



MEMORANDUM

DATE: 29 November 2022
TO: City of Cleveland Heights

FROM: Bostwick Design Partnership

CLIENT: Heights Libraries
PROJECT NAME: Noble Road Branch
Renovation and Addition
PROJECT NUMBER: 22008

Heights Libraries has made a strong commitment to engaging, informing, and gaining feedback from the community that the Noble Neighborhood Branch serves. The following is a partial list of public engagement that has informed the project to date:

- Early 2021: Community Survey regarding Noble Neighborhood Library
- March 8, 2021: Virtual Live Community Presentation (also recorded and available on website)
- April 7, 2021: Virtual Live Community Presentation (also recorded and available on website)
- September 8, 2021: Open House Presentation and Community Feedback Session
- June 28, 2022: Open House Presentation and Community Feedback Session
- October 4, 2022: Open House Presentation and Community Feedback Session

Project Summary

Services and programs at the Noble Branch have demonstrated clear value to the community that the Heights Libraries serves in this neighborhood. The original 1937 Walker and Weeks designed building is a well-liked important landmark in this community. However, even with the 1960's expansion and full renovation in 2010, the existing available space and site is not adequate to satisfy current and anticipated service goals and community requests.

The existing library-owned property at Noble was up until 2021 developed to capacity, with no opportunity for meaningful expansion. The Library purchased the adjacent property to the north, owned and occupied by the Noble Road Presbyterian Church, when it became available. The church was demolished to allow for the expansion outlined below.

The expansion of the existing Noble Branch includes the demolition of the existing 1960's addition, a renovation of the existing branch, and a new addition to the north. Parking for the site is located along the west edge of the newly expanded site, details for which are provided below. The northeast corner of the site is proposed as a community outdoor space for the Noble neighborhood.

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The addition will provide a new accessible entrance for ease of access from the parking to the west. The addition will include more active library services such as Children's, Teens, and Meeting Rooms, while the existing 1937 library will include quieter reading, study, and computer access areas for adults.

The library, design team, and community all agreed that the beauty and simplicity of the original Walker and Weeks design should remain the primary design feature of the site. As a result, the addition will not match or 'compete with' the existing design but rather be a contemporary and contextually appropriate expansion. It will act as a good neighbor to the existing library as well as the adjacent neighborhood.

Heights Library is committed to enhancing the entire campus through landscape design, which in addition to a community green space at the northeast corner, will include elements such as an accessible porch, outdoor programming space, reading nooks, bicycle parking, and a vegetable garden. These community amenities are balanced with the new parking lot that is located to the west of the site.

Conditional Use

The original library parcel is zoned 'A Single Family' and the new parcel is zoned 'MF2 Multiple Family'. A library is identified as a conditional use for both, so it is not necessary to rezone the parcels to the same zone. The parcels will be joined to allow for construction across both parcels (a Resubdivision Approval Application has been submitted).

Vehicle Parking

Cleveland Heights Zoning Ordinance Schedule 1161.03 'Required Off-Street Parking Spaces, Item (h) Community Facilities' indicates 1 space for every 4 seats or for each 300 sq. ft. of floor area, whichever is greater. The calculation by floor area will govern. With a total 20,600 sq. ft. of library space, 69 parking spaces would be required. The site is not capable of accommodating this total. We request a reduction to include 42 parking spaces, including 3 handicapped spaces, as shown on the proposed plan.

We believe that the spaces provided in the plan will be acceptable, for reasons that include, but are not limited to:

- Not all spaces in the total SF are occupied, such as storage and utility and mechanical rooms, restrooms, etc.
- Library usage is variable, and patrons will visit in larger or smaller numbers depending upon the programming and time of day.
- Community members in the October 4th public meeting suggested the quantity of parking as shown was already too large, noting off-site but nearby stormwater capacity concerns.

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Stormwater Management

Before the adjacent church was demolished, the total impervious area including the church property was 35,218 SF. With the library expansion and new parking lot, the proposed impervious area is 48,526 SF.

Stormwater management will address compliance with stormwater volume and water quality requirements of the City of Cleveland Heights ordinances, Ohio Rainwater Land Development Manual and the Ohio EPA Permit.

An underground device such as the ADS (Advanced Drainage Systems, Inc.) MC-3500 StormTech Chamber is cost-effective for management of both stormwater quality and volume/flow rate. The StormTech chambers will be appropriately sized and installed under the parking lot pavement, thereby maintaining valuable public greenspace.

Sustainability

Heights Library is committed to a sustainable approach to building design and incorporating elements that minimize environmental impact and maximize the amenities for the community.

The 1937 historic Walker and Weeks building is a fundamental part of the Noble Road Branch, and will be preserved for reuse as the Adult collection, meeting spaces, and staff support areas. The new addition will respect and honor the historic building through its design.

Energy efficiency has been at the forefront of the design of the new addition, which will feature a raised access floor system that supplies air low and returns above at the ceiling instead of recirculating it all from the ceiling. The HVAC systems, exterior glass, and wall insulation have all been selected for their high performance characteristics. Furthermore, the roof layout and electrical system is designed to provide the infrastructure necessary for the Library to add photovoltaic solar panels in the future.

