



NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL

**COMMITTEE ON CULTURAL AFFAIRS, LIBRARIES, AND INTERNATIONAL
INTERGROUP RELATIONS JOINTLY WITH THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON LIBRARIES**

OVERSIGHT–NYPL SCHWARZMAN BUILDING AND MIDTOWN CAMPUS PLANS

Wednesday, December 14, 2016

Good morning. I am Tony Marx, President and CEO of The New York Public Library (NYPL). I would like to thank Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito, Majority Leader Jimmy Van Bramer, Subcommittee Chair Andy King, and the entire City Council for holding this hearing. I would also like to thank the Council for your unwavering support of libraries. I appreciate the opportunity to testify today on the status of our Midtown Campus project.

INTRODUCTION

Earlier this year, we promised our patrons and partners in government that we would come back to you when substantive progress had been made on our plan for renovating the Mid-Manhattan Branch and the Stephen A. Schwarzman Building—our “Midtown Campus” project. Today we are here to share an update on the critical first phase of this plan: the renovation of our Mid-Manhattan circulating branch. While today we will discuss the the role the Schwarzman Building will play in this first stage of the Midtown Campus, the larger restoration of that building -- a complex undertaking -- will be ready to present in fuller detail in 2017. We look forward to sharing those details with you once they are available.



MID-MANHATTAN LIBRARY

Built in 1914 as a department store, and established in 1970 as NYPL's main circulating branch, Mid-Manhattan Library is one of the largest circulating libraries in the United States. The branch hosts upwards of 1.7 million visits annually and circulates approximately 2 million items every year. It also offers many of the programs and services that best signify NYPL's commitment to public service, including: free ESOL classes, free technology classes through our TechConnect program, exhibitions and talks from prominent artists and writers, free job search training, and free resume writing assistance. The library also serves as a prime example of NYPL's partnership with government and community based organizations (CBOs). Currently, Mid-Manhattan Library is home to the NYCitizenship initiative, run by the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs. NYCitizenship provides legal assistance and financial literacy support for members of our community seeking U.S. citizenship. Mid-Manhattan Library is a permanent IDNYC registration location, easily accessible to people seeking photo identification. The branch also hosts a Single Stop location, providing help to patrons who are navigating the issues with unemployment, health insurance, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and immigration/citizenship services.

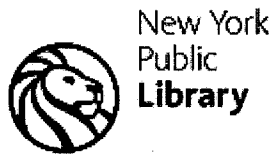
Mid-Manhattan Library is a source of great pride for our system and our city. The branch, however, accomplishes all the great work that it does despite the fact that the current condition of the building is far from ideal. Plagued by frequent maintenance concerns, outdated building systems, a lack of natural light, and an inefficient and outdated layout that falls far short of fulfilling the library's needs, the renovation of the Mid-Manhattan is long overdue.



Last year, following a rigorous process, we hired a design team for the Midtown Campus project: Mecanoo and Beyer Blinder Belle. Mecanoo, led by Francine Houben, offers unparalleled library design experience. Meanwhile, Beyer Blinder Belle, led by partner Elizabeth Leber, has extensive experience restoring iconic and historic buildings, including Grand Central Terminal and New York's City Hall. As a result, the plans our team have developed both create modern, functional spaces that are also respectful of the history.

PRINCIPLES

In approaching the Midtown Campus, our team focused on a set of principles that guided our vision and the process by which it will be achieved. First and foremost, the plan presented today seeks to improve the patron experience. Creating a state-of-the-art facility in the core of Midtown Manhattan, the new Mid-Manhattan Library will feature a newly designed layout that opens spaces and focuses on the visitor. The new design brings library staff out onto the floor, enabling seamless engagement with patrons. We believe librarians should be accessible and actively interacting with people to help them achieve their goals. The new Mid-Manhattan Library will also feature an entire floor dedicated to children and teens. The current building, unfortunately, has no space dedicated to young people. A few floors up will be one of the city's largest adult learning centers. Adjacent to that will be a dedicated business library that will incorporate the services and resources currently housed at our Science, Industry and Business Library (SIBL), which is slated to move from its current location to the new Mid-Manhattan Library once the new facility is open. In addition to specialized services, we believe that an enhanced patron experience must include improved access to materials. Providing our visitors with a campus environment that facilitates easy access to the services and materials they need is a priority of ours. Just across the street



from the Schwarzman Building and its vast research resources, the new MML will provide storage capacity for 400,000 circulating books and materials, the same number it holds today.

