WEEKS PUBLIC LIBRARY
SPACE NEEDS ASSESSMENT
May 31, 2016
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Chapter One — Introduction and the Weeks Public Library

Introduction
In late Summer 2015, the Weeks Public Library Trustees started the process of a Library Space Needs Assessment to define what steps the Weeks Public Library (WPL) needs to take in order to present a community-centric solution to the programs and services the Town of Greenland receives from the library.

The trustees hired Lavallee Brensinger Architects, which offers library planning and design, to assist in the formulation of the community’s vision for a 21st century library delivery of services and programs, both current and desired, to fulfill the needs of the Greenland community. The facts, findings, and recommendations here-in are based on input and feedback from previous community input, recent exploratory meetings with the library director, library staff, the Board of Trustees, and an open public Q&A opportunity held on December 12, 2015. Based on information and observations of library activities, tours of the existing Weeks Public Library and discussions of “Why”, “What if”, and “How” might the Board of Trustees establish a solution for future library services, the following report has been created to share with the Greenland community.

The expected outcome of this report is intended to provide the Board of Trustees and Community with a long-term vision of what the WPL will become and why it needs to evolve from the quaint jewel of a small community library into a 21st century resource for life-long learning and cultural activities, while maintaining Greenland’s community values.

A day in the life at Weeks Public Library

The current library is a heavily used community asset. Aside from the numerous obstacles created by the size and services, Greenland takes full advantage of the programs and offerings this small library delivers. All Greenland residents benefit from the Weeks Public Library. The challenge is the size and features of the library.

The library consists of two levels, one (1) large open space on street level and a second basement level. The street-level, large, open space accommodates all adult and young adult collections, as well as public computers, the copier, public printer, the circulation desk, director’s table, and the one (1) restroom. The lower basement level is utilized for library programming and collections which are dedicated to children. Children collections, computers, service desk, staff work and storage area, and multi-media materials are located within this space. This lower level space is also used, by rearranging furniture for all large group gatherings and events, but this makes the collection inaccessible.

Each demographic group within the community visits the library for their own unique experiences and expectations.

- Seniors utilize the library for access to newspapers, computers, activities and events, as well as to seek companionship. Senior programs are currently scheduled around other programs due to the lack of dedicated meeting space. The one (1) large group meeting space in the lower level is accessed via a tight and steep winding staircase; which drastically limits the use for Senior
programs. Senior-focused programs are very limited given this one (1) space is in constant demand for all other library programs, meetings, and events.

- Students from the neighboring Greenland Central School utilize the Library for daily after-school events and programs, as a place for after-school homework, informal learning opportunities, educational and recreational computer use, and social engagement with students their own age. The library becomes a home away from home for a few hours each day.

The space utilized by the students is the same space utilized by all other library programs, services, meetings, and events.

- Young adults are one group that use the library less, due to the space constraints and limited programs. However, when the teens do visit, they read, utilize the computers (educational and recreational), borrow video media, and socialize.

- Parents, care-givers and young children visit the same basement space for story hours, craft events, social gathering, and to share ideas with other parents and care-givers. Access to peers is beneficial for both the care-givers and the children to enhance their sense of community and camaraderie.

- Adults visit the library for a variety of services and programs and use resource materials, online databases, business improvement ideas, investment research, pleasure reading, genealogical and historical research, video borrowing, new book borrowing, etc.

Observations conclude that Greenland has outgrown the current Weeks Public Library, as desired and expected services have increased. Every square inch of the WPL is in use and most space is being used twice. The library that was designed to serve a village of 600 with 1,260 square feet now serves a population of 3,669 in about 2,560 square feet. As Greenland has grown, the Library has become the place where the community expects to get together, share their time, and enjoy access to local and global information.

