



Department of
Design and
Construction

Oversight Hearing - Library Construction Projects

December 18th

2017

Department of Design and Construction
Ana Barrio, Acting Commissioner

New York City
Council on
Cultural Affairs,
Libraries and
International
Intergroup
Relations

Good afternoon Chairperson Van Bramer, Libraries Subcommittee Chair King and members of the Cultural Affairs Committee. I am Ana Barrio, Acting Commissioner of the New York City Department of Design and Construction. I am joined today by Deputy Commissioner for Public Buildings Tom Foley and Chief Administrative Officer Justin Walter. Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today about this important topic. While we value every project at DDC, we understand how important libraries are, and the vital services and resources they provide.

In size, organization, and scope, New York City's three library systems are unique among municipal libraries in terms of circulation, research, and collections. Libraries are at the heart of our neighborhoods. Well-designed libraries provide welcoming spaces where all New Yorkers can access services and knowledge in all its forms for the 21st century. Libraries today can become catalytic projects, improving community cohesion, helping youth with job and education assistance, and providing a first introduction to books and socialization for our youngest toddlers. They are beacons for our neighborhoods and provide safe spaces for all to learn. We at DDC are proud to work side by side with our colleagues at our City's three library systems in designing and constructing these facilities. Over the past 6 months, we have collaborated more with Library staff and their leadership to enhance these relationships.

Around the City, the three Library systems are continuing to renovate, expand and build new branches. Whether it is through directly managing the design and construction or working closely with the Library institution through a contracting device referred to as a pass-through contract, DDC looks forward to continuing to assist in the growth and improvement of the system.

As the City's primary capital construction delivery agency, the funding for our projects is provided by the 28 City agencies that we collaborate with. DDC is currently managing 905 active projects – 438 projects in Public Buildings and 467 in Infrastructure – with a value of \$12.56 billion.

Our work for the three library systems – Queens Borough Public Library, New York Public Library and Brooklyn Public Library – includes 137 active projects valued at approximately \$410 million. Libraries account for 15% of all DDC active projects and 31% of all DDC Public Buildings work. In the past five years, DDC has completed 114 library projects, 28 for QBPL, 59 for NYPL, and 27 for BPL. These recently completed projects include four new branches: Elmhurst and Glen Oaks in Queens, Kensington in Brooklyn, and Mariners Harbor in Staten Island.

The DDC Libraries Unit is currently comprised of 49 DDC staff members. It is headed by an Executive Director who reports to an Assistant Commissioner, and ultimately Deputy Commissioner Foley. Each borough unit is led by a Director, a Deputy Director

for Design, a Deputy Program Director for Construction and various Program Managers.

As you know, the City Council Finance Committee, the Administration, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), Cultural Affairs, Parks, and DDC, have been discussing capital projects and how to improve the delivery of projects. During these discussions, it has been impressed upon everyone that construction is unique. Every project is different due to a variety of factors including the actual scope of work, the location of the project, and the amount of funding available for the capital need of the project. Moreover, there are differences attributable to whether the project is brand new construction versus a construction project that will renovate or rehabilitate an existing building or space.

In general, construction is performed in an uncontrolled environment. We work very closely with each library system to tackle the issues that arise, and our goal is to deliver the best product to our clients on time and on budget. However, common challenges in library and other Cultural projects include funding that originates from a variety of sources; the age and maintenance history of the buildings where libraries are located; changes made to the scope of projects after they have begun; market forces driving up bid prices; and performance issues with low-bid contractors.

DDC must follow New York State General Municipal Law section 103, which mandates that construction contracts be awarded to the lowest bidder that is responsive to the bid documents and the ability to demonstrate the integrity to receive a public work project. In addition, DDC follows the Chapter 13 of the City Charter and the rules of the Procurement Policy Board (PPB) under the supervision of the various oversight agencies such as the Mayor's Office of Contracts Services (MOCS), Department of Investigation (DOI), Small Business Services Division of Labor Services (SBS DLS), and OMB.

Chairperson Van Bramer, I would like to directly address the Hunter's Point Library project that you have personally been involved with since its inception. Since I stepped into the role of Acting Commissioner, my team and I have had a number of conversations with you about this project along with the leadership of the Queens Public Library, who I believe will be testifying in a short while as well.

As this neighborhood has grown along with the entire expansion of the Long Island City community, a decision was made many years ago to build an iconic library for the area. The Hunters' Point Library branch was designed by a world-renowned architect and when the final design was selected, it is my understanding that there was communication with stakeholders.

As one of the champions of the Hunters' Point library, I know you are frustrated by the progress of the construction. Let me say that DDC shares your frustration.

Nevertheless, we continue to push on all ends to complete the construction work and we are taking lessons learned from this project and applying to other projects that are currently in design or in the early stages.

One issue which you are very familiar with is the sourcing of the window glass. I recall your passion about this issue at the Budget Hearing last Spring. I am happy to report that the glass, which was designated by the architect as critical to his design based on the lighting and efficiency of this building, is now all here and on-site and 80% installed. We expect all windows to be completely installed by next month. Going forward, we have established a new policy in our design guidelines to ensure that there are several vendors to supply window glass for our projects.

Moreover, the challenges that arose on this project are also part of the discussions with the aforementioned Capital Project Task Force. When building a facility such as the Hunters' Point Library branch, the City needs more contracting tools and reform to the City's procurement process. The current limitation of awarding to the lowest bidder is an issue and that is why this Administration has been a champion of Design Build legislation at the State level.

Additionally, here are some of the lessons we are taking with us from the project and these have been discussed at previous hearings related to DDC's budget as well as with the Task Force. For example, working closely with the end user before a project is even a project at DDC. What does that mean? It means we need to address projects in their earliest stage – at the pre-project initiation phase of the process – and ensure that all the elements are in place for a project to proceed successfully before work begins – DDC, with the support of the Council, the Mayor's Office and OMB, in 2016 created the Front End Planning Unit.

Under our new process, once DDC receives the Capital Project Initiation (CPI) from a client agency, the Front End Planning Unit reviews the project's scope and budget in order to ensure that all the critical elements of a project have been included in the scope of work, and the budget is adequate to fund it. They also conduct a site visit with the client agency to look for field conditions that may affect the project. In addition, they verify the available funding in the City's Financial Management System, and review history and filings for the site with the New York City Department of Buildings, the New York City Department of Finance and the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission to avoid unforeseen challenges. Throughout this process DDC maintains continuous communication with the client agency to keep them

informed of progress. This entire Front End Planning process typically is completed within 30 – 60 days, but saves significant time on the back end.

The Public Buildings Front End Planning Unit currently has 12 staff lines, including a Director. Front End Planning has recently fully assessed 86 CPIs in conjunction with site investigations, recommending that 41 proceed in their current form, with non-recommendations for 45 projects, or 52% of those reviewed. There are 21 assessments after site visits were conducted that are still pending determination. Some of the common issues that Front End Planning has identified are projects with scope descriptions that were incomplete or did not define the area of work; inadequate funding to cover the required scope of work; the lack of a restrictive covenant; and the failure to differentiate between capital versus maintenance work.