Another key principle was the creation of great public spaces. The newly renovated Mid-Manhattan Library will expand the total amount space currently accessible to the public at that location and create an environment focused on learning and creativity. When complete, the new branch will offer 82,000 square feet of public space, which includes approximately 24,000 square feet of general reading and study space and over 22,000 square feet of programming spaces—including brand new outdoor terrace space—for classes, events, seminars, and various other programming. All told, the new Mid-Manhattan Library will provide at least as much publically accessible space as the current Mid-Manhattan Branch and SIBL combined. We will achieve this through the repurposing of staff and back-of-house areas, making improvements in space efficiency, and opening up previously inaccessible areas. Though increasing the amount of space available to the public is a priority, we believe that creating an educational environment that functions properly and inspires our patrons is just as important. One of the central elements of the new Mid-Manhattan Library will be the newly constructed “Long Room.” Located at the back of the building to maximize capacity, increase natural light, and prioritize floor space for patrons, the Long Room will offer five floors of visible, open, browsable book stacks. One of the most exciting features of the new Mid-Manhattan Library will be a rooftop space. Housing large multipurpose rooms and outdoor terraces, the rooftop will be completely free and open to the public: one of the only free and publicly accessible roof terraces in Midtown Manhattan. Finally, the new facility has been designed with the space needs of our partners in mind. The renovated Mid-Manhattan



Library will retain all of the current areas dedicated to our ongoing partnerships with government and CBOs, including IDNYC, NYCitizenship, and Single Stop.

The final principle of the Midtown Campus project has been the modernization of our buildings' aging infrastructure. As stated earlier, the current Mid-Manhattan Library continues to suffer from multiple maintenance and facilities concerns. Currently, the building's plumbing, HVAC system, fire safety system, and electrical systems are beyond repair and in need of replacement as they approach the end of their useful life. The bathrooms, elevators, external doors, flooring, windows, and roof are also all in urgent need of repair or replacement. Beyond aging systems, the current building's design is woefully inadequate for the needs of a modern, fully functioning library. Having retained many elements designed for use as a department store and retrofitted spaces that fall short of serving the branch's needs, the current Mid-Manhattan Library is unable to host all of the public programming (such as ESOL and TechConnect) that our patrons demand. Furthermore, our material delivery system is outdated and the building spaces supporting it are as well. Given the extremely high volume of materials we handle, the current system is completely unsuitable for the needs of our patrons. The renovation of Mid-Manhattan Library will address all of these concerns and finally provide our visitors and staff with the safe, comfortable, and properly functioning building that they require.

SWING SPACE

To achieve this vision, we have been careful to consider all facets of this project and all of the ways it will impact our patrons. From the beginning, we have sought to complete this project in a timely and cost-effective manner that is also minimally disruptive to our users. As we have stated



in the past, doing so requires the temporary closure of the Mid-Manhattan Library during the two years of construction. Given this reality, we are determined to continue providing services in the Midtown area. This will be achieved by offering what we are calling “swing services” at multiple NYPL facilities located a short distance away from Mid-Manhattan Library. The largest percentage of swing services will be located at the Stephen A. Schwarzman Building directly across the street. Already, we are taking the steps necessary to convert multiple, non-public spaces within the Schwarzman Building into an accessible, fully functioning, circulating library. When construction on the new Mid-Manhattan Library begins, the all of that library’s current collection, along with its computers and educational programming, will be relocated to the Schwarzman Building. Of note, all the infrastructure work to offer temporary library services will result in lasting improvements to the Schwarzman Building; the spaces will remain open for public use after the new Mid-Manhattan opens. In addition to the Schwarzman Building, we will utilize our other facilities in close proximity to Mid-Manhattan Library, notably SIBL and Grand Central Library. Throughout the course of construction, SIBL will remain open. We will augment that library’s offerings, providing patrons with another option for checking out materials. SIBL will also host Mid-Manhattan Library’s technology programming, including TechConnect and other educational computer-based programming. Last year, we extended the lease at our Grand Central branch, which will host dedicated space for IDNYC, NYCitizenship, and Single Stop. It is worth noting that each of these facilities—the Stephen A. Schwarzman Building, SIBL, and Grand Central Library—will continue to offer all of the services that they regularly provide. Swing services will be an addition to each of these libraries’ current offerings.



PUBLIC OUTREACH

At each phase of this project, we have been sure to engage the public and the various communities that rely on our libraries. Beginning in 2014, the Library has met with other cultural institutions, conducted a public survey (receiving 65,000 responses), met with key stakeholders, and held several public meetings (including a major town hall meeting in March 2015, an introduction of the design team to the public in December 2015, and another public meeting yesterday to discuss the Mid-Manhattan Library project) to solicit feedback and ensure all voices are heard. This project is for our patrons, these spaces belong to them, and we want to ensure that we're doing all we can to preserve, improve, and strengthen our institutions so that they can persist for generations to come. Their input has been and will continue to be an important part of this process.

Moving ahead, we plan on opening the swing services at the Schwarzman Building, SIBL, and Grand Central, and closing Mid-Manhattan for construction in the fall of 2017. Construction will last around two years and we should have a new Mid-Manhattan Library by early 2020.