**Services and Programs**

Based on the current size of the Library, the services and programs are greatly limited. There is a great desire for community members to engage in a viable and resource-rich environment. Programs and services will support and encourage involvement by demographic groups and all-age members with common interests, specifically:

- **Accessibility for All**
  The Library envisions a fully-accessible library. The Library currently does not meet federal and state code requirements for access to all areas. Current challenges prevent the use of almost all areas to those who need adequate means to move through spaces and access supporting features, such as the restroom. Handicap parking, entrances, and spatial connections are required to allow access by all members of our community, including those with mobility challenges.
• Teens
The Library envisions a dedicated, sound-proof space for teens to call their own after school, in the evenings, and on weekends. A place with tables and chairs for collaboration, soft seating for relaxing activities, computer space, collection space for print and audio-visual media, and message boards for sharing events and activities. A space like this will provide teens an opportunity to use a place within the community designed and operated to meet their specific needs, now and in the future.

• Adults
The current “grab and go” Weeks Public Library is limited in space for adults to visit, find what they seek, and relax. The Library envisions soft seating for relaxing and exploring information as well as tables and chairs for research, activities and social interaction. A need is seen for a quiet reading space as well as a gathering space.

Computers are often used today by adults who seek to remain anonymous on-line while researching new employment, new opportunities, and new directions in life. The vision of a technology-rich environment also supports recreational research on family, local, and global history, as well as current events. Print media remains a constant service adults seek, including new best sellers, fiction, non-fiction, current news and seasonal collections.

Current space does not allow for the proper delivery of these services. Programs are in demand, but space does not allow for educational events such as do-it-yourself workshops, presentations of new technologies, technology support, financial support, etc. The Library needs to become the one (1) neutral place within the community that will support all aspects of gatherings and activities for our adults.

• Seniors
A space for seniors needs to be found or created and should not be a shared space with teens.

• Children
Currently, programs for children are very limited due to space and the location (basement). Space does not exist for programming to take place while other services remain “open” to the community. The Library envisions toddler space, early-learning space, tween homework space, and space for collections from learn-to-read to easy readers and growing literacy.

Having a dedicated space for crafts and events that is separate from other children services will allow all functions and programs to remain open. Also, adults can take advantage of library services while their children engage in activities.

An area that supports blended learning on computers and other technologies will support the cultural needs of the youngest members of Greenland.
Chapter Two — Vision and Mission for 21st Century Library Services and Programs

Mission
At the center of the Greenland community, the Weeks Public Library is a cornerstone of the town’s heritage, pursuing Caroline Weeks’s legacy to encourage reading and literacy for all residents. As an active learning center for persons of all ages, it provides free access to informational, educational, cultural, and recreational resources and programs in a variety of formats and technologies.

Vision Statement
We believe our Library needs to be an active learning center for all ages, welcoming our community to engage in educational, social, and cultural activities.

Guiding Principles
The Board of Trustees explored the reasons “Why” the community needs a rejuvenated library, either by planning a new or an addition / renovation to the existing WPL:

• The 2001 Library Needs Assessment showed that all ages of the community were underserved due to the lack of space. Fifteen years later, in 2016, that hasn’t changed and the population has grown since 2001. The demand for services has increased due to and in spite of all the advances in technology and the prevalence of personal devices. The Library struggles to meet all the needs of the community due to the lack of space for services, the collection, and staff.

• Our Library needs to be an active learning and resource center for all ages and members of our community.

• Our Library needs to provide the services and programs to meet the needs of our community – such as activities, events, programs – services our current patrons have to obtain from Exeter Adult Education or Portsmouth Library. This includes, but is not limited to: how-to classes, new skill training, social events, educational sessions, etc.

• Our Library needs to be accessible and available in a safe manner to all members of our community, including both pedestrian and vehicular access. This includes easy handicap access and easy access from other Town venues, such as the school, historic Town center, etc.

• Our Library needs to be welcoming and encourage social engagement, while inspiring the cultural value of our community.

Indicators of Quality
The Board of Trustees explored “What” the Library needs to offer the community in order to fulfill the community’s needs:

• Our Library needs to embody the values of our community. One example is the architectural quality of the existing space.

• Our Library needs to be designed and constructed in a manner that will reduce operational costs and thereby be an example of long-lasting value through cost-effective sustainability and energy-efficient measures and strategies.
• Our Library needs to be flexible and adaptable for the future changes in library services and ever-changing advances in technology.

