

## Meeting Minutes

**FROM:** EHT Traceries  
**SUBJECT:** MLK Jr. Library Rehabilitation and Modernization  
 Section 106 Consulting Party Meeting #4  
**DATE:** December 16, 2015

The following minutes represent comments received during the fourth Section 106 consulting party meeting for the MLK Jr. Memorial Library Rehabilitation and Modernization.

### Attendees\*

DC Public Library (DCPL)	Richard Reyes-Gavilan Rauzia Ally	Jonathan Butler Martha Saccocio David Saulter
National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC)	Jennifer Hirsch	Lucy Kempf
DC State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO)	Anne Brockett	
Martinez + Johnson (MJ)	Tom Johnson	Steven Jensen
Jair Lynch Development Partners	Joshua Firebaugh	
EHT Traceries (EHT)	Bill Marzella	
Stantec	Liz Estes	
Commission of Fine Arts (CFA)	F.J. Lindstrom	
ANC 2C01	John Tinpe	
District Department of Transportation (DDOT)	Jonathan Rogers	
DC Office of Planning (OP)	Patricia Zingsheim	Josh Silver
Penn Quarter Neighborhood Association (PQ)	Jo-Ann Neuhaus	
MLK Library Friends	Robin Diener	
Friends of the DC Archives	Bill Rice	
Downtown BID	Gerry Widdicombe	
United Spinal Association	Carol Tyson	
First Congregational United Church of Christ	Sidney D. Fowler	
DC Preservation League	Rebecca Miller	
U.S. Secret Service	James Stevens	
Gilbane Building Company	Carol Moore	
The InTowner	Anthony Harvey	
National Trust for Historic Preservation (NTHP)	Anne Nelson	
Additional	David Edwards	Barb Reck

\* This list includes attendees who signed the sign-in sheet or were otherwise noted

## Presentation

1. NCPC opened the meeting and invited attendees to introduce themselves.
2. DCPL provided an update on the program and vision for MLK Library, including the commemoration of Dr. King.
3. NCPC reviewed the meeting agenda, presented the process flowchart, and discussed comments received at the July 2015 consulting party meeting.
4. MJ presented preferred alternative design, focusing on aspects of the project that had been updated from the previous presentation.
5. EHT presented an overview of the Section 106 process, including a summary of the consultation process thus far and a recap of the Area of Potential Effects and Criteria of Effect.
6. EHT presented a summary of the Determination of Effects as detailed in the Assessment of Effects Report provided to the consulting parties earlier in December. EHT noted that the Report had been posted on the NCPC website, and that consulting parties could review and provide comment after the meeting.
7. EHT presented an overview of the mitigation options that had been proposed by DCPL and through consultation. DCPL provided additional details on several of the options under consideration, particularly those that had been discussed during the November 4 “Dr. King in D.C. – A Community Conversation” event, including a permanent exhibit to Dr. King, a King scholar-in-residence program, and a walking tour.
8. EHT invited questions and discussion.

## Discussion

### *During Presentation:*

1. DDOT asked if proposed loggia skylights are in public space or private property.
  - a. MJ responded that the basement perimeter wall extends to the edge of the property line, and therefore the proposed skylights are located within the Library property.
2. One attendee asked for clarification regarding the location of the slide in the Children’s Room.
  - a. MJ responded that the slide was located to the immediate south of the southeast core.
3. PQ asked for clarification of the conference center on the fourth floor.
  - a. MJ responded that the conference center could be used independently or in conjunction with the Auditorium.

### *Following Presentation:*

4. David Edwards asked if there was a plan for the removal of the hanging paintings in the vestibule.
  - a. DCPL (Richard Reyes-Gavilan) responded that those pieces were the work of DC students and were installed in the vestibule in the 2000s. He said that those pieces would be installed in a new location in the rehabilitated building, possibly in the children’s or teen’s areas to reflect the artists.
  - b. Mr. Edwards expressed concern that removing those pieces from the vestibule would reduce the immediate sense of Dr. King’s presence that one has when currently entering the Library.
  - c. Mr. Edwards repeated his proposal to install a replica of the Edmund Pettus Bridge on the exterior of the building. He also stated that his earlier comments on the subject had been redacted from the transcript of an earlier meeting. (Note: Following the meeting, NCPC and DCPL confirmed that all comments related to the Edmund Pettus Bridge were reflected in the NEPA scoping report and previous Section 106 meeting minutes.)
5. Bill Rice asked if the Library was considering the collocation of the collections of the Office of Public Records and DC Historical Society with the DCPL Special Collections.