CONCLUSION

We need to make sure that we are giving New Yorkers the inspiring, modern spaces that are necessary for providing the best possible library service. The Midtown Campus project accomplishes just that. With the help of the City and State we are doing this work all over our system. From the Bronx to Staten Island, we are improving branches and often increasing their size. Our smallest branch, Macomb's Bridge Library in Harlem, is moving to a new space more than four times the size of the current branch. Facilities in Roosevelt Island, Woodlawn Heights,



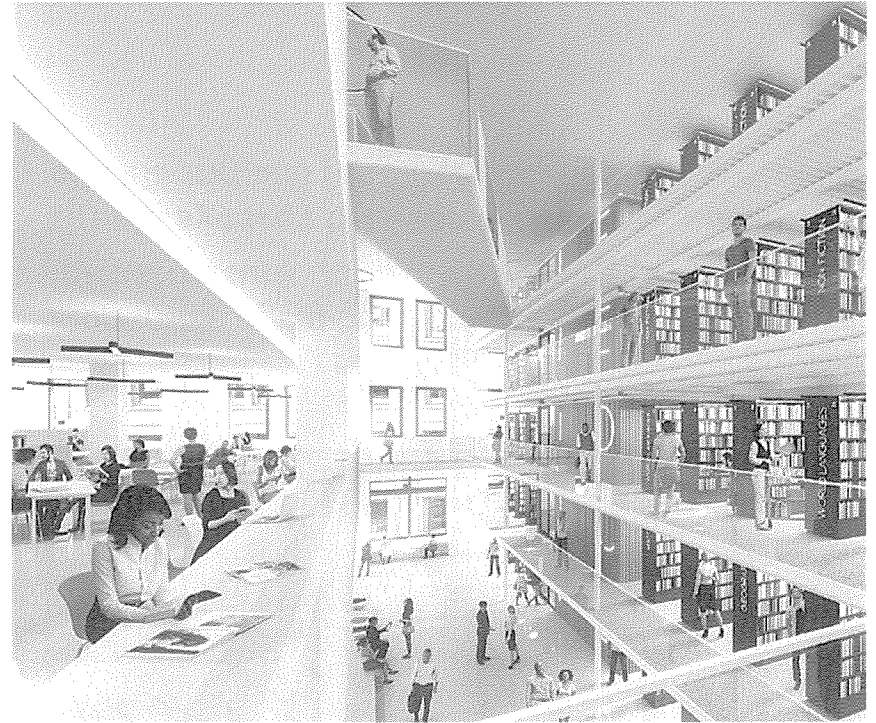
Westchester Square, Woodstock, Port Richmond, Harlem, Melrose, and Hunts Point have all recently increased their square footage. We are also building new branches. Three years ago, we opened a brand new branch library in Mariners Harbor, Staten Island. Currently, we're working on opening another new branch in Charleston. All in all, we are doing \$545 million worth of improvements in our branches, including this Mid-Manhattan project. And we know, when we do these improvements, they matter. Our Stapleton Library, in a high-needs area of Staten Island, was fully renovated and expanded in FY 2014. The first full year it was open, it saw a 33 percent increase in visits over its last full year open, prior to the renovation. We had a similar result at our Kingsbridge Library when it moved into a new, larger modern space in 2011. Over the course of its first full year, Kingsbridge saw an 80 percent increase in visits. This is proof enough for us that when you build spaces that are inspirational and conducive to learning, the public comes.

Again, thank you for all of your support and for this opportunity to testify. With this first phase of our project, we are proud to provide what this city has been lacking: a truly great central circulating library.

The New York Public Library

Midtown Campus Renovation

December 14, 2016 | New York City Council: Libraries Oversight Hearing



New York
Public
Library

MIDTOWN CAMPUS RENOVATION

Goals & Principles



- Create the **central circulating library** New Yorkers need and deserve
- Increase **public library space** and expand **services** and **public programs**
- Promote **opportunities for learning** for all ages
- Modernize aging building **infrastructure**
- Create **synergy** between NYPL's **circulating** and **research** libraries



