



Marlboro Free Library

## Community Room Remodel And Expansion

### Project Summary

- *Description:*

The Library will undergo a remodel and expansion of its community room in order to address space limitations and outdated features, and will include upgrades to an ADA accessible entry/vestibule area.

- *Project Management:*

The project will be managed by Butler Rowland Mays Architects.

- *Construction Dates:*

Design Development: Spring 2023

Bidding Process: Summer 2023

Construction: Fall 2023

- *Project Costs:*

Estimated Project Cost: \$930,492

*This project is fully funded through:*

NYS Library Construction Aid Grant: \$496,954

The James & Elizabeth Manion Charitable Fund: \$139,903

Library Building Fund/Donations: \$293,635

## Inspiration: *Love YOUR Library!*

There is no institution better qualified to ensure lifelong learning opportunities and equal-access-for-all than a public library. Studies have shown that for every \$1 invested into a library, there is an average of \$4.50 return on investment for its community. A strong, vibrant library ensures fair and equitable use of funds.

In addition, the Marlboro Free Library's (MFL) mission of '*servicing all the people of the Town of Marlborough, and the Marlboro Central School District, which includes Milton, Marlboro, Middlehope, and part of the Town of Plattekill as a community center for lifelong learning and access to information*', leads to an educated and informed public, helping to create a healthy overall community.

The MFL must evolve in order to fulfill its mission and to meet the ever-changing needs of the public, by providing access to materials, resources, information, modern digital services and technology, as well as offering a diverse programming schedule. Progress is always a top priority.

## Library Building History: *The Good Old Days*

First built in 1978, and last expanded and renovated in 1987, the Library building has proven to be a workhorse. Past Library trustees and directors ensured renovation and expansion plans were cost efficient, and utilized high quality construction that enabled the facilities to sustain many years of use with very little change.

The trustees foresaw that library services and community needs would change over time, and for more than 20 years, they prepared for the growth and the eventual need for building upgrades. During those times of focus groups, propositions, and land acquisitions, the goal was clear. The Library must continue to evolve with the times.

Recent trustees have recognized that the once state-of-the-art building is now outdated and inadequate for accommodating the modern library offerings and services available at the MFL. Based on the approved facility plan and an extensive site review by a licensed architectural firm, it was identified that many upgrades to the interior and exterior are priority, as they are near end-of-life. The increasing lack of functional space from the variety of usage must be addressed for future sustainability.

*Simply put, the building no longer supports the Library's mission of serving the community.*

Conceptual Design for  
Community Room Expansion



## Needs of the Community: *Always Evolving*

The MFL is a popular destination in the community. The Library welcomed over 4550 attendees to programs in 2019, a 60% increase over 2016. While programming and attendance numbers flourish, and continue to bounce back post-pandemic, the need for space for student education,

one-on-one appointments, community groups, and simultaneous youth and adult programming is evident.

The current room, originally built for the purpose of hosting community groups and occasional Library events, cannot continue to share the space with the multitude of services and programming offered. Nor can it accommodate all those that wish to attend, resulting in registration limits.

Groups wishing to use the room for meetings are increasingly turned away, while programs are limited in variety due to space limitations and also from lack of modern amenities and safety.

Below is just a sample of ongoing activities and the expected improvements the plan will offer in order to meet these needs:

- **Supporting Student Education: *Tutoring, Out of Class Teaching, Proctoring and more!***

The Library regularly hosts educational activities. From after school and evening tutoring, early intervention screenings, Honor Society projects, exam proctoring, to the Library's own afterschool programs for youth, these activities are essential for the health of the community. Many activities require quiet areas to accomplish the tasks at hand, away from the distractions of the open concept floorplan. Conversely, patrons hoping to have peaceful independent reading or study time among the stacks, are discouraged by the surrounding din of ongoing instruction. The remodel will address the shortage of available quiet space, and will help to accommodate the diversity of needs.

- **Community Groups: *Welcome!***

The Library hosts community groups of all kinds, and also fields requests for the use of the community room frequently. An increase in dividable space will alleviate the strain of room availability and limited access, due to the full schedule of Library programming and events. The plan will allow for groups and individuals to reserve use of the space with more flexible booking times, afterhours access, safe exhibit displays, kitchen access, advanced technology, and more.

- **Programming: *It's about variety!***

The Library strives to appeal to every age group and incorporate many topics of interest in its programming schedule. The Library often works with community members to enhance programming, and to gauge interest in popular topics. Dance, hula hoop, yoga, tai chi, toddler music and movement play time, guest speakers, and crafting are just a few examples of activities that have stretched the community room past its limits. Other programs of interest have been declined, moved outside into the unpredictable weather, or held in the Library stacks causing service disruptions, all due to lack of space. The plan will increase square footage to allow for more programming opportunities, popular family performers, and other demonstrations and performances.

- **Technology: *We've got that!***

Technology education and patron access to digital information are basic library services and are essential for a digitally literate community. Patrons can borrow technology devices for at-home use, and the training that provides equity in knowledge of those devices is a responsibility the Library takes seriously. A space conducive for group trainings and other classroom learning, one

that provides proper peripheral placement, sufficient electrical/charging options, overhead projection, and safe wire management, is a necessity.

The new space will accommodate this arrangement, as well as offer access to advanced audio-visual equipment, and a mobile technology center for group use and instruction.