When a project is not recommended to proceed, DDC works with the client agency to address the problems so the project can be reinitiated. Through these early analyses by Front End Planning, we seek to reduce the number of projects in which added scope and Change Orders could delay the process and increase overall costs.

Front End Planning should also help client agencies to better refine the funding requests they make to elected officials, reducing situations where Council Members provide funds they believe are adequate, to find out later that DDC's estimate –

accounting for a full project scope and market conditions that affect bid prices – is higher than the client agency's estimate.

In addition, upon request from one of our client agencies, Front End Planning performs pre-CPI assessments, intervening earlier in the process than before. This provides our client agencies with information they need to create informed scopes of work; helps identify potential risks in a project; and provides a preliminary estimate of the required budget. To date, Front End Planning has reviewed 27 projects at the pre-CPI phase.

Once a project passes through Front End Planning and a CPI is accepted by DDC, we have set up various internal steps to improve project delivery. Moving to the Design Phase, we have created an In-House Design team which has ramped up since its creation in 2016 to a total of 14 architects, engineers and spec writers. By designing in-house, we now have the flexibility to work on certain projects without doing a procurement. This is just another example of having more tools to better deliver on the various needs that arise during any year. The important library projects that DDC In-House Design has tackled to date include library ADA-compliance and roof upgrades, and full interior re-designs.

Working with the library systems, another change we have made during the Design Phase is baselining the scope at the end of schematic design. This means the client signs

off and agrees that the project will move forward to Final Design as is, with the existing scope of work. We have also begun baselining the cost at the end of Design Development. These changes eliminate delays during design, where scope is added and the designers must work to integrate the new elements, often having to start from the beginning, and also help us to ensure that the available budget is sufficient when a project is put out for bid. We have also refocused our efforts with outside design consultants to emphasize the need to continue to design to budget, ensuring that the functionality of a building is equal to its architectural merit.

We do understand that programmatic changes can occur and the design of a library may need to change, and we are open to those conversations. Overall, we are moving to a more structured environment with fewer open-ended issues, and we are implementing changes at the beginning of the process to address the root causes of delays and budget overruns.

One additional opportunity we worked on with the Mayor's Office of Contract Services and the Comptroller's Office was approval to treat Library Pass Through Projects the same way we process the Cultural Grants Programs. This step is expected to reduce by six months the timeline to registration for each library system for the projects that they handle on their own, allowing them to proceed faster for this important work.

We continue to work to meet the specific needs of each library system and find ways to ensure that project scopes and funding are aligned at the beginning of projects. We have added greater transparency to the process, with greater emphasis on managing expectations during the budgetary process. While challenges remain, we will continue to be creative to improve project delivery.

That concludes my remarks and I am happy to answer any questions you and your colleagues may have. Thank you.



**Statement by Dennis M. Walcott, President and CEO, Queens Library
New York City Council Committee on Cultural Affairs, Libraries and International Intergroup Relations**

Oversight Hearing: Library Construction Process

December 18, 2017

Good morning Chairs Van Bramer and King, members of this esteemed committee, and all in attendance today. My name is Dennis Walcott, President and CEO of Queens Library. Thank you for inviting me to testify today on a very important topic: the library construction process.

Maintaining our aging infrastructure is both a short- and long-term challenge for the library. We are responsible for maintaining 65 total sites, of which 62 are full-service libraries. The average community library in our system is 61 years old. They are heavily used, and most were not constructed to accommodate the burgeoning traffic we see today due to the significant growth in population and demand for our programs and services. Additionally, the vast majority of libraries are poorly configured to meet the demands of the digital age. Therefore, we are faced with the daunting challenges of modernizing our facilities, maintaining our critical infrastructure, and expanding our public spaces in order to thrive in the 21st century and continue to provide the first-class service our customers have come to expect.

The Mayor's and the City Council's capital investment in libraries over the last several years have been significant and greatly appreciated. Thank you. Additionally, we are fortunate to have a strong partner in Queens Borough President Melinda Katz whose funding, in addition to the City Council's and the Mayor's, has allowed us to continue tackling the issues that I have outlined. However, capital needs continue to exist. For the upcoming fiscal year, the library has identified \$68 million in additional capital needs, and an additional \$375 million worth of capital needs over the next ten years. I look forward to discussing those needs in greater detail at our Preliminary Budget hearing in March.

Today's hearing gives us an opportunity to have an open discussion on how we can make the capital construction process for libraries more efficient in terms of both cost and project duration. I want to take a moment to compliment Acting Commissioner Barrio for her collaboration and leadership in attempting to address the challenges that we face. For example, the Library and DDC now hold monthly instead of quarterly meetings, where we discuss all the Library's active projects and strive to resolve outstanding project issues in an expeditious fashion. Commissioner Barrio is taking a reform-minded approach to tackling issues in various stages of the construction process, and communication between our agencies has greatly improved.

DDC currently manages 56 projects for Queens Library, with a portfolio value of \$151 million. When combined with Brooklyn Public and New York Public, the DDC library unit is doing a great deal of work for all of us. Providing the library systems with greater flexibility in managing their own projects is critical. While there are limitations on the resources we have to manage such projects, by allowing us the ability to manage additional projects and simplifying the process to do so, we can get more projects completed in a timely manner and prioritize projects more efficiently. Of utmost importance is providing the library systems with the ability to address time-sensitive work, such as installing new boilers, pumps and roofs, in an expedited fashion. We need to work together with all stakeholders promptly to develop a process which will enable the library systems to perform such critical work expeditiously, rather than having to wait years for the work to be performed.

Certain elements of the construction review process need to be further studied as well. For example, issuing a change order on a project can add significant time to its completion. There are various things that happen that necessitate a change order to a project, such as a scope change or field conditions. However, when the approval process for a change order takes 6 months to a year to complete, that is not in the best interest of the public or any other stakeholders in the project.

In order to minimize the need for change orders, which can lead to project delays and drive up costs, we are working with DDC to ensure that the Library provides maximum input at the earliest stages of the design phase. Having our needs and vision of all design elements incorporated at the beginning of the process will help mitigate potential delays to projects. In this regard, the Library is developing a far more expansive list of design standards for projects, which will also help alleviate many of the issues that have led to delays on prior projects.

Finally, remaining in the city's Ten-Year Capital Plan is of paramount importance for having a solid library construction process. Projects will not commence unless all funding is in place, and will be abruptly stopped if a shortfall presents itself at any time during the project. When the library is forced to fundraise for its capital plan in a piecemeal manner, relying on individual Council Members to fund multimillion-dollar projects, our buildings will rapidly fall out of a state of good repair. Being funded in the City's Ten-Year Plan is vital for libraries to plan effectively and initiate much-needed critical infrastructure or expansion projects.

All of the suggestions that I have outlined today, I believe, will lead to a more efficient construction process which will serve to increase our commitment rates and bring renewed confidence to our community stakeholders and customers. I look forward to working with my colleagues and partners in government to bring further reform to this process.

Again, thank you Chairs Van Bramer and King for the opportunity to testify. I would be happy to answer any questions you or your committee members may have.

