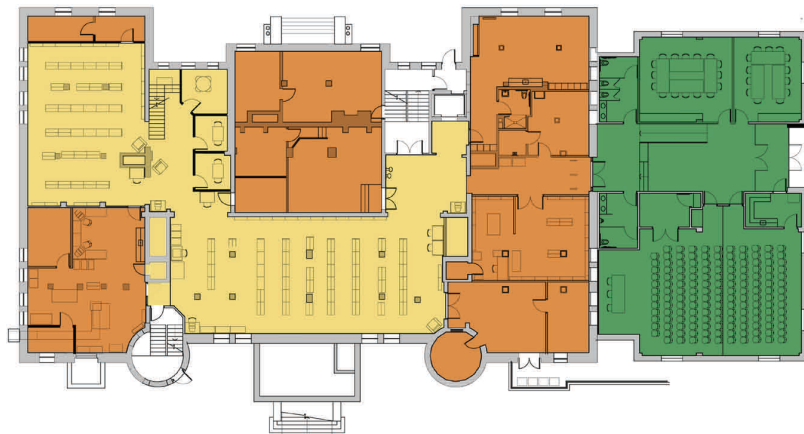
Second Floor Plan

- New Young Adult Area
- New computer classroom
- Quiet Reading Room & Nooks
- New Circulation Services
- New self-checkout option
- More space for browsing
- New study areas








First Floor Plan

- Meeting Room
- 2 New Conference rooms
- 3 New Study rooms
- Enhanced staff presence
- Fully accessible book stacks with better lighting
- After-hours pick-up boxes
- Rest rooms on all levels



Ground Floor Plan

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|--|---|
|  Children's |  Staff/Service |
|  Meeting/Public |  Young Adult |
| |  Collections/ Adult Services |

READING PUBLIC LIBRARY
Proposed Uses

BEACON ARCHITECTURAL
ASSOCIATES
ADAMS & SMITH ARCHITECTS