



San Francisco Public Library

Minutes of November 2, 6, and 23 2019 Community Meetings on the Ocean View Library Site Feasibility Report

Meeting Dates: **November 2, 2019 (2:00 – 3:30 pm)**
 November 6, 2019 (6:00 – 7:30 pm)
 November 23, 2019 (1:00 – 2:30 pm)

Meeting Locations: Ocean View Branch and I.T. Bookman Community Center

AGENDA

- Welcome by Library Chief of Branches, Catherine Delneo
- Ocean View Library Site Feasibility Report by Chief of Branches, Catherine Delneo and Public Works Architect, Andy Sohn
- Questions and Discussion led by Library Chief of Branches, Catherine Delneo

Welcome Remarks and Introductions – Cathy Delneo

- At this series of community meetings, the Library and Public Works will share the presentation from the October San Francisco Public Library Commission Meeting <https://sfpl.org/uploads/files/pdfs/commission/Ocean-View-feasibility101719.pdf>
- The meetings on November 2 and 6 were planned for an English-speaking audience.
- The meeting on November 23rd was planned for the Cantonese-speaking community served by the Ocean View Branch Library, with the PPT translated into Chinese, and with Cantonese and Mandarin speaking staff present to translate. However, as only one mono-lingual Mandarin speaker attended the meeting, the November 23rd meeting was conducted in English.
- Introduction of San Francisco Public Library staff, Public Works staff, Library Commissioners, District 10 Supervisor and Aides.

Ocean View Library Site Feasibility Report – Catherine Delneo & Andy Sohn

- The Ocean View Branch was one of three branches included in the Branch Capital Projects Feasibility Study done in early 2018. Having been newly built in 2000, it was not part of the Branch Library Improvement Program (BLIP) bond of 2000.
- The Branch Capital Projects Feasibility Study was published on January 26, 2018. The study <https://sfpl.org/pdf/about/commission/Feasibility-Study-dpw020118.pdf> identified the following concerns with the Ocean View Branch:
 - The size of the building is too small and unable to meet the needs of the community

- The program room is too small
- The building is not recognizable as a library
- No space for Teens
- Difficult to oversee the public spaces on the second floor
- No room for expansion on the current site
- The Library and Public Works came back to the Ocean View Community to share the findings of the feasibility study and discuss the renovation of the existing Ocean View Branch at 345 Randolph Street.
 - During the Ocean View Community engagement meetings in February and March 2019, the community expressed concerns that a renovated branch would not meet the needs of the community, and suggested exploring ideas outside of renovating the existing branch.
 - The Library committed to exploring an idea brought forward by District 11 Supervisor Safai to relocate the Ocean View Branch to the green space on Brotherhood Way.
- The Library and Public Works presented a feasibility study that explored the relocation of the Ocean View Branch to the Library Commission at the July 2019 meeting. The study explored the possibility of building a new library at the Brotherhood and Head Mini-park, and was expanded to explore adjacent sites on Brotherhood Way: [Ocean View Library Site Feasibility presentation](#) and [report](#).
- Of the nine potential building sites only one site (Site D) met all site viability criteria:
 - Neighborhood connectivity
 - Safe pedestrian access
 - Accessible path from transit
 - Existing vehicular infrastructure
 - Level building site
 - Synergy with existing site amenities
 - Within OMI neighborhood (District 11)
- The green space along Brother Hood Way is City owned property so the City could build a new branch without land purchase costs.
- Site D could accommodate a two story library with a footprint of up to 20,000 square feet (exact size to be determined as the programmatic needs are developed).
- At this location, the library could serve as a gateway to the neighborhood.
- The next step is for the Department of Public Works to meet with City Planners and the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (MTA) to talk about mitigations.

Questions and Discussion – Cathy Delneo

Traffic and Pedestrian Safety

- *Sagamore Street is too dangerous. There isn't a crosswalk to get across Brotherhood Way. How will it be possible to mitigate the traffic?*
- *There needs to be a solution to the traffic before anything else.*
- *The streets are a problem – the road is a speedway, and it is difficult to cross in the crosswalk.*

- (DPW) We agree that traffic is an issue, and that mitigation is needed - it is a priority to speak to the San Francisco Municipal Transit Agency (SFMTA).
- (Library) We are thinking aspirationally when thinking of a new library – of what library is possible for the community. We need to think of challenges, but should not see them as obstacles that cannot be overcome. For example, we have heard your concern that traffic is an issue, and we are working with other City departments to think of solutions to that challenge. This is a project that will involve the input of many City Departments.
- (Supervisor Safai's Office) We know that traffic calming is a concern, and we hope to have representatives from SFMTA to help address issues around safety and accessibility.

Parking and Transit

- *The closest transit is two blocks away, and there is no parking in the area. How will seniors and people with disabilities get to the library?*
- *There are folks who can't ride the bus. Will there be a parking lot or street parking? Will there be ADA parking spaces?*
- *Specific data is needed regarding transportation. It would be helpful to ask Ocean View Library users to fill out a transportation survey.*
 - *How did you get to the library?*
 - *Where are you coming from?*
 - *How far do you live from the library?*
- (Supervisor Safai's Office) The planning process for the new branch would include a study of transit.
- (Library) We hear the community's concerns related to access by car and will bear those in mind when planning the new Ocean View Branch. The Library and Public Works have already reached out to SFMTA to begin preliminary discussions about the traffic concerns that you have raised.

