

### Background:

The Crozet master planning process established a new and expanded public library as a critical priority. Based on strong citizen preferences expressed during the master planning process, the adopted plan placed the new library in the heart of downtown to provide a focal point for community activity and expanded opportunities for economic vitality for existing and new downtown businesses. The County has budgeted \$5.9 million for the new Crozet Library in its Capital Improvements Program.

The master plan envisioned the library serving as an anchor for a revitalized downtown Crozet, a major public sector investment and visible presence that could help stimulate other infrastructure improvements.

Following master plan adoption, the site selection process has continued. Based on the adopted plan's recommendations, significant attention was paid to locating potential sites within the heart of downtown Crozet as recommended by the plan.

The Old Crozet School was not recommended by the master plan as a potential library site, however it was included on the preliminary site selection list for several reasons, including interest from the community in preserving the Old School, the large amount of space available at that site and because the county already owned the property.

As part of the initial phase of the project, thirteen sites were identified and evaluated on a number of criteria. Those criteria included the community preferences and specific recommendations established by the master plan; operational requirements specified by the Jefferson-Madison Library Director, Crozet Library Branch Manager, and JMR Library Board; objective evaluations regarding transportation impacts and economic opportunities; and successful best practices for library projects in other communities.

The preliminary site evaluation narrowed the selection down to two locations – the Old Crozet School site and the Harris/Amato property which emerged as the downtown site which best fulfilled the intent of the master plan for the new library location.

### Current Status of the Library Project:

Grimm & Parker, an architect/engineering team headquartered in McLean, Virginia, with over 30 years experience in designing and building libraries and other public architecture, has been selected, in association with a local firm, Heyward Boyd Architects. The consultant team was chosen by a committee of county staff, library officials and citizen representatives.

The Grimm & Parker team was selected based on their overall public library expertise, experience with urban and town center libraries, and their successful track record of integrating public comment and input into library design and programming decisions, among other criteria.

### Highlights

The County has budgeted \$5.9 million for the new Crozet Library in its Capital Improvements Program

Citizen input into the Master Plan called for a downtown library to serve as a focal point for activity and economic vitality

Two viable sites – the Harris/Amato property and the Old Crozet School – are under consideration for the new library

Public input on the potential sites will be gathered at an October 25 meeting at Western Albemarle High School

The firm recently completed major library construction projects for the City of Hopewell and the City of Frostburg which won significant accolades from city officials and citizens both for the public participation processes and the buildings that resulted.

The team is analyzing benefits and impacts of the two final site options to present to the community at the October 25<sup>th</sup> public meeting.

### **Next Steps:**

The County and the Jefferson Madison Regional Library are conducting a community forum on **Wednesday evening, October 25<sup>th</sup> beginning at 7:00pm at the Western Albemarle High School cafeteria**. During the meeting, the consultant team will outline its analysis of the final site options. Following that analysis, the consultant team will lead a discussion to solicit public reaction to the two sites. That public comment will be forwarded to the Board of Supervisors for their consideration in making the final site selection decision. The Board will discuss site selection for the library at its November 1 meeting.

### **Library Process Timeline – Highlights:**

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| • JMRL Building Advisory Committee appointed by library | <i>December, 2005</i>   |
| • Bids solicited for architect                          | <i>April, 2006</i>      |
| • Architect selected for library planning and design    | <i>August, 2006</i>     |
| • Architect introduced to stakeholder groups            | <i>September, 2006</i>  |
| • Public meeting regarding site selection               | <i>October 25, 2006</i> |
| • Board of Supervisors Meeting/site selection           | <i>November 1, 2006</i> |
| • Community programming/design process begins           | <i>January, 2007</i>    |

### **Community Involvement Opportunities:**

Because of the critical nature of the library as a community focal point and activity center, citizens need to be actively engaged in the project to ensure its success. There is currently a Building Advisory Committee working to identify the most important elements of the building programming elements. There will be a number of opportunities for citizen involvement as the project progresses, including:

- Input on building features and programming needs
- Creating local business partnerships to support library activities
- Fundraising and volunteer support such as creating a Friends of the Library program

### **Who to Contact:**

The Albemarle County staff contact for the library project is Michael Stumbaugh, Project Manager, who can be reached at (434) 296-5816 or by email at [mstumbaugh@albemarle.org](mailto:mstumbaugh@albemarle.org). To participate in the Building Advisory Committee, please contact Tim Tolsen, JMRL Board member, email: [ftjolsen@yahoo.com](mailto:ftjolsen@yahoo.com).

**To stay up-do-date on the library process, please visit the Crozet Master Plan website at [www.albemarle.org](http://www.albemarle.org) and sign up for AMail, the county's enews service.**