Central to the site design is a new community green space with amphitheater seating, which will allow for outdoor programming and community activities to occur. Bicycle parking areas will be expanded, dedicated parking for electric scooters will be provided, and charging for electric vehicles is planned to be incorporated in the future as a separate effort by the Library. The approach to stormwater management has been thoroughly explored and is outlined above.

Other items included in this submission:

- Bicycle Parking
 - Schedule 1161.035 'Required Bicycle Parking Spaces' requires one space per 2,500 sf GFA for Community Facilities, or 8 spaces for the 20,600 sq. ft. facility. There are 16 spaces located near the entry off Kirkwood and 10 spaces located near the building addition entry for a total of 26 spaces provided.

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- Site Lighting
 - Fixtures to have controlled light trespass onto adjacent properties. Light level to be no greater than 0.5 foot candles at property lines adjacent to residential properties. Please refer to the fixture schedule.
- Exterior Design
 - Exterior Materials
 - The new addition will comprise of brick, glazing, and cast stone which will complement the existing building. Please refer to the exterior elevations.
 - The height of the addition is 14'-6" above finish floor and does not exceed regulations for 'A Single Family' or 'MF2 Multiple Family' districts. Please refer to exterior elevations.
 - Per Cleveland Heights Zoning Ordinance Section 1121.10 'Height Regulations', 'A Single Family' districts should not exceed 35'-0".
 - Per Cleveland Heights Zoning Ordinance Section 1123.11 'Height Regulations', 'MF2 Multiple Family' districts should not exceed 45'-0" for Principal Buildings.
- Landscape
 - A vegetable garden will be located to the south and be comprised of planter boxes. This will be tended to by the library.

END OF MEMORANDUM

General Standards for Conditional Use for the Noble Branch Library Renovation

The Noble Branch library has been located in a Walker and Weeks building at the corner of Noble and Montevista Roads since 1937. This building has been used continuously as a public library since then. At 85 years old, it is time to expand this library to better serve the Noble neighborhood of Cleveland Heights. This neighborhood is mainly residential and is home to a combination of single family and multiunit housing.

Here are some general demographic characteristics of the Noble Neighborhood as defined by a NODIS study of 2012 provided by Cleveland State University.

Over 1/3 of residents are in rental units
Least educated area
Highest % school-aged children in district; also highest percentage, 93.6%, of public school students
Least mobile population
Most African Americans in CHUH
Losing population
Highest unemployment in district, 9.9%

We feel that due to these demographic characteristics the expansion of the library building is an overdue community investment.

We also consulted the Future Heights Noble Corridor Study to assess some of the community needs for the building. There is additional green space for cultural activities outside, activation of the area along Noble Road with areas for reading, waiting for children to come out of school, waiting for a bus, enjoying nature and visiting with neighbors. These activities can also happen inside the expanded library space. After 3:00 each weekday during the school year, hundreds of children leave the Noble Elementary School, and walk up from Monticello Middle School, and stream into the library. Additional Children’s and Teen spaces are needed to accommodate them until parents return home from work.

Satisfaction of Conditions:

- a. The general use of this property is a continuance of the use since 1917 when the library was in a wooden hut on the Noble School property and moved into the 1937 Noble Library.

- b. Public Health, safety, morals, comfort and general welfare will be improved by the added library services and the added green space at the northern end of the now combined lot.
- c. A harmonious and appropriate appearance has been designed by Bostwick's architects using brick materials in a pleasing design that allows a great deal of natural light inside and colorful interest on the outside. Expanded tree plantings and lawn spaces will create a small park-like setting. It will not negatively change the character of the area, it will greatly improve it.
- d. Property values improve in areas that are walking distance to a public library. With the added amenities of meeting rooms, maker space, larger youth areas, and separate and peaceful adult areas, the impact can only increase.
- e. The continuation of the library use of this property is an example of orderly development and improvement of this property. Even by relocating the electrical wires that currently run down the center of the property we will be creating a more orderly appearance and eliminating low slung wires that are a safety hazard.
- f. Adequate utilities, access roads, drainage and necessary facilities are being provided and enhanced. We will be providing 24-hour access to WIFI and exterior WIFI. A storm water management plan had been created by our Civil Engineer.
- g. Ingress and Egress have been designed to calm traffic and ensure pedestrian safety in the parking lot and side streets. If necessary, there is excess parking on the street and in the school lot across the street that is available on nights and weekends.
- h. There should be no additional use that would be detrimental to the economic welfare of the community, as it should be an additional employer and a public place of recreation and intellectual stimulation. Students as young as 16 are often employed as library pages. Police, fire and school costs should not be impacted any more with a larger library. In fact, with additional space for youth, police calls to the area could be reduced.
- i. There is minimal potential for future hardship. While the church was on this property the neighbors had to deal with traffic during events and services. While the library is consistently open more hours, the flow of people during the day lessens the traffic at any one time.
- j-k The conditional use is in keeping with applicable regulations set forth in the zoning code.

Nancy Levin
Director
Cleveland Heights-University Heights Public Library