MID-MANHATTAN LIBRARY

Key Elements

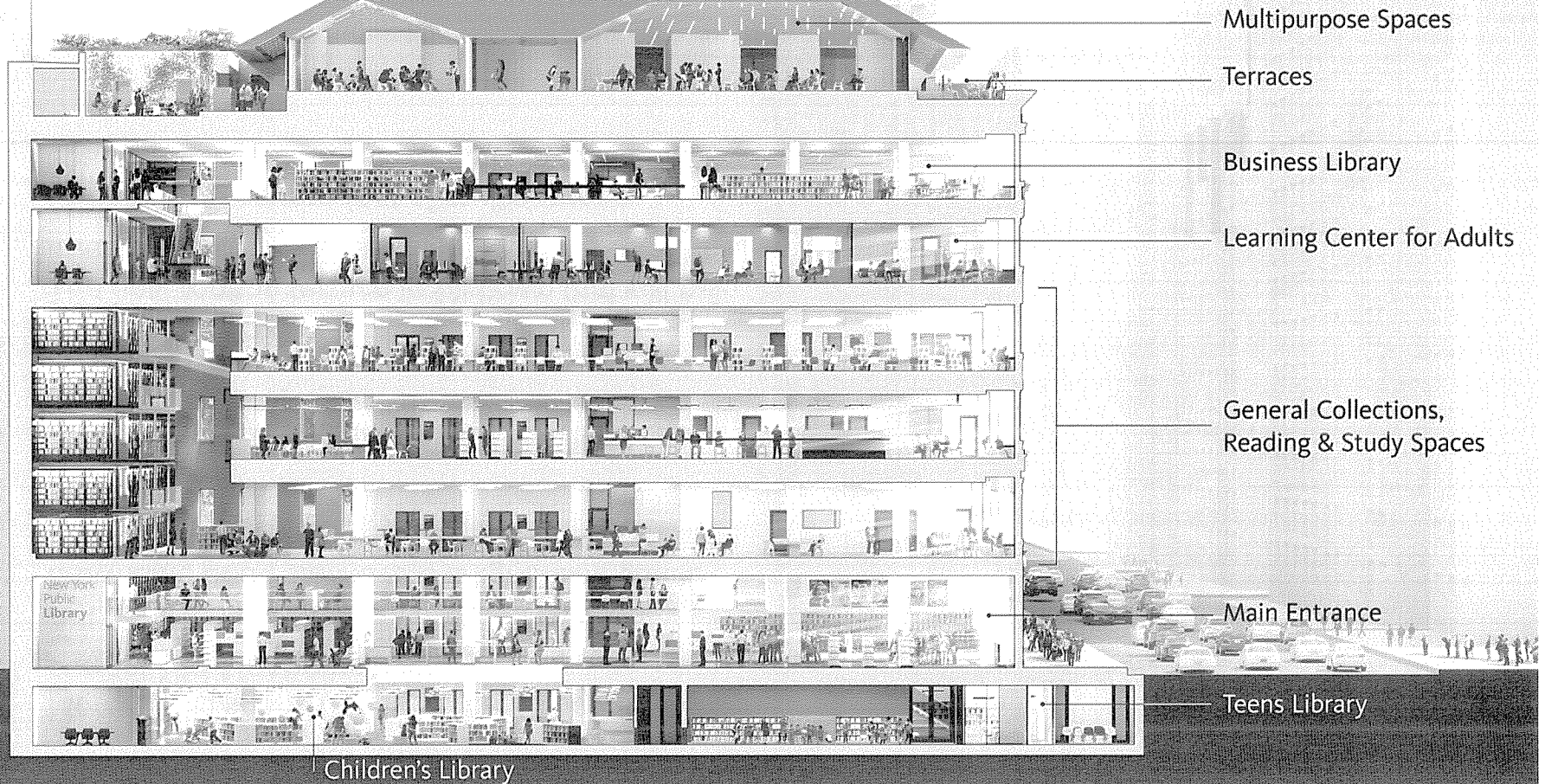
- More public space (by 35 percent) than the current Mid-Manhattan Library
- A “Long Room” offering five floors of open, browsable book stacks and a light-filled space
- New dedicated spaces for children and for teens
- An adult learning center—one of the largest in the city
- A full-floor business library
- The only rooftop terrace in Midtown that will be free and open to the public
- Over 13,000-square-feet of multipurpose space for classes, events, and consultations