- a. DCPL (Richard Reyes-Gavilan) responded that the Library would be amenable to accommodating these institutions, but that the specific details were still being studied.
6. OP (Patricia Zingsheim) expressed support for a walking tour of Civil Rights sites in DC.
7. MLK Friends (Robin Diener) expressed support for the Pettus Bridge proposal, stating that they saw the symbolic potential of such an installation on the site. She also proposed a dedicated room within the new building: a “chapel-like” space with books, films of Dr. King’s speeches, and other media that could allow for a contemplative reflection of his work.
  - a. Mr. Edwards reiterated that the steel-frame truss structure of the Pettus Bridge was not unlike the exposed steel components of the MLK Library façade.
8. PQ (Jo-Ann Neuhaus) asked for additional clarification regarding the assessment of effects: if elements are unpopular or not well liked, does that affect the determination?
  - a. EHT (Bill Marzella) described the process of identifying adverse effects, which is grounded in the Section 106 regulations and existing National Register documentation for the property. Mr. Marzella stated that some actions, while they may represent positive changes from a usability or urban design perspective, must still be evaluated as adverse effects if they alter or remove character-defining features.
9. NCPC (Lucy Kempf) prompted attendees to respond to the conceptual lighting design.
  - a. The consulting parties generally expressed a positive reaction to the lighting effect, particularly the lighting as viewed from the street.
  - b. Ms. Zingsheim noted that the mechanics of the lighting and the reading ribbon desks should be carefully studied, particularly as it will affect the appearance of the building from the exterior.
10. Mr. Edwards stated that the Library should expand its access and hours to offer “24/7” programming.
  - a. Mr. Reyes-Gavilan responded that expanded hours and programming was an operational question and would be dependent on available funding.
11. The United Spinal Association (Carol Tyson) asked if considerations for the hearing and visually impaired had been incorporated into the design. Ms. Tyson also asked if the design would make the elevators more inviting, in a similar way to what is being proposed for the glass, including the potential use of glass. Finally, Ms. Tyson asked if considerations for accessibility (including strollers) were being made for the Children’s Room slide.
  - a. Mr. Reyes-Gavilan responded that considerations for accessibility had thus far been limited to the Center for Accessibility, but that those considerations would be addressed as the design develops.
  - b. MJ (Tom Johnson) added that world-class lighting and acoustics designers had been retained to advise the design.
12. NTHP (Anne Nelson) asked if viewshed studies had been developed to evaluate the effects of the addition from surrounding areas of the APE.
  - a. Mr. Marzella responded that they had and that those studies had been presented to the consulting parties at an earlier meeting and were included in the Assessment of Effects Report.
13. Ms. Zingsheim noted that a number of the new design elements featured clear glass, curved forms, and the color red. She wondered if all three were necessary to convey their distinction from the original building, and if perhaps they would overpower the original architecture.
  - a. Mr. Johnson replied that the design of new elements adhered to a philosophical rigor that would enable them to be clearly distinguished from the original fabric.
14. One of the consulting parties questioned if there could be literature at the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial at the Tidal Basin to guide visitors to MLK Library.
  - a. NCPC responded that as mitigation is defined through negotiation of the memorandum of agreement, a walking tour which highlights sites related to Martin Luther King, Jr. in Washington, DC would be considered.
  - b. Mr. Reyes-Gavilan responded that the memorial at the Tidal Basin is under the control of the National Park Service and therefore literature at the site would require National Park Service approval, and he suggested the National Museum of African American History and Culture as an alternative.