Testimony of Brooklyn Public Library

**Committee on Cultural Affairs, Libraries and International Intergroup Relations
Jointly with the Subcommittee on Libraries**

**Oversight - Library Construction Projects
December 18, 2017**

Good afternoon. My name is Linda Johnson and I am the President and CEO of Brooklyn Public Library (BPL). Thank you Chairs Van Bramer and King and the entire Council for your commitment to our City's public libraries. I am here today to testify on library construction projects, the progress we have made with our capital program and the considerable infrastructure challenges BPL continues to face.

Libraries are an essential public resource. More patrons than ever are walking through our doors and we are striving to meet their growing needs. We are indebted to you, the Speaker and the Mayor, for your outstanding work to help us meet this challenge. In addition to allowing us to achieve universal six day service, the city has made significant investments in library infrastructure. Our inclusion in the ten-year plan, three years ago, was extremely encouraging. BPL received \$100 million in funding over ten years so we can overhaul five libraries: Eastern Parkway, New Lots, Canarsie, Brownsville and New Utrecht.

Additionally, with your help, the FY18 budget included a further boost -- \$30 million to help BPL address system wide critical maintenance, \$10 million for our Central Library renovation, and funding from individual members.

You and your colleagues have heard us speak many times about the specific infrastructure hurdles in our branches; you have seen these challenges yourselves and you have used your discretionary funds to help us fix them. We are grateful, and it is making a difference.

Just a few years ago, BPL carried \$300 million in unfunded capital needs for the 59 libraries in our system. With the help of the City, Albany, and private philanthropy as well as creative library projects, we have reduced the need to \$240 million. You have helped BPL enter its most significant era of rebuilding in recent memory. Over the next ten years, one third of BPL's system will have been rebuilt or renovated.

Innovative library projects in Brooklyn Heights, Sunset Park, Greenpoint, and Brower Park will add new state of the art libraries to our footprint and reduce unfunded capital needs by tens of millions of dollars. As we've discussed numerous times, revenue from the sale of Brooklyn Heights Library will allow us to improve several branches that are badly in need of repair and to replace and expand our Sunset Park library.

Our collaboration with the Fifth Avenue Committee and extensive community input will result in a new 21,000 square foot library topped with 49 units of permanently affordable housing. An interim location is set to open by the end of March, and we look forward to beginning construction soon thereafter.

At the end of October, we broke ground for the new Greenpoint Library, a model of sustainable development that will provide significantly more space, indoor and out, for expanded programs and activities, and special collections that increase awareness and stewardship of the local environment. Funding for this facility included a \$5 million grant from the Greenpoint Community Environmental Fund, the outcome of a settlement with ExxonMobil over its oil spill in Greenpoint.

The new Brower Park Library is also being built through a new partnership that will save the City funding. Brower, a leased branch and our smallest, requires a renovation that would cost over \$8 million. Relocating the branch to the Brooklyn Children's Museum will ensure a similarly sized, new branch in a City-owned building, and an ongoing library presence for the neighborhood. Thanks to Mayoral, Council, and Borough President funding, this \$3 million project is moving forward and an RFP to design the new space was released last week.

Additionally, I am pleased to report that two new small libraries will come online in the next few years. A new leased branch, approved as part of the Brooklyn Heights initiative, will serve a growing community in DUMBO and Vinegar Hill. The Brooklyn Cultural District will house a rent free branch focused on cultural offerings at 300 Ashland Place, increasing BPL's total number of locations from 59 to 61.

We also are beginning a sorely needed renovation of our largest library, Central Library at Grand Army Plaza. The first phase of the renovation will launch in 2018.

Not for half a century has Brooklyn seen such a significant addition of new and improved spaces to our portfolio – modern, flexible, thoughtfully designed and inspiring libraries so badly needed by the many communities we serve.

Yet at the same time we still must contend with staggering capital needs that we are not close to resolving. Decades of underfunding has left us with \$240 million in unmet capital needs system-wide, approximately one third of which are emergency infrastructure projects like boilers, HVACs, roofs, and security upgrades. We are still facing a deferred maintenance crisis that is impacting most neighborhoods in the borough.

With a physical plant of more than 1.1 million square feet, we are constantly working to maintain a state of good repair. Our average branch is 68 years old with at least \$1 million in needed upgrades and one quarter of them require more than \$5 million. Eighteen of our branches are beautiful Carnegie Libraries, over 100 years old and even more costly to preserve.

Every year our buildings experience unplanned closures and we lose hundreds of hours that we could have been open to the community. Many of our major systems are not functioning at all; we have branches that are operating with *temporary* chillers in summer and heaters in the winter that are well beyond their useful life.

While we have begun to make progress, our overall funding level continually forces us to 'triage' only the most serious projects and leave countless critical infrastructure needs and preventative work unaddressed.

We spend much of our time and resources responding to emergencies. The lack of a reliable source of recurring funding also makes it impossible for us to manage capital projects efficiently.

Urgently needed improvements are often delayed over the slightest change in scope, because we are not able to address routine adjustments and overruns with dollars budgeted for the coming year. We simply do not have the flexibility other agencies have. In total, we face shortfalls of more than \$18 million throughout the borough. The bulk of the funding we received last year was spent keeping the design effort moving on projects initiated years ago. We have projects planned for nearly half of our libraries that are on hold or delayed.

While there is no single and easy solution to address the capital predicament we face, there are a few steps I believe we must take. First and foremost, a large, recurring budget allocation for libraries must be placed in the 10 year capital plan. We not only need an adequate level of funding, we need to be able to accurately plan our program.

Most City agencies have funding in every year of the 10 year plan, so when a project inevitably runs into a shortfall in the design process, they have money to cover it and complete the design phase, ultimately reaching construction. Libraries, on the other hand, must wait until the end of each year and divert our one time allocations to plug holes, constantly topping off the project budget to allow design to move forward. In some cases we do not have enough to reach construction. This process is inefficient and ultimately more costly. Operating under this structure forces us to maintain our physical plant piecemeal—focusing on individual systems rather than our buildings as a whole.

Recurring allocations every year would not only ensure that we fully fund our projects, but would enable us to deal with our buildings holistically, rather than applying emergency fixes. This was the intention behind the five \$20 million branch overhauls that were funded in the FY 2016 ten year capital plan. Approaching our building upgrades comprehensively is the most efficient and prudent way to maintain our physical plant. In addition, if we had the flexibility to separate design and construction budgets, we would prevent delays in our projects. We could make progress on many more projects if we were given the latitude to fully fund design and move forward with the understanding that the construction budget will be shored up separately. In addition, given the growth in our capital efforts, it is imperative we have the flexibility to pursue new approaches – from embracing additional public /private partnerships and colocations to taking on more pass-through projects ourselves.

We are committed to doing our part to meet capital challenges through innovative projects and our continual search for new sources of funding. Coupled with a long-term and sustained investment by the City of New York, as well as process improvements and flexibility, I am confident we can build upon the progress we have made. I am heartened by the Council's focus on library capital projects, and your recognition that we must collectively rise to this challenge. I thank you for the opportunity to testify today and would be happy to answer any questions.

NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL

**THE COMMITTEE ON CULTURAL AFFAIRS, LIBRARIES AND INTERNATIONAL
INTERGROUP RELATIONS AND THE SELECT COMMITTEE ON LIBRARIES**

OVERSIGHT HEARING: LIBRARY CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS

Monday December 18, 2017

INTRODUCTION

Good afternoon. My name is Iris Weinshall and I am the Chief Operating and Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer 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 appreciate the opportunity to testify and would like to thank the Council for your steadfast support of libraries.