MID-MANHATTAN LIBRARY

Design Cross Section

The Long Room



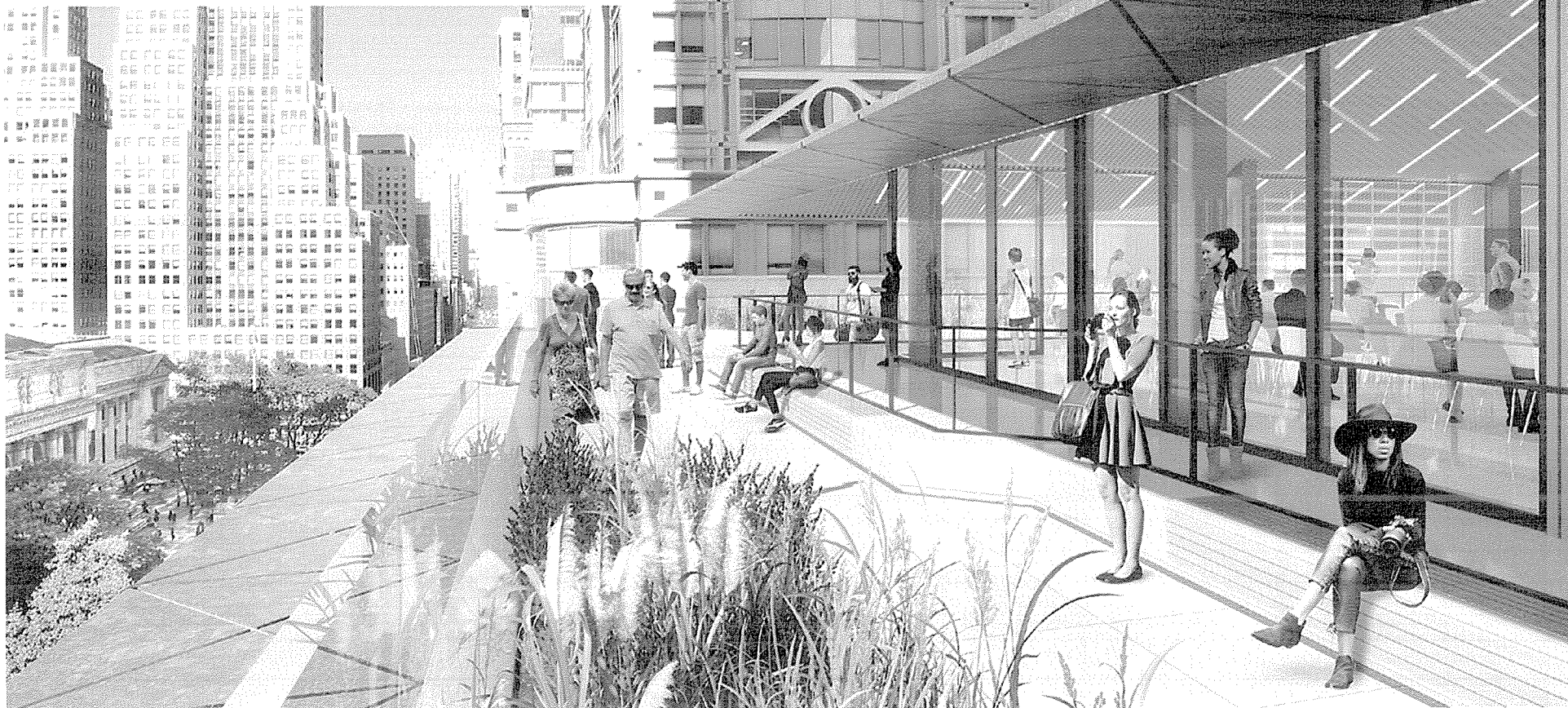
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MID-MANHATTAN LIBRARY “The Long Room”