15. Ms. Diener stated that she was supportive of the design, but she had a number of questions not related to the NCPC or Section 106 processes. She requested a separate meeting or venue to discuss these questions.
  - a. Mr. Reyes-Gavilan confirmed that there would be a meeting of the MLK Library Advisory Panel in January, and likely other public meetings as the project progressed.

### **Conclusion and Next Steps**

NCPC and DCPL thanked the consulting parties for attending and participating in the discussion. The meeting closed by noting the project would be presented to NCPC on Thursday, January 7. It was anticipated that the Environmental Assessment and Section 106 processes would be concluded in the winter and spring of 2016. The final CFA review would occur in the spring of 2016, and the preliminary and final NCPC reviews would occur in the spring and summer. NCPC stated that presentation would be posted on NCPC's website within the next few days. Public comment on the project and material presented would be taken until January 13, 2016.

### **Additional Comments**

See enclosed.

*Minutes prepared by Bill Marzella, EHT Traceries, December 22, 2015 (revised January 29, 2016)*



January 14, 2016

Ms. Jennifer Hirsch  
National Capital Planning Commission  
401 9th Street NW, Suite 500  
Washington, DC 20004  
\*\*via email\*\*

Dear Ms. Hirsch:

Thank you for submitting the Assessment of Effects Report prepared for the Modernization of Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Library. The DC SHPO very much appreciates the comprehensive documentation and analysis provided in the report.

We have reviewed the document and concur with the finding that the project will have adverse effects on this National Register-listed property. We generally concur with the analysis of specific effects to individual features in the building, with the following comments:

- There is not enough information to fully understand the proposed treatment of the curtain wall and assess potential effects. Please provide further information on how the building envelope will be updated on both the interior and exterior.
- There is not enough information about lighting proposals to evaluate effects to the library itself or to concur with the finding that the lighting will have “no potential to alter the character” of historic resources within the APE (p. 36).
- The removal of original furniture (tables, chairs, bookcases, etc.) should be identified and addressed as an adverse effect in addition to the introduction of new furniture (p. 33 and 36, #3). Please provide information on the disposition of furniture throughout the library that was designed or selected by Mies. We look forward to consulting with you on ways to avoid or minimize this adverse effect.
- There is no information provided on proposed flooring or interior wall surface treatments.

Avoidance and minimization efforts to date have included retaining the exterior walls at the front of the building, partially retaining site walls, and designing a compatible one story addition to the roof. We look forward to continuing a full exploration with you on the avoidance and/or minimization of the other adverse effects, as required under Section 800.6 of the regulations implementing the National Historic Preservation Act. Some of the concerns we have expressed are stated in the SHPO letters submitted following previous Consulting Parties meetings. These concerns include the following:

- Proposed changes to the vestibule, which we recommend maintain a symmetrical pattern as is implicit in Miesian designs

- The first floor reading room pods and the associated cuts in the floor
- Possible video screens on exterior-facing windows and doors
- Further exploration of total removal of the upper floor corridor walls and the design development for the upper floor areas
- Retention or reuse of the features identified in Design Guidelines as character-defining (doors, shelving, signage, furniture, trim, phone booths, water fountains, clock, metal railings, fire panels, etc.).

As plans are further developed, we continue to encourage use of the Design Guidelines developed for the treatment of the building. These Guidelines follow the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, and were developed by the Library and adopted by the Historic Preservation Review Board to guide decision-making. Their use will help to avoid and/or minimize adverse effects, and should be consulted especially for any aspects of the current plans that were not included in previous submissions, which may need to return to the Historic Preservation Review Board for further consideration.

We look forward to continuing our consultation with you on this important project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D Maloney". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping tail on the final letter.