We are here today to discuss library construction projects, our successes, and the challenges of the City process. As you well know, the NYPL system is massive and requires significant ongoing improvements to ensure that libraries are functional, safe spaces for our patrons. Our physical infrastructure is significant with 93 buildings and 71 current capital projects underway, including 29 in the Bronx, 35 in Manhattan, and 7 on Staten Island. These current projects represent \$565 million in total cost. We are excited to provide an overview of our capital program, tell you more about a few major projects, and share some of the innovative ways we're working with the City to improve the capital process.

TEN-YEAR CAPITAL PLAN

Over the past few years, with actions by the City, we've been able to advance our capital program. The inclusion of libraries in the City's Ten-Year Capital strategy was a key step forward. We are grateful to the Mayor and the City Council for working together to see that the City's three library systems are included in the capital planning conversation. As a result of the \$100 million that we received in the Ten-Year Plan in 2015, we are renovating five of our historic Carnegie libraries in high-need neighborhoods. The libraries are Hunt's Point and Melrose in the Bronx, Ft. Washington and 125th Street in Manhattan and Port Richmond on Staten Island. We hope to remain part of the City's Ten-Year capital planning conversation and to build on the progress we have made over the last two years.

SUCSESSES

As I mentioned earlier, the NYPL currently has 71 active capital projects in its portfolio totalling \$565 million. Our biggest is the Midtown Campus project, which includes a complete renovation of our largest circulating branch - the Mid-Manhattan Library and an extensive upgrade and renovation of the Stephen A. Schwarzman (SASB) building. The Mid-Manhattan Library is currently in construction and SASB is in the early concept phase. Some other projects that I'd like to highlight are Van Cortlandt in the Bronx, Macomb's Bridge, Inwood, and Schomburg in Manhattan and Charleston on Staten Island.

At Van Cortlandt, we are relocating the existing library three blocks away to a new, larger space. Scheduled to open in 2019, the Van Cortlandt branch will more than double in size and features an outdoor area, as well as more space for reading and programs. The Macomb's Bridge branch in Harlem will also be relocated to a larger, 3,375 square foot, state-of-the-art space. At

nearly five times the size of the current 685 square foot branch it will have more than double the number of computers and a dedicated space for children and teens. We are currently in the design phase of that project. Both Macomb's Bridge Library and Van Cortlandt Library have benefited by leveraging City capital dollars with State and private funding. The Inwood branch redevelopment project in Upper Manhattan features a mixed-use development that will house a brand new library, 100% affordable housing, and a universal pre-K site. This innovative project is a partnership with NYC Department of Housing Preservation and Development and the Robin Hood Foundation. The new 10,000 square foot Charleston branch on Staten Island is beginning construction late 2018 and will have almost 3,000 square feet dedicated to children and teens, as well as larger program rooms to accommodate the need for more ESOL classes, art exhibits, senior programming, and more.

And lastly, this fall, we completed an extensive, two-year, \$22.3 million major renovation of the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture. The project preserved the 112-year old Landmark Building, adding new research space, conditioned storage for collections, and critical upgrades to building systems like HVAC, fire alarms, and security.

The impact of improved facilities is clear -- circulation, program attendance, and visits grow significantly after capital investment. Following our Stapleton branch renovation on Staten Island, we saw a 177% spike in program attendance, a 33% increase in visits and a 51% increase in circulation. And after our Washington Heights library was renovated, we saw a 105% increase in program attendance, a 47% improvement in visits and 45% increase in circulation. New Yorkers want beautiful, inspiring, functional and safe public spaces in their neighborhoods. And when they have them they flock to them.

CHALLENGES

As you can see by the numbers, New Yorkers need their libraries and we must continue to invest in the physical aspects of our branches. At NYPL, the average age of our libraries is 67 years old, with many branches dating back more than 100 years. Additionally, many branches need to be reconfigured for how New Yorkers use libraries today, with increased program space, upgraded technology, and ADA access. Capital funding is necessary for critical repairs and improvements but equally important is a City capital process that works.

At NYPL, we know that when we do projects as pass-throughs we can deliver them more cheaply and expeditiously than when they are managed by the City. Our data shows that the DDC average project duration of six years and two months compared to NYPL at two years and four months. The DDC average project cost is \$724 per square foot compared to NYPL's \$411 per square foot. Our Roosevelt Island branch is a simple interior build out of an existing 5,200 square foot space. The Design process began in December 2014. At that time, the project was expected to be completed by the end of 2017. Almost three years later, construction has not commenced. The new construction completion date is late 2019. DDC's reason for the extensive delays, include the addition of a hearing loop in the community room and complex code and procurement issues. These should not be issues that would impact the schedule in a meaningful way. At our Ottendorfer Library, we need to close the branch in order to make critical updates to the fire alarm system. We planned for the redirection of our staff and patrons in August, but four months later, DDC has not scheduled the closing date and the construction paperwork has now expired and must be re-filed. At New Amsterdam Library, the constructability phase was supposed to take one month and was delayed six months. This delay

resulted in the heating and cooling system breaking in the middle of the summer, forcing the branch to unexpectedly close for months. These are just a few examples of where the process needs to be improved.

While we are thankful for the ability to manage projects as pass-throughs, we must up-front a significant amount of money to do so and this is simply not feasible for the library. We currently have \$192 million in pass-throughs in the pipeline, including the Mid-Manhattan Library, the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, the fire alarm at the Stephen A. Schwarzman Building (SASB) and the third floor of the Washington Heights Library. However, we need long-term, sustainable solutions so we can use the public funding that has been granted to us in a way that allows us to maximize the City's investment. There is a tremendous opportunity for us to think more creatively about how to manage and deliver on capital projects, and we're eager to work with our partners in City government to continue to explore new solutions.

Having discussed these issues, we've had numerous conversations with DDC Acting Commissioner Ana Barrio, who has been very receptive to finding better, more efficient ways to manage library capital projects. We are currently in conversation with the Commissioner and her staff about the possibility of doing library pass-through projects as cultural grants. The City believes that this change will reduce the project timeline by months. While this change is a significant improvement, it only applies to a small number of projects in our capital portfolio and doesn't remedy the issue.

CONCLUSION

For more than a century, NYPL's network of libraries across the Bronx, Manhattan, and Staten Island have served as powerful engines of individual and community empowerment and development. But they require capital investment and a City capital process to ensure they can continue to provide all New Yorkers with the tools - and the essential public spaces - they need and deserve. We are grateful for the Council's longtime support of libraries and look forward to working with you and our other partners in government to increase our ability to provide world class library service to New Yorkers in well-maintained, safe, and accessible spaces. Once again, thank you for the opportunity to testify on this important issue. I remain available to answer any questions you may have.

Citizens Defending Libraries

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December 18, 2017

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: Testimony respecting oversight of plans to alter - NYPL Schwarzman
Building (i.e. 42nd Street Central Reference Library).