New York
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Library

MID-MANHATTAN LIBRARY Public Rooftop Terrace



New York
Public
Library



MID-MANHATTAN LIBRARY
Current Facade



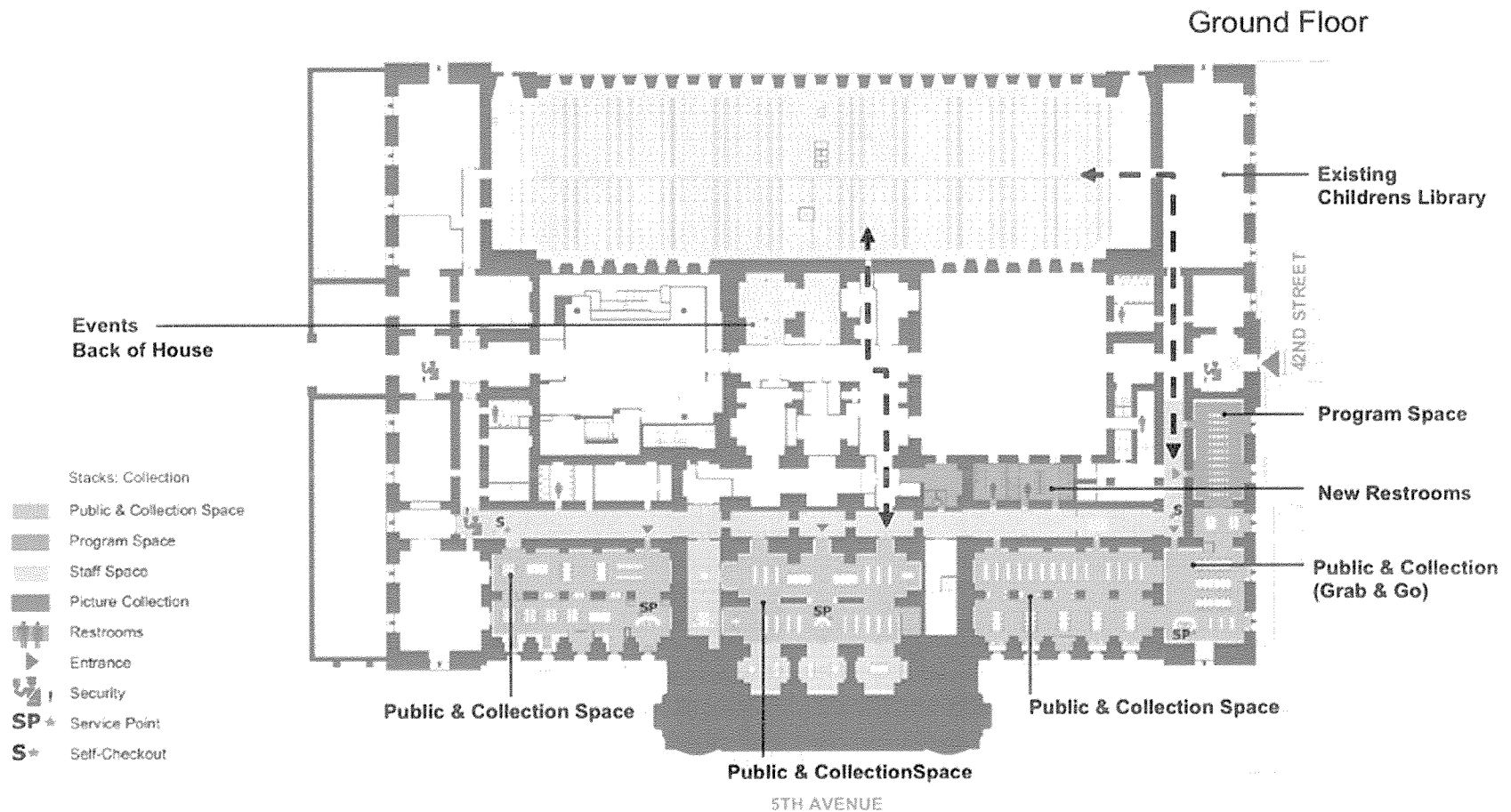




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MID-MANHATTAN LIBRARY

SASB Early Work | MML Swing Space



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MID-MANHATTAN LIBRARY

Swing Space | Midtown Area Services

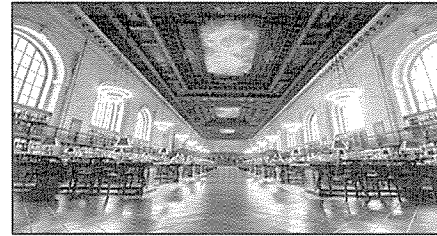


MIDTOWN CAMPUS RENOVATION

SASB Projects: Completed & Ongoing



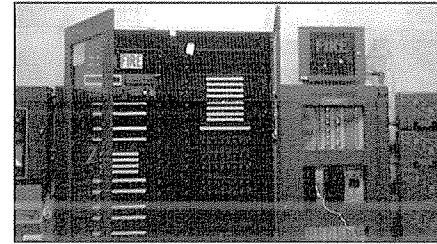
Milstein Research Stacks



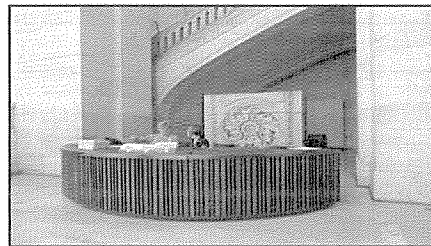
Rose/Blass/Gottesman Ceilings



Fountains



Fire Safety System



**Visitor Experience
Improvements**

MIDTOWN CAMPUS RENOVATION

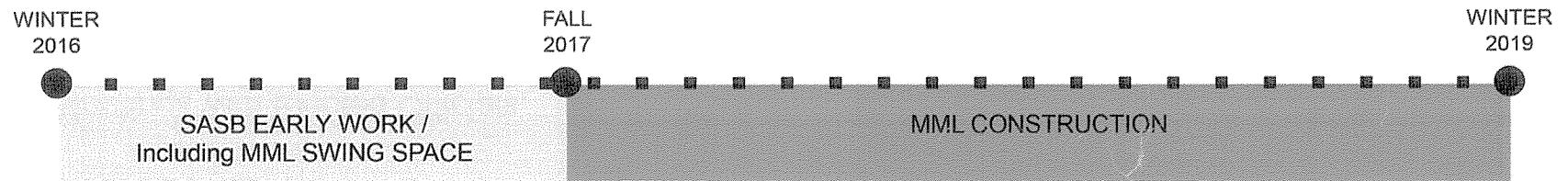
Community Engagement

- User Surveys, Research, Site Visits
Summer 2014–Late 2015
- Public Town Hall Meeting
March 2015
- Public Meeting Introducing Design Team
December 2015
- Meetings with Elected Officials,
City Agencies, CBOs
March–November 2016
- Public Meeting on Schematic Designs
December 2016



