

Building Committee, Warren Library  
August 30, 2016  
Meeting minutes

Members: Bruce Anderson, Joseph Manley, Eric Schoenfeld  
Craig Nelson, ex-officio

Initial meeting of the committee called to order at 5:30pm. The Warren Public Library building is at least 80 years old. Committee is charged with assessing the physical condition of the building and making recommendations for appropriate action.

Bruce Anderson unanimously elected committee chairman.

Members conducted a tour of the Warren Public Library to assess exterior and interior conditions.

**Exterior:**

Roof was re-done 12 years ago and appears to be in good shape. Many (but not all) windows were replaced circa 2010. Certain sills still show signs of extensive wear.

Parking area is very limited.

Library entrances are not handicap accessible. Must bring building into compliance with ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) regulations. This is a high priority. Joe Manley suggested we might explore removing the big tree and blasting out the large rock directly opposite the main entrance to the Library. Leveling that area could provide ample space for parking, and could make it easier to locate a handicap access ramp. That land, however, is owned by the Region 6 school district (as is the land the Library sits on), which adds a complicating factor.

Oil tank(s) located underground in the northeast corner at the rear of the building. Must determine how old the tanks are and to what degree they pose an environmental hazard that must be addressed. This is a high priority.

There are several emergency lighting fixtures on the outside of the building, some of which no longer work. The town has contacted Eversource and the utility has agreed to replace and upgrade lighting fixtures both inside and outside the building. The date for this work to begin is still TBD.

There are some other wires – probably phone lines – on the outside of the building that are hanging loose and need to be re-attached. This is a minor issue and should be easy to resolve.

There is a concrete slab at the northwest front corner of the building with bolts sticking up at each of the four corners. There may have been a mailbox on the slab at one point. We should cut the bolts flush with the ground to reduce the risk of injury. This is also a fairly minor issue and should be easy to resolve.

Vinyl siding is deteriorating, loose or even missing in several places, especially on west side of the building. Will require repair or replacement, but repairs can likely be prioritized into most critical areas. Certain downspouts and leaders are in need of some work, as well.

On west side of building, wooden deck and stairway just outside women's bathroom is in terrible shape. Needs to be repaired, replaced or removed as a source of egress from building. Should not be used until repairs are effected.

There is also wood rot or other damage to the door frame between the ladies room and the deck which will need to be addressed.

There is a small courtyard abutting the wooden deck and stairway that is badly overgrown with trees, shrubs and weeds, further limiting emergency egress. Craig Nelson will ask town crews to remove all the vegetation, which will help us further address the needs on that side of the building. There is another small tree on the other side of the building at the rear that should be removed at the same time.

Exterior rear door in southeast corner (leading to mechanical room with water tanks) is missing lower panel, providing unfettered access for wildlife. At the very least, the hole needs to be covered with plywood. *All* exterior doors need to be further inspected for damaged or rotting frames, or other conditions which make them difficult to open and close.

### **Interior:**

Bathrooms must be made handicap accessible. Joe Manley advises us that, according to Connecticut statute, Library needs to provide separate ADA-compliant bathrooms for both men and women (that is, a single unisex handicap accessible bathroom is not sufficient).

This is a high priority.

Sink in women's bathroom needs immediate replacement. Cold water tap does not work, and temperature of water from hot tap is too hot, causing a potential scalding hazard. (Hot water appears to be feeding directly from the oil burner, and temperature is apparently not adjustable). Eric Schoenfeld advises that Library board will seek an inexpensive replacement for this sink in the very near future.

Regarding the oil burner, there was general consensus that the building will require a new heating system, preferably sooner than later. Cooling is provided by a number of window air conditioners, which are less than ideal, but not viewed as a critical issue at this point.

The committee found asbestos in certain areas of the basement, and possibly in the basement ceiling tiles. There is also a rotted sill in one corner of the basement, letting water seep in, which requires immediate attention.

On the upper level, there are a number of internal doors that could be removed to facilitate better handicap access. Any architectural changes will need to include ADA-compliant traffic flow throughout the building.

As mentioned earlier, Eversource has agreed to replace interior and exterior lighting fixtures. Date TBD.

Need to add emergency lighting and exit signs throughout.

### **Next steps:**

1. Committee to create list of critical areas to be dealt with. At a minimum, this would include:
  - Make building ADA-compliant (handicap accessible entryways, bathrooms, parking, etc.)

- Determine what must be done with underground oil tanks, and in what time frame
  - Make all Library building openings (doors, windows, walls) weather-tight, and address existing areas where water is getting in.
  - Repair or replace wooden rear deck and staircase outside women's bathroom.
- 2. Hire architect to draw up detailed plans to deal with critical areas. Joe Manley will recommend candidates.
- 3. Create Request for Proposal for contractors to address critical needs
- 4. Town meeting to authorize spending necessary funds for critical needs (Fund outlay to be reimbursed via Connecticut LoCIP grants)
- 5. Submit forms for CT LoCIP (Local Capital Improvement Program) reimbursement. Note: Available LoCIP funding currently estimated at up to \$250,000.

Meeting adjourned at 6:50pm