Dear City Council Committee and Subcommittee:

The 42nd Street Central Reference Library was designed around and with exquisite thought given first and foremost to a central core of research book stacks as a book deliver system. Why is the NYPL now inverting the process for the building's redesign focusing first and foremost on commercialization of what for 100+ years has been library space and leaving as an (ostensible?) afterthought what will become of the stacks?

The NYPL trustees are out of control. At their meeting reviewing these plans, not one of them questioned the idea of making Map Room and Map Room reading space, library space for over 100 years, into a café, equipped, as a rendering showed, with wait staff and a bar where patrons could sit perusing shelves of (expensive?) wines they might choose. The only question offered by a trustee about the café was whether the café could be expanded to take over and incorporate some of the outside public Bryant Park space.

Is the goal to appeal to library patrons? Or is it instead, as it would appear, to appeal to tourists, tourist dollars and an elite who can rent the library out for private parties in the evening? That's privatization! That and the worrisome focus on "*exit by the gift shop*" design puts *commercialization* first.

We learned at the *second* public presentation that although a huge portion of the expense of the hundreds of millions of dollars that will be spent on the ravaging "*renovation*" will be spent on an expensive new elevator and staircase, seeming surplusage to the building's already ample circulation features, the NYPL architects aver they have no idea what this major expenditure will cost either dollar-wise or as an overall percentage of the overall massive expenditures. That's startling. The architects also said rather incredulously that the building's circulation needs have nothing to do with the plans for the building's core of central stack or how that space will be

used in the future.

Accordingly, it is very far from reassuring that the NYPL and its architects say that they are still absolutely flexible about how the research stacks will be used in the future, preserving the "*possibility*" that those stack will be returned to their right, true and proper purpose of holding book for fleet and efficient delivery to researchers.

It is also abhorrent that these excessive expenditures are being used as an excuse to sell off SIBL (the 34th Street central destination Science, Industry and Business Library). How can the City Council condone selling off an closing New York City's biggest science library when science is under political attack?

Citizens Defending Libraries has posted a film of the NYPL's first public presentation that will give you a chance to see Senator Schumer's wife (NYPL COO Iris Weinshall) promote the plan and cozy up to Blackstone's Stephen Schwarzman about it (literally patting him on the back at the board meeting) and a chance to see that the plan was not at all well-received by the public during the ensuing public presentation Q&A. . . . It is to be remembered that Stephen A. Schwarzman, economic advisor to Donald Trump, is leading an initiative to privatize American public assets with Trump having obtained \$20 billion when visiting the Saudis for investment in Schwarzman's Blackstone Group for that purpose.

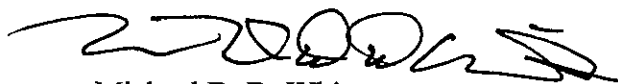
Since this plan got presented to the public AFTER the NYPL trustees (w/ Mr. Schwarzman) approved it, along with the budget for it and the commencement of construction, it sort of reeks of a "*done deal*" insult to injury approach.

The evening when we recently left the NYPL's *second* presentation of the 42nd Street plans we couldn't leave most directly by the library's front door, but had to wend our way through back corridors to exit because of a candle-lit party going on in the main halls that we were told was a hedgefunders having fun making private use of this theoretically public space. . . .

. . . Outside on 42nd Street, just a few doors down from the library a mass of demonstrators was congregated outside of the Verizon building protesting the FCC's impending vote to end net neutrality, another diminishment of our access to information and reduction of the public commons and democratic rights.

We must preserve the primacy of the library's mission, the free, open and ready access to books and information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael D. D. White", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Michael D. D. White
Citizens Defending Libraries

About Inwood's Award-Winning Library

In 2016 Inwood Library was the only Manhattan library branch that won the NYC Neighborhood Library Awards for libraries "going above and beyond to provide exceptional services and programming for their communities." Open 7 days a week, Inwood's award-winning library serves people of all ages, with programming that includes tutoring, homework help, English classes, Story Time, Spanish-language computer and internet classes, workshops on immigration rights, free film screenings, and more. Scores of Inwood students count on Inwood's library to do their homework. They don't have computers or internet at home, and are required to do their homework on a computer.

Real Facts about the Inwood Library Proposal:

1. Inwood Library would be sold to a developer for \$1.00.
2. Inwood Library would be torn down, with no guarantee of any kind of interim library or even library "services" during demolition and reconstruction.
3. This means no guaranteed library for five or more years.
4. Why would it take five or more years? Because there is documented toxic brownfield contamination next door which has probably migrated to the library's site. That takes time to test and clean up. The latest standard new building in Inwood is the TD Bank building, located at 207th St. & Broadway. It took 3 ½ years to build, from demolition permit to first Certificate of Occupancy, and it's only two stories high. They want to build something 14 stories high on the library site after they tear down the library.
5. The proposed new library would be permanently capped at a size that is 20% smaller than Inwood's award-winning library (2016). How does that serve the future of our growing community?
6. There is no guarantee that any Inwood residents could get an apartment in this proposed building. And "affordability" is questionable: Affordable for whom?
7. The City owns dozens of empty and under-used properties in Northern Manhattan. One example is Safety City at 158th St. & Riverside Drive. They don't have to tear down our library to build housing.

The "Save Inwood Library" Campaign is a local campaign of Inwood neighbors organizing to save Inwood Public Library from sale and demolition. On Facebook, join the "Save Inwood Library/Salvemos la Biblioteca de Inwood" group.

Email: saveinwoodlibrary@gmail.com Tel: 646-515-8909.

To the NYC Council Committee on Cultural Affairs and International Group Relations:

It is quite apparent that our libraries in NYC are in dire trouble. The problem is not, as usually claimed, a lack of funds. Those in positions of responsibility like to ply us with sugary words about the importance of libraries in our culture, but their actions speak otherwise. The NYPL at 42nd Street and SIBL at 34th Street are present examples revealing the greed, the cold indifference behind those actions.

Anthony Marx, president of the NYPL, was thwarted in his Central Library Plan when he saw that he was about to lose the lawsuit brought against the NYPL. He backed down and gave the face-saving excuse that he had no funds for his plan, anyway. That was in 2013.

When he gave up on the plan, he should have immediately updated the temperature-humidity controls in the seven tiers of book stacks and returned the more than three million books he had already shipped to storage in New Jersey. Instead, he did nothing, effectively destroying the designation of our magnificent library as among the four greatest research institutions in the world. It is the second largest in the United States, next to the Library of Congress. The stacks are intended to form both the architectural and intellectual core of the Library. After four years they remain empty, nor have they been updated with the proper controls in any anticipation of the books' return to their intended space. It would cost the NYPL only \$46 to \$47 million to update the controls. Yet they spend countless millions keeping the books in storage and transporting them back and forth daily in trucks from New Jersey, 60 miles away.

In spite of claims that a good percentage of the books have been returned for storage beneath Bryant Park, we know the truth. Researchers must wait one to four days or more, to get a book they need. And when the book is there, the amount of time to retrieve it upon request is doubled. The books are shipped carelessly back and forth in the trucks from New Jersey. Some arrive badly damaged. Others are lost or destroyed. Anthony Marx and those representing him say otherwise, though the facts are there to prove them wrong.