• Our Library needs to allow for loud activities and social gatherings, quiet meetings and private conferences, public access and private staff operations, and places that support simultaneous, multi-use functions.

• Our Library needs to be the Community Living Room, a comfortable place for our community to rest, relax, and take advantage of our resources.

Community Connections
The Board of Trustees explored “How” the community needs to connect with the Library and benefit from the library services, programs, location, and value:

• Our Library needs to be a safe place for children to attend after-school programs, which may mean located within walkable distance from the school.

• Our Library needs to be located such that it is easy to find (for visitors), easy to access (vehicular and pedestrian), and continues to be part of the historic Town Center.

• Our Library needs to support all demographics and groups within our community.

• Our Library needs to share resources within our community, including the ability for our community to access meeting and activity space(s) when the Library is closed.

• Our Library needs to remain a “grab and go” library, while also becoming a “destination” library to suit the needs of our community.

• Our Library needs to support the ever-changing services and programs found in 21st century libraries.

Expected Outcomes
The Board of Trustees defined the expectations for this planning process and the goals expected to be achieved:

• Our planning process will be a collaborative and interactive effort between the Board of Trustees, our community leaders, and our community-at-large.

• Our planning process will take an objective approach to explore and find the most beneficial solution for our community, meaning all options are open for consideration and discussion.

• Our planning process will consider the resources and availability of our community to maximize the value of the resulting solution.

• Our planning process will engage our community and consider their thoughts and needs, resulting in a community-centric solution being offered to our community for their consideration and financial support.
Chapter Three — Program Analysis

The existing Weeks Public Library is approximately 2,560 square-feet in area and resides on two levels: one access from street level and one basement space. The current collections break down as follows:

- 22,541 books and periodicals
- 4,552 digital media (DVDs, music, devices, audio books)
- 5 public access computers
- 1 copier
- 2 ink-jet printers
- 5 staff computers

Program Spreadsheet

This report includes an attached program sheet following Chapter Three. The spatial area defined by program space allocations is a “starting” point as the design progresses the review of multi-use, multi-functional, and flexible space strategies to maximize the efficient use of space.

Programmatic Uses

Library services are open to all residents of Greenland. Program uses are defined by what is offered, how services are offered, and where the library is located. The following program and service area descriptions are defined as core elements required within a planned expansion of the Library. These are the minimum needs:

- Community Meeting Room for 80-100 occupants.
  - Multi-use space with operable partition and AV equipment, table/chair storage, and kitchenette.
  - Women’s Club, about 45 people meeting once a month. Currently the Club meets at the Country View restaurant, where they have to purchase refreshment.
  - Groups now meet at other libraries a couple of times a month.
  - Community organizations (Cub Scouts, etc.) need a place to meet.
  - Needs to be multi-functional, an enclosed space for use at any time, and open to the community when the Library is closed.
  - Includes a coat room/racks – for winter meetings.

- Small Meeting Areas.
  - Two small meeting rooms for 2 to 4 occupants.
  - Conference room to hold 12 to 15 occupants and possibly house local history materials.

- Sitting and Reading Areas.
  - Adult areas acoustically separated from Children and Teen Areas.
  - Snack area.
  - 1 table with 6 chairs.
  - 2 tables with 4 chairs each.
  - 6 computer stations.
Reference, digital media, collection, magazines, newspapers, large print, NH collection, book display, new books section, front facing book shelves, NH reference, seasonal media display space.

- Laptop charging stations.
- Puzzle area.
- Quiet study spaces (4 individual spaces).
- Reading advisory resources and display.
- Soft-seat reading for 8.
- Staff desk with workspace (computer, storage, file cabinets).
- “Staff Picks” display.
- Telescope area.

- Teens (space for 10 teens).
  - Designed to accommodate teen programs.
  - 2 tables with 4 chairs each.
  - 3 computer stations.
  - 5 to 6 soft seats.
  - Book display space.
  - Message tack board (bulletin board).
  - Laptop charging station.
  - Collection, magazine, and special display space.
  - Gaming area for 6 with wall-mounted TV.
  - Maker-space counter.
  - Staff desk area (computer, storage, file cabinets).