MIDTOWN CAMPUS RENOVATION

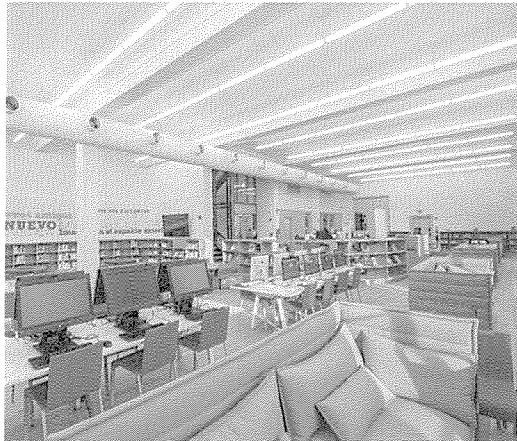
Next Steps



MIDTOWN CAMPUS RENOVATION

Recently Completed Projects

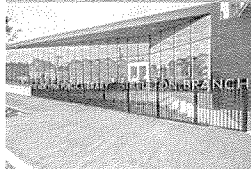
Washington Heights (Manhattan)



Renovation Impact

Program Attendance +105%
Visits +47%
Circulation +45%

Stapleton (Staten Island)



Renovation Impact

Program Attendance +177%
Visits +33%
Circulation +51%

Kingsbridge (Bronx)



Renovation Impact

Program Attendance +90%
Visits +80%
Circulation +76%

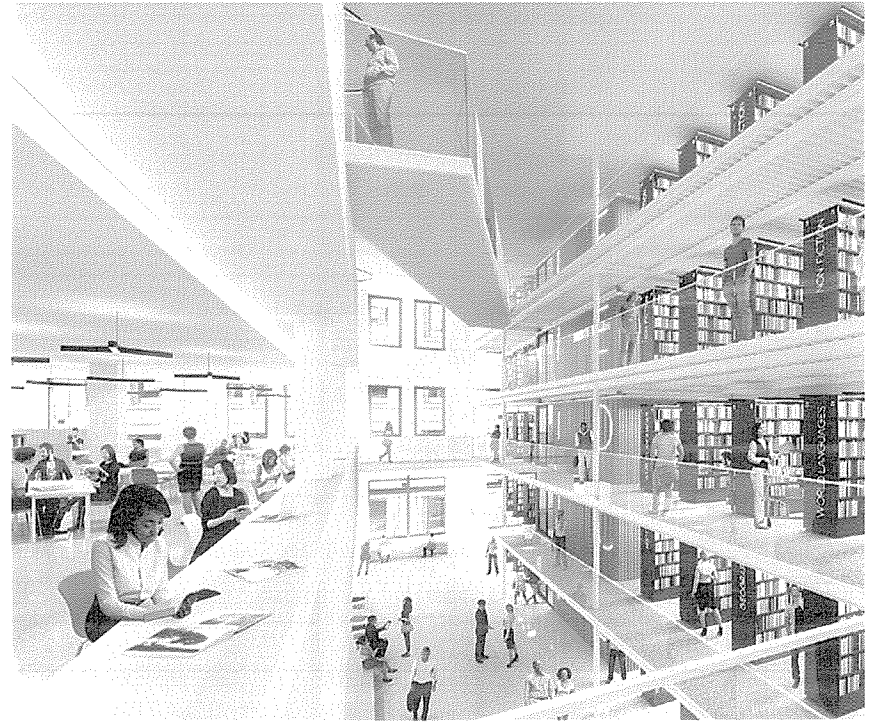


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The New York Public Library

Midtown Campus Renovation

December 14, 2016 | New York City Council: Libraries Oversight Hearing



New York
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Citizens Defending Libraries

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Co-Founder

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E-mail MDDWhite@aol.com

December 14, 2016

City Council Committee & Subcommittee:
-Subcommittee on Libraries
-Committee on Cultural Affairs,
Libraries and International Intergroup Relations
City Hall
City Hall Park
New York, NY 10007

Re: Submission of supplemental testimony respecting Oversight - NYPL
Schwarzman Building (i.e. 42nd Street Central Reference Library) and Midtown
Campus Plans and against the proposed sale of the 34th Street Science, Industry
and Business library, the elimination of books and the surveillance of library
patrons.

Dear City Council Committee and Subcommittee:

Last night at the Mid-Manhattan Library the NYPL presented design and plans to the public with respect to its proposed replacement for the Mid-Manhattan Library and the 34th Street Science, Industry and Business Library (SIBL). The proposed replacement, if you track your history, also replaces most of what was the Donnell Library as well. It affects the 42nd Street Central Reference Library which has been threatened by the NYPL with serious destruction that would have included destruction of the core research stacks designed to hold three million books. Those stacks are now empty, drastically reducing that libraries capacity to hold books.

At the presentation the NYPL said they would answer the public's questions, but the NYPL refused to answer critical basic questions about their plan.

NYPL Won't Answer The Question: "How Many Books Is It Banishing?"

Asked how many books SIBL used to hold, not just the other day, but before concoction of the Central Library Plan when we know that there were well over one million books in SIBL, and, similarly, asked how many books the Mid-Manhattan Library used to hold the NYPL refused to answer. Whether the NYPL didn't answer because they don't know or simply because they didn't want to, either is unacceptable.