We know, too, that the area beneath Bryant Park, is only half the size of the stacks or less. Therefore it is impossible that a good percentage of the books in storage have been returned to the library. The space beneath Bryant Park was originally intended for new acquisitions. Not only is it smaller, but new books already occupy that space. And, if the NYPL's constant plea over the internet for more funds to buy new books means anything, then the library clearly intends to fill up that space with still more books. There is certainly no intention to return the precious, rare, important books that were shipped away from the stacks.

Stories are fabricated for the public about how many books were originally in the stacks, how many have been returned, what their present condition after truck transportation over the years, how many can be accommodated beneath Bryant Park. We are insulted by these stories. And we are insulted, once again, by the NYPL's latest attempt to fool the public with meetings supposedly meant to hear their opinions on what the NYPL is now calling their Master Plan!

The first meeting was held just a few days before Thanksgiving, perhaps to insure a relatively small attendance. We were given a presentation of the Plan, which included a film of things to expect. The audience in Celeste Auditorium was outraged by the cafe intended for the first floor to replace the map room, which has been closed for years. The library will have to move the maps to a space more appropriate, but that does not mean they must put a cafe in its place! (And, by the way, we wonder why they did not move those maps several years ago, instead of simply closing the room.) They say that people want to have a place to drink coffee! I assume that across the street is too far, wastes too much time, as would the restaurant behind the library. Best not to keep people waiting for coffee, though it's perfectly all right to keep them waiting for books.

And they had no answers about their plan for the stacks. They are keeping that a secret, I assume, to spring on us when there is too little time to stop whatever destructive fate they have in mind for them. They have been thinking about that plan for years, one can be sure, or else they would have returned the books there immediately. The rage was so loud from the audience, that Iris Weinshall had to

call the room to order. Over and over, people were insisting that the stacks be used for their original purpose, nothing but that purpose. Yet the people in charge were not listening.

At the second meeting they said that they were still "brainstorming" about the stacks! It was astonishing to the audience, who were invited, this time, just days before the December holidays. At the second meeting, the NYPL merely repeated everything it had said at the first meeting. They even showed the same film to sharpen it all in our memories! Once again, we all expressed outrage, having to repeat our powerful objections. But instead of a promise to heed us, we received an online message, thanking us for attending the meeting and showing an interest! Clearly, they held these meetings in order to claim, later on, that they opened discussion to the public. But we will see whether they change their minds about any of our objections, including ones I did not even mention in this testimony, regarding other needless construction in the building. Those projects, too, present huge problems. They, too, are wasteful of money, as they contribute to the ruin of a great, world-famous research institution.

We learned that the NYPL intends to spend \$317 million on this Master Plan, plus whatever additional millions it will cost for the secret plan they have in mind for the space now occupied by the stacks. The renovation of the Mid-Manhattan Branch will be an additional \$200 million. When Anthony Marx backed down from the lawsuit a few years ago, he said he lacked funds for the Central Library Plan, estimated then at nearly \$300 million. Now, in 2017, he possesses over \$500 million! I wonder how. The Brooklyn Public Library likes to claim a need for \$300 million in repairs alone. But the NYPL intends a needless five-star renovation for itself. How they mock their sister borough!

And SIBL is still being sold off. Why? It was recently renovated at great cost. It is super-modern, super-abundant in all it offers. It is very heavily used, and many thousands of signatures on petitions have been submitted to save it. Angry crowds have rallied in front of the library demanding that it remain for their continued use. Deaf ears again. Cold indifference. Greed. Many of its books will be discarded, and the people in charge, who know nothing about libraries, say all information in books can be found on line. Their ignorance is appalling. So are their downright lies. They make the same nonsensical statement about books at 42nd Street. Yet they keep pleading with the public for funds to buy books! Books? What are books?

I strongly suspect that greed is the motivation behind all these schemes. There are many financial deals involved here, including big real-estate profits, contracts conferred, numerous possibilities of pay-for play. I was never one to speak with such cynicism, until I witnessed that kind of greed in the demise of our Brooklyn Heights Library, now rubble. While Anthony Marx will not be able to tear down the magnificent NYPL at 42nd Street, he will turn it into a mere shadow of itself, especially as he destroys the stacks, known as the architectural and intellectual core of the library, and deprives the world of one of its greatest research institutions. Please do not allow this to happen.

Respectfully submitted,
Marilyn Berkon

Brooklyn, NY 11201

Testimony presented for the City Council Hearing 18 December, 2017 of the City Council Committee on Cultural Affairs, Libraries, and International Intergroup Relations and the Subcommittee on Libraries:

Cynthia M. Pyle, New York City (Active Independent Scholar, Fellow of the American Academy in Rome, Founder of the Renaissance Studies Program at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York; Co-Chair, Columbia University Seminar in the Renaissance.) <c.m.pyle@nyu.edu>

Chairman Van Bramer, Members of the City Council, thank you for holding this hearing.

The City has had far too little to say in recent years about the 42nd Street Research Branch of the New York Public Library. Yet it is New York City that owns the Building and Grounds of the Research Branch. This includes the interiors of the Carrère and Hastings Building, whose Book Stacks support the two main Reading Rooms in an ingenious engineering feat. These remarkable and perfectly functional stacks have been empty for too many years now – empty of the books needed by researchers and writers who frequent the Library, and who must wait from one to three days to receive books from 60 miles offsite. This also damages the books, which are no longer maintained by resident binders or curators. We are all grateful for digitization of certain books, but it is never enough, and requires scrolling through one text in time, rather than being able to easily compare portions of it by flipping pages – not to mention comparing various books and texts during one library session.

I have been saying for several years, internationally, in various contexts of public hearings and professional meetings (and I am publishing this in a number of places), that the **Library is the Laboratory of the Humane Sciences, or Humanities**. Would a chemist in the middle of an experiment be told to wait days for a reagent he needed? That is the situation at the 42nd Street Research Branch of the New York Public Library. The stacks could easily be refurbished, and the air conditioning upgraded; they are perfectly functional. Millions of books are off site. Some are now under Bryant Park (for as long as it is in shape to keep water out), but that storage was created for Overflow, not for the only books kept on site.

Learning is little prized by the Real Estate and other Moguls who sit on the board of the NYPL (some of whom are great supporters of the culturally destructive policies being enacted in Washington). But Our City -- which used to prize learning greatly -- has ownership of the Building and Grounds, of which the Stacks are an important part. You, our City Council, can decide to make your and the City's presence and voice known in these matters, and represent us, your constituents, by restoring the Stacks to their intended and needed use. Please give us back our former justly world-famous

Research Library! And its erudite librarians, curators, binders and restorers of real books (which are needed, despite the handy internet). Librarians and curators, binders and restorers, not to mention chasers and distributors of books -- unlike administrators -- are paid normal, reasonable wages, and therefore also cost far less than the current top-heavy system. And they keep many more jobs in this Great City of ours.



Sebastian Brandt, *Ship of Fools* (1498), Chapter XI:

On the Uselessness of Books

(Modern English, from the 1509 Barclay Translation)

I am the first fool of all the whole navy
 To keep the pomp, the helm and even the sail;
 For this is my mind -- this one pleasure have I --
 Of books to have great plenty and adornment.