- Children Library.
  - 2 restrooms with changing stations.
  - 2 early learning computers.
  - 3 tween computer stations (homework area).
  - iPad station for 4.
  - 3 tables with 4 chairs each for homework.
  - Laptop charging stations.
  - Collection, media, print space, and special media display space.
  - 18 book bins on wheels.
  - Toddler seating with board books and sensory panels.
  - Listening station.
  - Maker space for 10.
  - Parent seating for 4 with parenting collection.
  - Soft seating for 8.
  - Staff desk area (computer, storage, file cabinets).
  - AccuCut machine space and dies.
  - Bulletin board.
• Children Activity space.
  o Area dedicated to children’s crafts and story hour for 20-30 occupants (for children and adults).
  o Sink and “wet” flooring.
  o Program supplies, storage cabinets, and storage closet.
  o Craft tables for 20.
  o Programs and movies.
  o Integrated into the children library area.

• Support Space.
  o Men and Women rooms near program room (use after-hours).
  o Informal greeting areas for staff and patrons.
  o Coin-operated all-in-one copier alcove.
  o Art display space.
  o Book sale space.
  o Wall display and messaging.
  o Friends storage area.
  o Storage closet.

• Computer spaces (e-common areas).
  o Six (6, minimum) desktops for adults.
  o Three (3) for teens - 2 early learning computers for children.
  o Small and quiet computer tutoring space for 6 computers / occupants.
  o Privacy and place for papers or reference desk area for the computer.
  o Separate adult, teen, and children computer areas.

• Staff Area.
  o Break area.
  o Custodial closet.
  o Circulation Desk with 2 stations.
  o Director Office.
  o Office Supply area.
  o Processing area with cabinets and storage.
  o Book Return area with 3 book carts.
  o Staff restroom.
  o Storage area for staff.
  o Workroom with storage and all-in-one printer-scanner near Circulation Desk.
  o Secure space for records retention.

**One-story building versus two-story building**
Operating a one-story library is more cost-effective and staff-efficient than a two-story library: this is the case for libraries smaller than 20,000 to 25,000 square-feet. Once the library exceeds 25,000 square-feet, the cost for elevators, fire stairs, upper-floor framing loading, and additional non-assignable chase space off-sets the cost of foundations and roof. Staffing of a one-floor facility allows all staff to take advantage of support areas and maintain more staff on one level for flexible coverage.
The existing site will most likely require a two-story solution based on the limited site area. A new site may be able to accommodate a one-story solution.

The proposed area for the library expansion is 9,000 square-feet.

Parking and Site Programming
The existing site is limited in its current area to support adequate parking. Additionally, existing on-street parking creates a challenge with on-coming traffic along Post Road.

The preferred number of parking spots is 12 to 24. Parking will accommodate the everyday activities, with overflow using the adjacent Greenland Central School parking areas. Whether a new site or the existing one is used, creating a rational number of spaces will prevent “an expansive paved area”.

The existing site does not allow for a lot of outdoor programming which is currently limited to a few activities, such as cow day and astronomy programs. The Library envisions more outdoor programming for adults and children as part of the expansion.
### Adult Collection

**Existing Shelving LF**

- **Print & Digital media**
  - 1,101 linear feet of shelving
- **Periodical media**
  - 55 linear feet of shelving
- **Reference**
  - 25 linear feet of shelving
- **NH Ref & Local History**
  - 34 linear feet of shelving

#### Total Existing Collection

- **1215 linear feet of shelving**

**New Shelving LF**

- **2430 Total Proposed Collection**
- 67 shelf units x 7.5
  - **1215 half collection on 7 tier shelf units + 3ft**
- 90 shelf units x 7.5
  - **1215 half collection on 5 tier shelf units + 3ft**

#### Total Adult Collection Area

- **795.75 net sqft x 27% NTG**
- **1215**

### Children Collection

**Existing Shelving LF**

- **575 Total Existing Collection**

**New Shelving LF**

- **1150 Total Proposed Collection**
- 85 shelf units x 7.5
  - **1150 collection on 5 tier shelf units + 3ft**
- **18 bins**
  - **existing collection area**
  - **148 net sqft x 27% NTG**