Site Selection

- *I'm afraid the Library is moving too quickly. The process needs to slow down so that the community can give input. Maybe the size of the branch can be reconsidered in order to bring the cost down and build on another site. Mitigating traffic can also be costly.*
- *Having been involved in the renovation of three of the branch libraries, I know that changing the site from a City owned property to a private one will be costly. The money saved from not having to purchase land can be put into the library itself.*
- (Library) We want to assure you that the Library will move at a deliberate pace and keep the community engaged. One strategy that we use is to have a series of meetings in each phase of engagement in order to provide many opportunities for individual community members to share their comments and raise questions. Building a new Ocean View Branch will be a community-involved process, with many public meetings on this topic over the coming months and years.

- (Supervisor Safai's Office) We heard from the community that the current library is not big enough. A larger branch will meet the demands of the growing number of families in the Ocean View and the surrounding neighborhoods on the south side of the city. The purpose of these meetings is to hear and address community concerns early on in the process, so that we can move forward together.
- (Library) We are at the very early stages of evaluating this particular site. We will take a hard look and study it fully. One major benefit of this site is that it is City owned, keeping the cost at \$35M and opposed to a privately owned site, which would require a large outlay of funding just for the property, plus the funding required for a new library building. We would want to exhaust the viability of this site before considering other sites, as this site is a City-owned location and has full support from elected officials and multiple City Departments.
- (DPW) We are only at the very beginnings of the feasibility study. Before a final decision is made about the site of a new library, traffic studies and an environmental reviews will be done, and regulators and City Planners will be involved.

137 Broad Street

- *The proposed location on Brotherhood Way and Orizaba Street is not ideal. Orizaba Street is too narrow to handle increased traffic, trees and utility poles would need to be torn down, there is no infrastructure at site D, there is no parking, the closest transit is two blocks away, and the streets are dark and unsafe. I recommend building the library on the vacant lot at 137 Broad Street. It is a wide street on level ground, it is close to the elementary schools and the Minnie and Lovie Ward Recreation Center, there is infrastructure in place, and building the library here would help to activate the area and create a business district.*
- *Site D has no electricity, sewer, water, while 137 Broad Street does have utilities. Any cost to purchase property will be offset by the work that will need to be done on Brotherhood Way.*
- *I am very familiar with the property being suggested at 137 Broad Street; there is no parking, and it is not a safe block. Also, we have always wanted a building on the corner and this lot is mid-block. The area is not appropriate for the size and type of library that we want. It would be a step backwards.*
- (Supervisor Safai's Office) The problems with the property on Broad Street are: it is in a residential neighborhood, so there would need to be a setback; there is no parking; the property is currently not for sale, and it is unknown if the owners are even willing to sell it; it will not accommodate a twenty-thousand square foot building, and therefore, would not have the many amenities possible on site D. We are happy to have DPW look at the property, but I think it will be easy for them and the Library Commission to decide that it is not the best site.

Open Space

- *I am a member of the Merced Extension Triangle Neighborhood Association (METNA). Open space is valuable because it breaks the monotony. What happened on Summit Way is a disgrace, and I am opposed to more development on the open space strip. I support building the library at 137 Broad Street. The open space on Brotherhood Way will no longer be open space if you build a library on it.*

- *Open space is only good if it is activated. A library on site D would resolve the nuisance activities that occur on it, and would be good for the neighborhood. There is no jewel in this neighborhood, and this neighborhood deserves a jewel.*
- (Supervisor Safai's Office) The City's greatest institutions are found in green spaces, and a library on this site will enhance the green space, and be a welcoming place in the surrounding area. Designs can be created that respect the green space and build a better library.
- (Library) The Library hears your comments and respects your appreciation of the green space you have in your community. We hope by building on site D, more attention will be brought to the space and it will become a better-utilized resource for the OMI community. A partnership with the park would help create a synergy with the park and integrate the library into the open space. The Library has had great success in our locations adjacent to parks currently (e.g. Ortega, North Beach, Marina Branches). We aim to be innovative and creative in engaging the open space, and create an attractive park/library experience where the sky's the limit for programming possibilities.
- (Supervisor Safai's Office) Building on this site is different from developing it for homes because what is being built is a public resource that will serve the entire community.

Support for Site D

- *I am a member of METNA and wish to share a resolution that METNA has drafted. We are willing to support a library built on the greenbelt under these conditions:

 1. *An agreement signed by Supervisors Yee and Safai, that there will be no further building on the greenbelt; to keep it open space in perpetuity.*
 2. *DPW and the Library Commission will look at 137 Broad Street as an alternate site, with a feasibility study done prior to moving forward.**
- *The community needs a better library. I'm part of the OMI Community Collaborative, and we have to send the children in our community to another neighborhood to use the library. I support a library on site D if pedestrian safety is addressed.*
- *As the Council of Neighborhood Libraries (CNL) representative for Ocean View Branch. I asked the Library Commission to take another look at site D, and to develop a plan on the open space that will include a space for parking and dropping off. I'm in favor of the library on site D, but with improvements to accessibility by car.*
- (Supervisor Safai's office) The need for a better library is long overdue, and the neighborhood needs one that can plan for the growth in the area – the OMI (Ocean View, Merced, Ingleside) has the highest concentration of seniors and people under the age of eighteen, and Park Merced is adding 5,000 more units. The southern part of the City is an underserved community. A premier library will not only serve the Ocean View, but will serve the broader area.
- (Library, Ocean View Branch Manager) I was initially delighted to hear that our branch will be renovated and now am excited that we're exploring a new, larger location because our

current building is too small to truly serve the community. The conversations that we are having is a real testament to how important the Ocean View Library is to the people in this community. Everyone's input is important, appreciated and valued. I have faith that the Library will address the access issues on site D. I envision that a beautiful public commons will be created that will benefit this community.

Minutes respectfully submitted by: Florinda Battad