I take no wisdom from them, nor yet avail,
Nor perceive them. And then I them despise.
Thus am I a fool, and all that suits that guise.

--

C. M. Pyle
Intellectual and Cultural Historian
Co-Chair, Columbia University Seminar in the Renaissance
(Ph.D. Columbia University;
Fellow, American Academy in Rome 1978;
NSF Individual Grant 1988-89;
Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts iii-iv2001;
Netherlands Institute for Advanced Study 2002-3)
<http://sites.google.com/site/cynthiampyle/>
<https://nyu.academia.edu/CMPyle>

Subject: New York Public Library matters, related also to Brooklyn

I am writing to express concern about the operations of the New York Public Library.

The Library trustees are supposed guardians of both the 42nd Street main research collection and the branches, but their proposals for the future warrant critical supervision by public officials. Senator Schumer's wife, Ms. Iris Weinshall, is a paid spokeswoman for the Library and will attempt to counteract the following remarks, but she will not serve the public well by repeating everything she is told to say.

For the past several years, the stacks under the main reading room at 42nd Street have been emptied of research books under the pretext that the stacks require improved air-conditioning and sprinklers to safeguard books against fire. Books from the stacks were sent to expensive storage in New Jersey, not even in our own state, at a time when the Library proposed a physically impossible, financially calamitous remodeling of the whole building---a plan now abandoned.

When readers need the books in New Jersey, the books must be trucked to Manhattan, an expensive system. The Library claims that an equal number are in "the stacks" now, but 1. Those stacks are under Bryant Park, not under the main reading room from which delivery was faster. The Bryant Park stacks were meant to add to available books in Manhattan, *not to replace* what was there already 2. The number of books formerly under the reading room and those under Bryant Park has never been recorded. This makes the public suspicious of the Library's public statements of storage in Manhattan 3. The stacks are in fact usable; they now hold books from the temporarily closed mid-Manhattan branch which is under renovation! They do need improvement but the Library refuses to give verifiable estimates of the cost, and proposes to 'study' what can be done with the stacks when the obvious answer is to rehabilitate and refill them.

Under the Library's renovation plans, plenty of space is being proposed for instructing high school and college students in library use. That is best done locally, given the distance that many young people live from 42nd Street. Moreover, research advice is given in every school and college library. The Library officials are therefore pseudo-populists, given that they are 1. shrinking branch libraries (the shrunken Donnell under a condo is a scandal, as the Inwood branch will be under another condo) and 2. thinking up vague purposes for 42nd Street when what readers need at 42nd Street are books and professional librarians. Readers need books in the main stacks under the reading room for rapid access, and need them in specialist research reading rooms, as in the former Slavonic Division, joined for some years with the Jewish Division and deprived of its own specialist librarian.

****Why do the trustees insist on keeping so many books in New Jersey? Do public officials or Library trustees have a financial interest in that ReCAP storage facility? No one knows. *****

While the trustees have certain rights to secrecy and to exercising their prerogatives, citizens are concerned about their increasing concealment of statistics, costs, reasons for actions, and real

estate interests. At least four trustees have Ph.D.s but are not active researchers at present, so they cannot speak for those who use 42nd Street for their daily needs.

We rely on responsible civic leaders to safeguard our need for knowledge and access to it. No scientist has to wait days for access to the next test tube; for researchers, efficient access to books is equally essential. Education is a major industry in our city, and thousands of students and professors and independent researchers in many fields add to our economy. These facts make your supervision of the New York Public Library essential, and since the Brooklyn system has comparable problems, it would be responsible of your office to initiate a study of our city's three library systems and to enforce important regulatory recommendations.

Respectfully yours,

Prof. Carol Herselle Krinsky (NYU College of Arts & Science, Department of Art History/Architecture and Urban Design Studies.)

Written Testimony regarding NYPL's Master Plan for the 42nd Street Research Library
Submitted to the New York City Council Library Committee
18 December 2017

The Master Plan for the Research Library at 42nd Street now being considered is fragmentary and episodic. It lacks cohesiveness and coherence. Consisting of proposals for individual rooms and areas, it does not describe how the individual rooms will be related and how the changes will affect staff and users. Critically important, the Plan defers consideration of the Library's stacks, which constitute the Library's heart and core, and a large percentage of the space available in the Library. As Trustee Peter Baldwin declared to the Trustees before they approved the current plan, determining the future of the stacks is an essential condition for deciding how the rest of the building should be renovated and re-purposed. For a fraction of the huge sums that are to be spent on the Master Plan, these stacks can be restored to the use for which they were intended: storage of the books that readers and researchers need to have immediately available for their work. Not only will this benefit those needing access to the books they can hold. It will also have dramatic financial benefit, making unnecessary the expenditure of the huge sums now being spent to transport books back and forth to and from the depository in Princeton, New Jersey. These expenses will only increase over the years. Returning the books to the stacks will protect them from the risks and hazards associated with storage offsite.

The Plan approved by the Trustees has not been adequately discussed with the general public. Consultation has been shockingly spare, with no involvement of the Trustees in the process. As the minutes of its meetings reveal, even the Advisory Council for the Research Libraries named by William Kelly, Director of the Research Libraries, has had no meaningful participation in the Plan. The two hour-long public meeting devoted to the Plan were poorly announced and inconveniently scheduled. There has been no announcement of plans for future consultation.

If the public is to trust in the Library and its Plan, there must be significantly more consultation, announced well in advance. Such consultation must involve not only the readers and researchers who use the Research Library, and the Library's administrators and the architects hired to devise the Plan, and but also the Library's staff members, who are in daily touch with readers, and most particularly the Library's Trustees, who govern the Library, contribute to it, and are ultimately responsible for its well-being.

Respectfully submitted,
Elizabeth A. R. Brown,
Professor of History Emerita,
The City University of New York (Brooklyn College and The Graduate School)

**New York City Council - Committee on Cultural Affairs, Libraries and International
Intergroup Relations, Subcommittee on Libraries
T2017-7023 Oversight - Library Construction Projects, Hearings
Mon., Dec 18, 2017
Council Chambers, City Hall
Testimony by Veronika A. Conant, M.L.S.**

Dear Chair Van Bramer, Chair King and Council Members,
I am writing about the New York Public Library in my own name.

Both the 42nd Street Library and the land on which it stands are owned by the City. According to the original agreement between the City and NYPL, it was designed to hold NYPL's research collection in a unique design with seven floors of book stacks holding the collection as well as supporting the giant Reading Room above, providing easy access in a closed, safe book delivery system. In exchange for the City providing and maintaining the building, completed in 1911, NYPL's obligation is to function as the free public research library for the City, develop the research collection and provide free access to research materials to all New Yorkers and visitors from elsewhere. **This arrangement has worked beautifully for over 100 years and made NYPL into an internationally respected research institution. This arrangement is currently threatened.**

Since 2000, NYPL, Columbia University and Princeton have shared an off-site storage area about 50 miles away, in Princeton, NJ. For several years NYPL contributed small amounts to the off-site collection.

During Spring 2013, in anticipation of the Central Library Plan (CLP), NYPL secretly emptied the 7 floors of book stacks, and moved by Clancy Movers their contents off-site in NYS. **In May 2014 NYPL agreed to abandon the Central Library Plan, however the research materials are still missing from the 42nd Street book shelves.**

NYPL, Columbia and Princeton recently formed the Research Collections and Preservation Consortium (ReCAP) which for NYPL must keep the collection permanently off-site at the jointly developed and owned facility. As of June 2016, the most recent record available, **ReCAP held 5.12 million items from NYPL**, the largest of the three. Since the cost for each member is according to their size and frequency of use, in 2016 NYPL picked up about 38.4% of the cost, Princeton contributed 23.7%, with Columbia in between.

The **under Bryant Park Storage Extension** was the brain child of Vartan Gregorian (Pres. 1981-1989), and its purpose was to double the local storage capacity, not to replace it. One half was developed in 1991 with capacity of 1.5 million. The second half was only completed by 2017, can hold 2.5 million, but at present has 1.5 million items, leaving room for growth. **Therefore, the two extensions now hold 3 million items.**

Only about 300,000 volumes are inside the building, less than when it was originally designed in 1911 (about 350,000). It is a magnificent empty shell.

Essentially, NYPL is outsourcing both millions of its research collection and hundreds of jobs for the local research library staff to ReCAP, Princeton, NJ, another State.

Staff in NYC	NYPL at ReCAP	NYPL 42nd St. Lib.
2000 started	1,216, salaried 813, hourly 212 3.5 million+1.2 million	(Annual Reports) ReCAP
2006 items	1,026, salaried 813, hourly 212 3.5 million+1.2 million	2.37 million
2008 items	1,016 3.5 million+1.2million	2.62 million
2011 3.5 million+1.2 million	854	
Dec 2015 appointment)	460 (Announcement of Dr. Kelly's 300,000+1.2 million	
June 2016 million	? 300,000+1.2 million	5.12
2017 million?	? 300,000+3 milllion BP	over 5.2

The claim that all research items have been returned to 42nd St after 4.5 years is incorrect.

Just before Thanksgiving, 2017, NYPL announced its Master Plan for the 42nd Street Research Library at the cost of \$317 million, without including the book stacks, for which the building was built by the City in 1911. The still empty book stacks would need about \$46-47 million to upgrade the existing HVAC system there, allowing return of the research collection. The one time cost is under \$300 per square foot, a bargain.

NYPL's current construction priorities are very troubling. There is no overall vision, just expensive and mostly low priority plans. They are currently doing a stacks study, still ignoring the needs and priority of researchers, the return of the research collection.

I am very strongly against the expensive Master Plan (Central Library Plan in disguise), and ask you to please practice your oversight powers and do not allow any capital improvements in the building until the HVAC is upgraded in the book stacks and the research collection is returned there. This must be PRIORITY ONE.

NYPL is the public library of all New Yorkers. Transparency, accountability and oversight of the entire NYPL system is much needed.

ReCAP is only good for Princeton which contributes only 23.7% of the collection, NYPL 38.4% and Columbia the rest, less than NYPL. **Only what can not be kept on location belongs off-site.**

NYPL claims ReCAP provides easy access to millions of items. This is not correct. **Access to the off-site collection has been taking too long, is poorly organized and is causing researchers severe problems.**

Fortunately NYPL is in the middle of a large metropolis. Both NYPL and Columbia are members of **METRO (Metropolitan New York Library Council)**, a 275 member group of local libraries which, through a cooperative agreement, provides access to the collections of all participating libraries either through interlibrary loan of circulating materials, with daily deliveries, or by getting a METRO referral card from the originating library for a one-time, on-site use of any of the 275 libraries. This can be repeated as many times as needed. Therefore, instead of losing access to millions of NYPL's collection stored permanently off-site, **if the three millions of items are returned to the 42nd Street book stacks, where they belong, NYPL users can get a METRO card any time and use Columbia, NYU, etc., much better than access to Princeton's collection, making the collection easily accessible to all New Yorkers.**

Even after the 42nd Street Library book shelves are again full, construction plans for the rest of the building need careful study of each component. \$317 million for the interior construction is a very steep price. **In comparison, NYPL's Estimated FY 2017 - 2010 total construction needs for 54 individual NYPL libraries, including the circulating branch libraries and more for system-wide work are almost \$332 million.**

I recommend to study the list at the NYS Library site <http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/libdev/construc/needs.htm#NYPL> and fund the capital problems in those branches before allowing additional funds spent on the 42nd Street Library.

I also want to make a statement about the \$200 million interior renovation plans for the Mid-Manhattan Library. I was delighted to hear in 2014 that NYPL decided not to sell the most heavily used library in Manhattan but renovate it. However, I have problems with the expensive plans. The architect plans to cut an atrium in the middle of the six floor building, and to create a long stacks area at one end, with walkways across the space. This idea defeats the open stacks idea, I do not recommend it. I would prefer to see book stacks close to people, all over. The beauty of the old Mid - Manhattan was 140,000 square foot space on six spacious floors. After the atrium is created, the book stacks area looks cramped and far from library users. Where will people sit once they pull off an item from a shelf? There will be a loss of about 40,000 square feet. **If the new space is about 100,000 square foot, the renovation cost is \$2,000 per square**

foot, too expensive, Even at 140,000 square foot it is \$1,428 per square foot, still expensive.

I recommend the use of DDC (Department of Design and construction) and not a pass through process which allows less oversight and very expensive plans rather than functional, cost effective ones.

Although this hearing is about Oversight of Library Construction, **please do not allow the sale of the Science Industry & Technology Library (SIBL) or any branch library.** Libraries are needed more than ever.

There is need to establish baseline funding for capital library projects, to make sure they receive regular, much needed preventive care rather than extensive emergency funds too late.

Please practice your Oversight function, it is very important. Thank you.

Veronika Conant M.L.S., retired from Hunter College Libraries
past Pres., West 54 - 55 Street Block Association
Member, Committee to Save the New York Public Library
45 W 54th St, Apt 7C, New York, NY 10019
(h) 212 581-1895 vaconant@yahoo.com

**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: JEANNE RUSKIN

Address: 11 SEAMAN #4B

I represent: SAVE INWOOD LIBRARY

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 42nd Street Library Plow Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☒ in opposition

Date: 12/18/17

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Michael D. White

Address: 62 Montague Street Bklyn 11201

I represent: Citizens Spending Libraries

Address: 62 Montague Street Bklyn 11201

**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: 12/18/2017

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: KATHERINE O. SULLIVAN

Address: 1825 Riverdale Drive, NY NY 10034

I represent: Inwood Preservation

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: 12/18/17

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: LINDA E. JOHNSON

Address: PRESIDENT & CEO

I represent: BROOKLYN PUBLIC LIBRARY

Address: 10 GRAND ARMY PLAZA

BKLYN, NY 11238

**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: Dennis Walcott

Address: 89-11 Merrick Blvd.

I represent: Queens Library

Address: same as above

**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: Risa Honig

Address: NYPL

I represent: _____

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: Thomas Foley

Address: 30-30 Thomson Ave

I represent: DDC

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: Justin Walter

Address: 3030 Thomson Ave

I represent: DDC

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: Ara Barrio

Address: 30-30 Thomson Ave

I represent: DDC

Address: _____

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