David Maloney  
State Historic Preservation Officer



January 5, 2016

Email: [jennifer.hirsch@ncpc.gov](mailto:jennifer.hirsch@ncpc.gov)

Ms. Jennifer Hirsch  
Federal Preservation Officer  
National Capital Planning Commission  
401 9<sup>th</sup> St., NW  
Suite 500  
Washington, DC 20004

Re: Section 106 Comments on MLK Jr. Memorial Library  
Rehabilitation and Modernization (Project: #7610)

Dear Ms. Hirsch:

As a member of the Advisory Panel for the MLK Rehabilitation, and a Section 106 Consulting Party member representing the Committee of 100 on the Federal City, to follow are comments regarding the presentation on December 16, 2015:

- 1) Overview: it is useful to provide context on the current proposal to renovate and rehabilitate the MLK Jr. Memorial Library. After many years of debate followed by the selection of an architectural team, the project is well-positioned for success. The primary program elements are generally aligned with Mies van der Rohe's "less is more" precept. Proposals to add multiple floors driven by a desire to include unrelated mixed-use components have been put aside. The minimalist building can retain its singular vision. The challenge now is to fulfill the "devil is in the details" principle to ensure that alterations are consistent with the Mies design or compatible when distinguishably different.
- 2) First Floor: Entrance and Vestibule: the Committee of 100 supports the proposal to replace the existing vestibule brick wall and adjacent exterior steel panel door with glass. It will make the new staircase visible and increase the building's transparency. There is one qualification. The current design includes an asymmetrical steel rib pattern. The glass wall should have a steel grid pattern that is balanced, symmetrical and proportioned with the Mies design. The glass elements should also be identical across the entire wall (ex: clear glass) or symmetrical if introducing non-identical elements (ex: tinted glass or words etched on glass panel).
- 3) First Floor Reading Rooms: the first floor's two reading rooms designed by Mies included book shelves and tables that were elegantly proportioned and laid-out. Their geometric rhythm reinforced the building's grid pattern, as seen by both the

library patron and outside observer. The furniture configuration was also consistent with form and function, allowing the patron to quickly locate books and walk within the room.

Although the function of these two rooms may be changing, placement of furniture elements must still be compatible with the existing architectural design since the first floor interior is a designated landmark. If not pursuing a right-angled grid pattern, any alternative approach such as curvilinear components must fit harmoniously within that grid so that the geometric rhythm of the columns and ceiling/lighting is not obstructed. Placement of these new elements must also follow the precept that their function be immediately apparent and that their placement creates a balanced symmetrical pattern within the grid. This comment specifically applies to the proposal to include two-story pod fabrications within the Digital Commons. The current proposal's asymmetrical layout draws undue attention to the pods' presence and bold color scheme, and undermines the room's grid pattern and transparency. While curvilinear and asymmetrical elements are being introduced in other areas of the library, their placement within the landmarked first floor raises concern. Further, it is unclear if the pod's second story has sufficient function when balanced against its visual disruption. Although the pod concept is useful, the focus should be on creating functional quiet zones rather than visually distracting spaces.

- 4) First Floor: Informal Performance Space: the Committee of 100 supports the current redesign of the informal performance space to include a permanent glass wall separating it from the Great Hall rather than opaque partitions that open/close. The glass wall approach reinforces building transparency and also helps showcase the two Martin Luther King Jr. murals above the wall.
- 5) Removal of a Portion of the G St. Site Wall: the Committee of 100 supports the proposal to remove a portion of the brick site wall that currently separates the Library from the First Congressional United Church of Christ, a building specifically constructed with materials that are harmonious to MLK. Use of this new plaza has not been agreed to and such use must not have the effect of obstructing the Church facade, such as would the kiosk displayed in slide proposals. The Library and Church should reach agreement on a mutually acceptable use, such as a sculpture park commemorating Martin Luther King Jr.
- 6) Underground Parking and Ramps: the Committee of 100 supports Option 3 to retain the underground parking garage with single west ramp access. The library has ample space so there is no need to eliminate the parking level which provides vital access for staff and patrons. Eliminating the east ramp will enliven that portion of the building's north side that can then be used as a pocket park and outdoor cafe.
- 7) Third Floor: Adult Collection Reading Room: the Committee of 100 supports the creation of a reading room that includes a second story opening. The room may become a favorite location for research therefore the furniture must be computer compatible with comfortable seating, something that is not currently evident in the renderings.