The NYPL did answer one related question: How many books will the library replacing Mid-Manhattan and SIBL hold. The answer was with the books that will be brought from SIBL: "Just over 400,000," which is far less than even half of the books that were at SIBL alone.

At the presentation, multiple members of the public followed up objecting to the NYPL's refusal to answer the question about the missing books. One such member of the public criticized as a "PR locution" the NYPL's repeating over and over again the phrase that *"there will be as many book in the library as there are in the libraries now,"* without answering about all the books asked about that have disappeared. Another member of the public described in detail how she had watched books and book shelves disappearing from Mid-Manhattan with what seemed to be a concurrent dumbing down of the books available.

Additionally, the NYPL blithely said at the presentation that it had abandoned collection of science books, expecting that people can resort to "the internet" to learn about science instead. This is at a time when climate change is probably the greatest threat to the continued existence of this planet and climate change and all of its possible solutions are undoubtably a matter of science.

NYPL Won't Answer The Question: "Why Did It Hire Booz Allen Hamilton, A Top Spy Firm Working For The U.S. Government, Before Launching These Book Banishing Plans?"

The NYPL was asked why, in connection with its library reorganization plans banishing books, the NYPL hired Booz Allen Hamilton, a top private surveillance firm with the U.S. government as its main client, *shortly after* the NYPL's board (according to its minutes) was advised that it was expected that the federal government was going to "require" the NYPL *"to reengineer their Internet service facilities to enhance law enforcement's ability to monitor and intercept communications."*

Also to be considered is why, with the Mayor's office inserting itself to require it, all three New York City library systems engaged Booz & Co. in connection with reorganization that would involve similar banishment of books from library premises.

Will The City Council Ask These Questions?

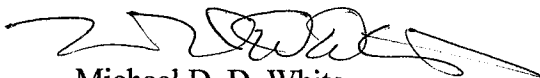
The City Council is hereby advised that these questions have been asked and the NYPL has refused to answer them. It is not as if these questions haven't been asked of the NYPL in the past; they have and were unanswered then as well.

You as City Council can ask these absolutely essential questions and insist on answers. If you do not, you become complicit in perpetuating obfuscation and mystery to which the public should not be subject.

What we are talking about are basic issues of free speech, democracy and, especially urgent today, robust protections for freedom of thought.

We refer you to the articles (available on the web), together with our resource web page *"Articles About Library Privacy and Surveillance In Libraries"* listed in the attached addendum, the first of which is also printed out and attached.

Sincerely,



Michael D. D. White
Citizens Defending Libraries

ADDENDUM

- **Noticing New York:** American Library Association Issues "Advocacy Alert" About "Massive Privacy Threat" of U.S. Government Remotely Hacking Library Computers and NYPL Issues "Privacy Policy"- Is "Privacy" At Libraries Actually Protected? December 6, 2016

<http://noticingnewyork.blogspot.com/2016/12/american-library-association-issues.html>
- **Noticing New York:** Snowden, Booz and the Dismantling of Libraries As We Know Them: Why Was A Private Government Spy Agency Hired to Take Apart New York's Most Important Libraries And Turn Them Into Something Else? October 30, 2016

<http://noticingnewyork.blogspot.com/2016/10/snowden-booz-and-dismantling-of.html>
- **Noticing New York:** Too Close For Comfort? Real Estate Addresses- Blackstone, Booz Allen Hamilton, The Libraries & Bryant Park, November 16, 2016

<http://noticingnewyork.blogspot.com/2016/11/too-close-for-comfort-real-estate.html>
- **Citizens Defending Libraries:** Articles About Library Privacy and Surveillance In Libraries, December 6, 2016

<http://citizensdefendinglibraries.blogspot.com/2016/12/articles-about-library-privacy-and.html>
- **Noticing New York:** Libraries And Climate Change: The Dangerous Destruction of Information We May Need To Know To Survive, February 11, 2014

<http://noticingnewyork.blogspot.com/2014/02/libraries-and-climate-change-dangerous.html>

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor / ☐ in opposition

Date: 12.14.16

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Christopher Platt

Address: 155 5th Avenue, NY, NY 10018 - NYPL

I represent: NYPL

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Anthony W Marx

Address: _____

I represent: NYPL

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 12/14/16

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Iris Weinsall

Address: 445 5th Ave, NYPL

I represent: NYPL

Address: _____

◆ Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms ◆

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. BSA Res. No. _____

☒ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 12/14

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Alan D. Sugarman

Address: 17 W 70th St, NY, NY 10023

I represent: Self

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. Librarians - Side of SIBC Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☒ in opposition

Date: 12/14/16

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Michael D.D. White

Address: 62 Montague St, Bklyn NY 11201

I represent: Citizen Defending Librarians

Address: Ditto

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms