

Tinton Falls Public Library

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Director: Rosemary Tunncliffe
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Dear Friend,

You are receiving this letter because you signed the petition for a bigger building for the Tinton Falls Library. We thought you would appreciate an update on the situation.

- 1) 640 people signed the petition, which was presented to the Borough Council at their meeting on Sept 4, 2007
- 2) After the petition action, the Library Board of Trustees appointed two committees to continue the work of pressing on towards a new building. One was called the Concept Committee, whose task it was to do the necessary groundwork towards getting a cost estimate for the building. The other was an Outreach Committee, charged with reaching people in the community and informing them as to why the building was essential.
- 3) The Borough Council, however, wished to have its own committee, appointed by the Mayor. Since there was no point in having two committees, that formed by the Board was in part integrated into the Mayor's committee – now called the Library Evaluation Committee.
- 4) The Library Evaluation Committee consisted of 10 members: the Mayor, a member of Council, the President of the Library Board, another member of the Board, the Library Director and 6 members of the public, two of whom represented Seabrook Village.
- 5) This committee's first job was to evaluate public opinion by sending a survey to every household in the borough. The survey was printed in the Borough Newsletter and on the website and distributed to schools and senior housing complexes.
- 6) 342 surveys were returned and were overwhelmingly positive about the library and about supporting public funding of a bigger building.
- 7) The committee interviewed 4 architectural firms, chosen from a list provided by the State Library as being experienced in designing libraries.
- 8) After discussion, and viewing of some of the work of these architects, the firm of Dennis Kowal was chosen as being the one to be approached to do the initial work for us. This would consist of a Needs Analysis (looking at the size of the town, use of the library etc. to decide what would be needed in a new library), a Feasibility Study of any proposed site, and a Concept Sketch and cost estimate for a new building.
- 9) The work would be covered by a grant received in 2006 for this purpose, and would therefore be no burden to the Borough.
- 10) On Sept 4, 2007, the Committee presented the Borough Council with this proposal, to receive its agreement for spending the grant money. The Library Board also gave an

informative presentation on the situation at the library – both historical and current – to bring new Council members up to date.

- 11) At the council meeting on Sept. 18 the Council passed a resolution permitting the architect to go ahead.
- 12) The work is expected to take about 3 months, during which time members of the public will be able to express their opinions and make suggestions.
- 13) At the end of this time, in early 2008, a cost estimate should be available and will be presented to Council for their consideration.
- 14) While we are exploring every avenue we can think of to get help with funding, including corporate sponsorship, there is no doubt that all of us will bear a large part of the cost. With a revaluation of properties going ahead at the same time, some of us will feel that we want no additional costs.
- 15) We would ask you to consider the following:
 - if any Council over the last 15 years had decided to go ahead with a bigger building (and that is the length of time we have been waiting) it would have cost far less.
 - Since we were promised to be phase 3 of the municipal building project in 2001, use of the library has gone up by 63% and we are still trying to work out of the same inadequate space.
 - Costs have also gone up considerably – think of the new Municipal Building, which was originally bonded for \$6.8 million and ended up at over \$11 million.
 - Eventually a bigger building will have to be agreed on, and the longer the decision is delayed the bigger the cost will be.
- 16) We think Council should bite the bullet and go ahead. The situation is desperate and getting worse every day.

We hope that we can still count on your support. We are being as up-front with you as possible. Since we do not want to spend money unnecessarily on postage, we would ask those of you with email to go to your computer NOW and send an email to

tintonfallslibrary@yahoo.com

In the subject line, just write “Please keep me informed about the new building”. You do not need to write more than that, though we shall be delighted to hear from any of you who do.

If we do not hear from you, we shall still try to keep you informed, but it will be more expensive. We also plan to put news on the website from time to time. Go to www.tintonfalls.com and click on Library.

Thank you for your past and future support. We need all that we can get.

Sincerely

On behalf of the Tinton Falls Public Library