## Modern Building Needs: *With safety and smart design!*

The Covid-19 pandemic demonstrated not only the importance of an adaptable, accommodating space for people to congregate comfortably, but also ensuring maximum airflow when groups are utilizing the community room. In addition to an upgraded energy saving HVAC system, openable windows will allow for better air circulation, while increasing safety and security of the room.

Smart and thoughtful design of a flexible dividable space will allow for concurrent groups/programs and for proper storage of furniture and equipment, improving the safety and cleanliness of the room. An updated kitchenette will create opportunities for more dynamic cooking and other science based programming, while a durable art display system will enable local artists and community art shows to exhibit their work with an appealing esthetic.

The natural light afforded by window installations will allow for lighting alternatives, while dimmable, sensory friendly LED lighting will modernize and increase energy conservation over the current system. The existing lack of electrical power options that modern technology demands, will be addressed by anticipating current and future power, charging, and wire management needs. Current mechanicals will be upgraded to energy saving models.



Increasing the level of ADA accessibility into the Library building and the community room, is another critical part of the design, and is included in the plan.

## Plan for the Future: *Community space for all!*

The plan for the **James & Elizabeth Manion Community Room** envisions a redesign of the current footprint of the Library's community room with an addition, while remodeling the north entrance. The Board of Trustees, working with the Library Director and the architectural firm, Butler Rowland Mays of Ballston Spa, identified key areas of the Library building to be addressed in order to meet the needs of the community. Focus groups and surveys revealed thoughts and opinions of community members that help to guide the future of the Library.

Key concerns are:

- The inadequate size and configuration of the community room
- Lack of quiet space for tutoring/educational purposes
- Non-existent dedicated youth programming space
- Overburdened reservations for community group bookings
- Security of room (no inner or outer windows)
- Inadequate furniture/equipment storage leading to safety issues and inefficiencies
- Patron privacy for Library services (notary, passports, one-on-one appointments, etc.)
- ADA accessibility concerns
- Lack of adequate facilities and exhibit amenities

The project will have minimal impact to the surrounding property, but will incorporate pleasing landscaping enhancing the town esthetic, and

will transform the existing building into a multi-functional, purpose-driven space, serving all of the Library community.

### *Wish List: Completed Reading Garden! Maker Space!*

Through fundraising efforts organized by the Friends volunteers, the Library might also have the opportunity to reach these wish list goals:

- **Maker Space:** The current lack of functional space and storage has restricted the Library from developing a practical Maker Space, for adults and youth.
- **Reading Garden:** Renovation of the rear patio will allow for a contemplative outdoor area that can also be used to hold library and community functions in an esthetically pleasing setting.



### *Project Costs: The best part!*

With the community voting to pass building propositions over the course of many years, the Library positioned itself to effectively fund for the proper maintenance of the building, as well as future improvements, as community needs and services evolved.

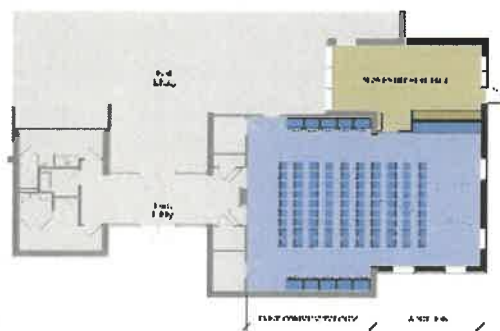
Continuing its tradition of fiscal vigilance, the Library applied for and received a grant from the New York State Construction Aid for Libraries. It



was the largest award granted in the Hudson Valley for the 2021 cycle. This has placed the Library in the very enviable position of having the opportunity to remodel and expand the community room and north entrance without bond referendum.

The project is fully funded through the NYS Construction Aid for Libraries grant, private donations, and the building reserve fund. Additional grants have been submitted in an effort to fund much needed interior renovations to the circulation desk areas as well.

Community Room Expansion Plan



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## Community responses and comments:

The MFL community identified the role of the Library as a “lifelong learning center for all ages” as its most important role.

99% of survey participants agreed that a good library adds value to your home.

*“The room itself is dated, and could use updating and technology and safety upgrades”*

*“I think it is a great space, but since it gets a lot of use, it would be great if you had an additional space as well, or a few smaller spaces that could be used”*

*“Building needs update but staff are wonderful!”*

*“I think the ability to sub-divide--and also make the room more accessible-- is important. Accessibility both in terms of disability (what kind of furniture do we have? how wheelchair friendly is it? can folks sit/stand/pace comfortably?) and neurodivergence (dimnable lights would make for a sensory-friendly experience; soundproofing as well) but also in terms of – can multiple programs go on at once? Is there space for passive programming/education? Windows also will make it less depressing.”*

## *Did you know???*

The MFL...

- ...has processed over 5000 passports**
- ...provides curbside service**
- ...has more open hours than 98% of all other Mid-Hudson Library System libraries**
- ...does not charge late fees**
- ...offers self-guided walking tours with *Discover Marlboro* app**
- ...lends laptops & Wi-Fi hotspots**
- ...has an item lending collection & museum passes**
- ...loans STEM learning kits**
- ...offers personalized reading advisory**
- ...provides free notary services by appointment**
- ...has thousands of items and photographs in the local history collection**
- ...offers one-on-one tech appointments**

WE  OUR COMMUNITY!