#### Total Teen and Children Collection Area

- **849**
- **2300 net sqft x 27% NTG**

### Computers

- **adults & teens**
  - **23**
  - **150**
- **children**
  - **35**
  - **105**

### Public Seating

- **seating open areas**
  - **15**
  - **420**
- **children**
  - **52**
  - **100**
<table>
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<th>Use</th>
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<td>Less Existing Library Area</td>
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<td>Proposed Expansion</td>
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Chapter Four — Site Possibilities
The Board of Trustees has explored site possibilities, including the existing site, school-owned property, and Town-owned property. Discussions of site possibilities are depicted below.

A Community Connected Space and Place
One option may be to plan for a new 2-story option connected to the existing library. This option will require additional parking to be provided on the adjacent school property. This will enable the library to construct a new addition with all the sustainable characteristics found in a new library.

The existing library basement does not comply with current federal and state codes for use as occupied, public space. However, if an expansion is created on the existing site, the existing basement – accessible to some, but not all patrons – could be used for new energy-efficient mechanical systems and general storage space.

The street level of the existing library could be restored into a large adult-area Living Room, making good use of the significant architecture and vaulted space as the reading and social places.

This is just one possible option. If land is available from the neighboring elementary school, then consideration for parking or both a library and parking could be discussed.

A Town Center
Another option may be to utilize Town-owned land, but in considering this option, planners need to consider the requirements of the original deed that established the Weeks Public Library.

New versus Addition and Renovation
The services and programs delivered by the Library need to be convenient and accessible to the community, as the first order of priority. In order to resolve the space needs, it is necessary to consider the community connection from the standpoints of walkability, drivability (parking and traffic), and community-wide integration.

Location Considerations:
   If the library moves to a new site, the Board of Trustees will consider keeping the Weeks name, as well as a new name.

   If the library moves to a new site, the Board of Trustees will assist in the Town’s decision relating to the future use of the existing Weeks Public Library.

Benefits for moving to a new location:
• Fewer site constraints and limitations – assuming a new site will have more acreage and better vehicular access.
• The project will be “easier” and possibly less costly to make sustainable and energy-efficient.
• No design limitations, meaning no need to “work around” existing library site and building conditions.
• No retro-fitting / renovation obstacles with regard to historic and regulatory requirements.
• Safety during construction – allows full library operation during construction.
• Existing library location has challenges for both traffic and parking, including sharing the already limited number of parking spaces with the Community Congregational Church.

Benefits for staying at the existing location:
• We will keep our connection to the elementary school.
• We will keep our connection to the church for shared access and “social feeling”.
• We will preserve our connection to the historic center of town.
• We will keep – what the Town has considered its “crown jewel” – at the center of Town.
• We will keep our “library”, which is a very nice library, and create a “beautiful reading room”.
• We will keep our architecturally significant library – currently on the State Historic Register.
• We will keep and make use of a currently sound structure – or at least it’s considered sound.
• We will make use of land we “own”, the utilities, etc., and avoid the cost of purchasing land.
• We will transform the library into a modern 21st century facility and continue to honor the vision of Caroline Weeks’ legacy to “encourage reading and literacy for all residents.”

The Board of Trustees will continue to seek feedback from the community; however, the general consensus is that if the Library can attain the benefits of a new library while remaining at the current location within the community, there is a strong desire to remain the its current historic Town-center location.

Sustainability
The sustainability goals established by the Board of Trustees are based on best-practices to reduce operational and maintenance costs, while using planning and design strategies to maximize the spatial flexibility and adaptability to allow the Library to evolve over the next several decades along-side innovations in library services and technological advances.
Third-party programs include: the US Green Building Council’s Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED), the Green Building Code from ASHREA, the New Building Institute’s Core Performance, and the Living Building Challenge offer measures and strategies and measures to maximize a building’s performance over future decades.

The Board of Trustees has not decided to use a third party program, but in the library planning process the Board will consider strategies and measures from these and other programs in order to create a high performance library.