- 8) Fourth Floor: Auditorium: the Committee of 100 has continued concern that an auditorium will be placed on the fourth and fifth floors. This is based on its prominent central location which displaces other potential uses such as the adult collection reading room, and the question as to whether elevator access will be sufficient. Although it has become apparent that the space is desired by the Library staff and some public, concern remains that the space may be under-used and that there are other more appropriate locations within the library. The Committee of 100 urges Library staff and architects to continue studying this issue and consulting with the Advisory Panel and other parties.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this project.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Stuart Gosswein", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Stuart Gosswein  
Member of the Advisory Panel for the  
Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Library Rehabilitation  
[sgosswein@aol.com](mailto:sgosswein@aol.com)  
202/375-4422

**MLK Library Friends**  
**901 G Street, NW Washington, DC 20002**

January 7, 2016

Ms. Jennifer Hirsch  
Federal Preservation Officer  
National Capital Planning Commission  
401 9<sup>th</sup> Street, NW, Suite 500  
Washington, DC 20004

Section 106 Comments re MLK Memorial Library Renovation

Dear Ms. Hirsch,

I write as a Section 106 Consulting Party member representing the MLK Library Friends. I also represent the MLK Library Friends on the MLK Library Renovation Advisory Panel.

The MLK Library Friends find a number of problems with the renovation plans, which we will discuss below, but first we feel compelled to point out two issues that have impeded the effectiveness of Consulting Parties participation in the planning process.

One is the difficulty of judging plans in the absence of a detailed architectural building program narrative that describes the goals and functions of Library spaces. MLK Library Friends continues to call on the Library to produce this necessary document. Advisory Panel members have even offered to help draft one.

Second is our confusion over the NCPC 's role as convener. NCPC has not caused meaningful discussion to take place between DCPL and Consulting Parties, it has accepted pro forma answers, and it has not required follow up.

For instance, page 4 of the December 16, 2015 NCPC presentation lists the need for further discussion of the auditorium and reading room issues, based on the July NCPC meeting of Consulting Parties. No such discussions were ever held with Consulting Parties, nor have Consulting Parties received any report of internal DCPL discussions that led to decisions. Other examples exist.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Another example was DCPL's cursory response to a question by several Consulting Parties as to why a particular alternative was eliminated. The response was simply that a different alternative was found to be better. No further

In addition, the following issues concern us:

1. Auditorium on Fourth/Fifth Floor

Locating the main auditorium on the fourth floor will make it likely that most people will take the elevator. Moving a sizable number of people up and down will be time consuming. Most concerning is the effect it will have on physically limited persons, especially those in wheelchairs, who will have no choice but to take the elevator, and who have testified to DCPL about the competition they already face from able-bodied persons, who prefer to take elevators meant foremost for wheelchair users and the physically limited. MLK Friends has raised this issue repeatedly. Alternative sites in the building should be considered for the auditorium.

2. Welcoming Entrance and Vestibule

Making MLK Library's front facade less fortress-like and more inviting is the number one request of residents and library users, many of whom say they avoid the Library because it appears dark and feels dangerous. Opening the front by removing all brick is required to achieve the desired open feel, to let in the light, and to eliminate spaces where non-library users congregate on the sidewalk in ways that can seem threatening. This renovation will fall far short if the brick remains. The bricks can be adaptively re-used on the roof level to create low walls for gardens and benches. An all glass front will make the staircase and the entire building more light-filled and transparent. The State Historic Preservation Officer has said the Library renovation is not a transformation, but in fact "transformation" is the term DCPL has employed throughout the so far \$250 million project of updating the library system over the last eight years. This is the greatest civic project in recent DC history, exceeding even the schools restoration because libraries serve all citizens, not just children. Removal of the brick was a hallmark of the selected architectural design.

Any discussions with the Historic Preservation Office or the State Historic Preservation Office or others about this matter were not open to the public, and it is not clear that DCPL ever advocated for the open front. Members of the public would have helped lobby for glass had they been included. Moreover, the unwillingness of Historic Preservation officials to permit removal of the brick from the front, while allowing holes to be dug in the floor of the landmarked West Reading Room, and allowing the installation of giant "red elephants" that will block the existing east/west view through the building, seems inconsistent, to say the least.

3. Memorial to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

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explanation was given, no opportunity for back and forth provided, no rationales put forward. This exchange took place at a Consulting Parties meeting conducted by NCPC staff.

The renovation is an opportunity to make a physical, architectural statement that further honors Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. A structure suggesting the Selma bridge has been suggested for the front of the building. Also, a chapel-like room for meditation or study where King's speeches might be shown along with the books he referred to in his speeches, which encompass many of the world's works of religion, philosophy and literature. Discussions of programming about King have been held, but no physical space or objects have been considered, so far as we know. No reports have been issued.

#### 4. A New Washington History Center

DCPL has long needed a better facility for its unique and valuable Washingtoniana collection. In addition, the possibility of co-locating the DC Archives public education division with Washingtoniana, Black Studies, and other DCPL special collections is very appealing in theory. However, careful study of the needs of each is required before any plans can be assessed. For instance, the proposed auditorium takes up a large part of the fourth floor which is the floor designated for special collections in the current plans. More space will likely be needed and would be justified given the importance of Washingtoniana and the DC Archives (should it be co-located at MLK). They would both be a huge draw for the Library and is another reason to reevaluate the auditorium location.

#### 5. Grand Reading Room

A "grand" adult reading room was originally suggested by the MLK Friends, but DCPL plans as now proposed put it on the east side in direct line of the Verizon electronic billboard, a huge and inappropriate distraction. The Reading Room could be shifted to the center of the third floor and surrounded by the book stacks. This would make the reading room the quiet heart of the library, as it should be. Reading "rails" along the windows as proposed could remain and allow for readers to choose their view. Ideally, the fourth floor atrium space would also shift to the center, another reason to reconsider the placement of the fourth floor auditorium.

The issues raised above are only the most major. Numerous others exist, such as where films will be viewed, why there is no bookstore for Library Friends (a common feature of central public libraries), why so much space on the second floor is devoted to as yet unidentified "partners," what will become of the Mies designed staircase handrails, how the neighboring Congregational Church building will interface with the Library design and operations, and how the homeless will be accommodated in the renovated central Library.

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on this project. We feel strongly that much remains to be examined and discussed with the interested public and the Renovation Advisory Panel.

Robin Diener  
President 2015-16  
[info@mlklibraryfriends.org](mailto:info@mlklibraryfriends.org)  
202 431-9254



**MEG MAGUIRE**  
*Community Conservation Consultant*

631 Maryland Ave., NE Washington, DC 20002  
Ph: 202-546-4536 Fax: 202-546-4536  
E-mail: [megmaguireconsultant@msn.com](mailto:megmaguireconsultant@msn.com)

December 30, 2015

Ms. Jennifer Hirsch  
Federal Preservation Officer  
NCPC  
401 9<sup>th</sup> St., NW  
Suite 500  
Washington, DC 20004

Section 106 Comments on MLK Memorial Library Rehabilitation

Dear Ms. Hirsch,

As a member of the Advisory Panel for the MLK Rehabilitation, and a Section 106 Consulting Party member representing First Congregational UCC, I wish to register several comments regarding the presentation on December 16, 2015:

1) Removal of a portion of site walls at G St. Plaza

In a October 28, 2014 letter to you I made the following comment:

*The Church has also expressed its opposition to filling the pocket park with a bike kiosk that would adjoin or block the view of the Church, stating instead that there are better uses for this space as part of a visionary public space that joins the pocket park with the Library loggia. But this would be possible only if at least a section of the yellow wall were removed.*

We are pleased that the Dec. 16 proposal shows a portion of the site wall removed. However, as *we have made clear to the Library on several occasions*, we oppose filling that space with a kiosk such as the red container shown in the latest renderings or any other structure that would obstruct the church wall and its potential use as a backdrop for a commemorative piece of sculpture, outdoor seating, or other appropriate use. In designing the church and office building, we carefully chose brick that would blend well with the MLK and that would bridge the two buildings. We ask that further renderings not include a structure of any sort and that this space be visualized as the backdrop described above.

2) Underground parking and ramps

Option #3 is much the best option. Eliminating parking as proposed in Option #2 would be a grave error, affecting the use of Library by many who need to drive – staff, patrons, those attending concerts, etc. Street parking is not a viable option for those needing or wanting to stay more than 2 hours.

However, keeping both ramps in Option #1 is unnecessary and takes up more space than required. Ingress and egress on a single ramp on the west side could be controlled by stoplights thus making one ramp work well. (Gerry Widdicombe of the Downtown BID has ideas on how this could work.)

Eliminating the east ramp and opening the area on G Place for café seating in Option #3 is consistent with the public purposes and welcoming feel everyone wants in the renovated Library.

While not detailed in this presentation, we understand that DDOT has discussed opening the alley onto G St. to one-way traffic exiting from the parking garage. We oppose this in the strongest possible terms as the alley abuts the church building, is used frequently for loading to serve the many functions of the church and office building, and would present considerable dangers for pedestrians walking on the G St. sidewalk between 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> St., NW.

### 3) Location of the DC Archives at MLK

While on its face, co-location of the DC Archives with MLK might make sense, it has not been discussed publicly in any serious way. No one knows how much space would be required, or the ideal characteristics of that space to provide a new home for the Archives. What would be the relationship to backup facilities elsewhere? How much would it cost? What would be the implications for additional staff space? *Any potential co-location must be thoroughly discussed in all of its implications with the concerned public, the Advisory Panel and the staff of the Library.*

### 4) Entrance and Vestibule

Option 1 with full glass will make the staircase and the entire building more light-filled and transparent.

### 5) Digital Commons

It is good to see that the Digital Commons has been restored to its prominent location on the first floor. However, while the large pods in the Commons serve to break up the space visually, it is unclear how they will enhance the functionality of the space, how many computers these pods will displace, the types of activities that will take place within them, and their effects on noise levels.

### 6) Popular Library/Café/DC Welcome Center

These functions all seem appropriate for the eastern ground floor of the building. It is important that the café have an entry from 9<sup>th</sup> St. and not solely through the main door.

### 7) Community Alliances

How the “community alliances” will function in the central area of the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor has never been described in any detail and thus, it is difficult to comment on the rendering shown. What organizations will use them? Will they be equipped as offices or just meeting spaces? Will they be sound proofed for privacy? The current renderings make this area appear more as a lounge rather than a place to get any work done.

### 8) Adult Collection Reading Room

Opening this to two stories creates a more airy and spacious feeling characteristic of reading rooms in many libraries. In addition, a 4<sup>th</sup> floor balcony rim study area added onto the Reading Room would make this space more complete without taking too much space from the special collections.

While it is very early in the process to comment on furnishings, the renderings show rather cheap looking white tables and plastic chairs. This room should be much more elegant, with long central reading tables running N/S made of the same blonde wood shown elsewhere, and chairs befitting this soaring space.

#### 9) Auditorium

Location of the auditorium – as opposed to the Reading Room – on the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> floors – with its pinnacle location, roof access and superior light -- gives greater prominence to community events than to reading/information access. Further, while some may take the stairs, many people will also want to ride the elevator to and from events in this space. But the elevators are not really large enough to service crowds of people attending or leaving a performance and may cause frustration for those with bad knees, health or physical problems that make 4 long flights of stairs difficult or impossible.

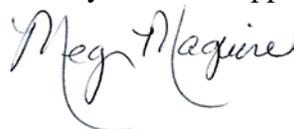
Since an auditorium is a space that the Library staff and some in the public wants included, other potential locations for this function within the building should be studied and discussed with the Advisory Panel.

#### 10) Furniture

See comment in #8 above.

Finally, it is difficult to judge many of these issues because **the narrative for the architectural program does not describe or detail the goals and functions of many of these spaces.** Without a well-written and detailed architectural program that incorporates this information, reviewers are left with little option but to respond to renderings on a purely speculative visual level. As of this date, no such up-to-date narrative has been shared with the Advisory Panel or the public. How can the public know if you have succeeded if you have not been explicit about what you are trying to achieve? I consider this to be a significant problem in the planning process and continue to call on the Library to produce this fundamental document.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this project.



Meg Maguire

Member of the Advisory Panel for Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Library rehabilitation.