

SPRING 2016: OUR NEW PUBLIC LIBRARY IS GETTING CLOSER

We need your financial support NOW to finish the capital campaign in 2016!



Over 600 households and businesses have contributed -- we need you to join us

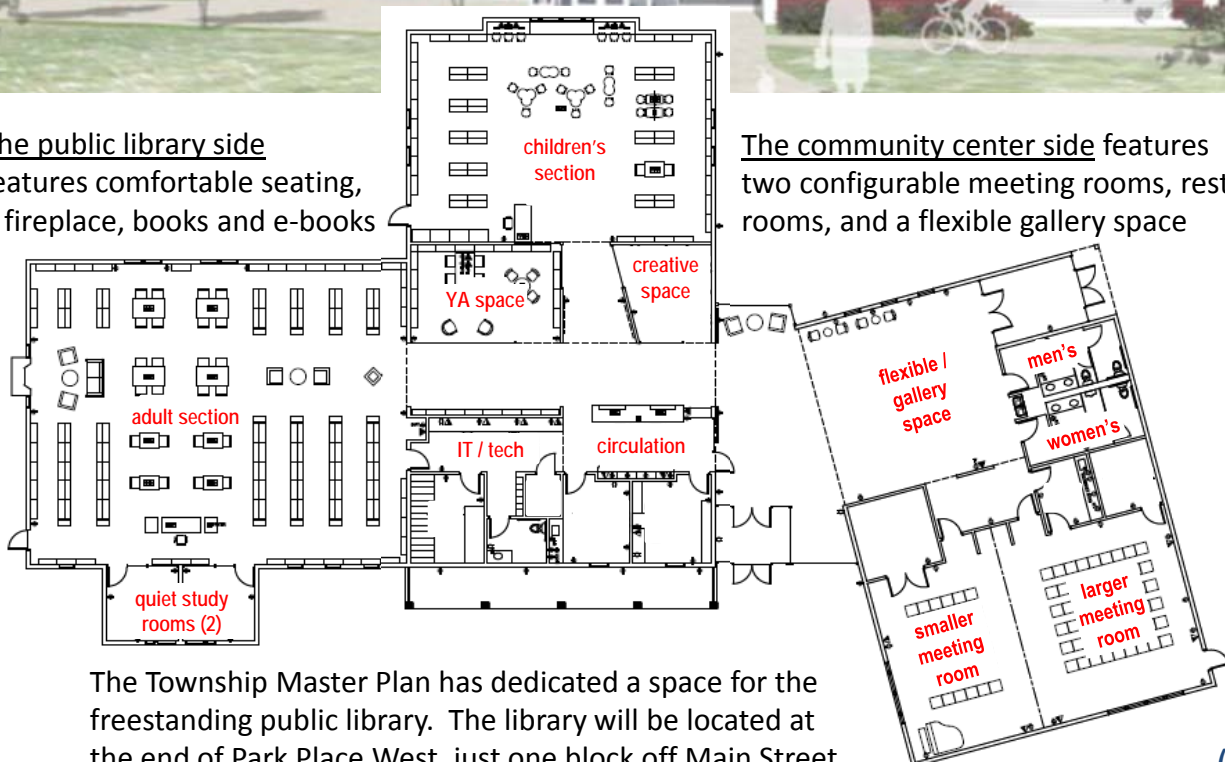
Our capital campaign is currently at \$2.2 MM. The engineering drawings are almost complete, and the project will go out to bid in June. We can break ground when we have secured \$2.7 MM in funds.

In addition to raising \$2.2 MM in capital funds, we have also secured site approval from both the Planning Board (April 7) and the Township Committee (April 11). On May 9, the Township Committee agreed to build the adjacent municipal parking lot on the same timeline.



The public library side features comfortable seating, a fireplace, books and e-books

The community center side features two configurable meeting rooms, rest rooms, and a flexible gallery space



The Township Master Plan has dedicated a space for the freestanding public library. The library will be located at the end of Park Place West, just one block off Main Street.

(OVER)

Cranbury needs a community center

- Sharing a space with the school library no longer meets the public needs of our community.
- Cranbury deserves a freestanding public library that serves as the “community living room” and technology center for the town.
- The new library will have sufficient space for adults, children, and teens to work, relax, gather, and enjoy programming in a comfortable environment, during both the daytime and evening hours.

Cranbury School deserves a dedicated school library to provide secure access and meet the educational needs of Cranbury's K-8 students

- The Cranbury Education Foundation is planning to support reconfiguration of the space to become a multi-media center that can provide unconstrained access for students to develop research skills critical to 21st-century public education.

Once completed, the new library will operate with no net increase to Cranbury taxpayers

- The annual library funding represents about 1% of your property tax bill (and is mandated by NJ law) --- this will be sufficient to operate the new library facility with no increase in taxes
- Independent assessments have confirmed that operating the new building will cost equal to or less than the usage fee currently paid to the school.
- No additional library staff are required to operate the new facility.

Libraries have always been there for you --- now it's your turn!



30 local Chinese families, representing all neighborhoods of Cranbury, organized the second annual Chinese New Year fundraiser.

Good public libraries strengthen communities and raise property values

- 1 Community groups** can reserve the two configurable meeting rooms, even outside library hours, with accessible restrooms and adjacent flexible / gallery space.
- 2 Families** will have a non-retail destination to enjoy the relaxing space, fireplace, sunset, and programming, with room for each person to enjoy the space.
- 3 Teens** will have a year-round group project / hang-out / creative space that isn't attached to their elementary school.
- 4 Adults** will have a comfortable and quiet “common ground” to meet, read and work year-round, as well as access to technology support and services.
- 5 History buffs** will have expanded and easier access to the Cranbury History Center archives.

The new library will have all this, as well as the same great library staff, collections, technology training, books and e-books, and community services you've come to expect.

Selected thoughts on the new library / community center



“Today, the school board and administration must secure the school, including the library. Having the public comingle with students presents an insurmountable safety issue for the school. Having the school and public libraries in separate facilities will allow both programs to meet the needs of their patrons and to establish appropriate security measures.”

- Carol Malouf, Cranbury School Superintendent, 2002-2007



“As a small business, we like to see a reason for community members to come together. A strong public library and community center would be a pillar of our special downtown area, as much as a diner, hair salon or ice cream parlor.”

- Juliana Lako, Owner, Studio 43 Hair Salon



“I believe that the Cranbury Public Library is an important component of the vitality of the town. Activity space is in demand but in short supply, so the library will be meeting a need we have in Cranbury. The location downtown will also be a boost to the local businesses by bringing additional foot traffic to town.”

- Lisbeth Veghte, Cranbury Business Association



“BE IT RESOLVED that the Cranbury Township Committee asserts its endorsement and support of the plan to create a new library building and its endorsement and support of the Cranbury Library Foundation’s private capital campaign to fund it.”

- Cranbury Township Resolution R 06-12-079



“We can see the future, and it includes a clean, comfortable public library for all members of the community, young and old, to come together to read, learn and connect with one another. We see a future in which Cranbury School has a safe and welcoming school library dedicated solely to student learning and exploring.”

- Julie and Stephen Kim, Main Street residents

More endorsements can be found at www.cranburylibraryfoundation.org

LETTER TO THE EDITOR: It's time for Cranbury to have its own library

My wife, Jo Ann, and I have been Cranbury residents for the past 17 years. I served as the Chief School Administrator of Cranbury Township School District from 1989 to 2001. We are proud of what makes our town unique: a National Blue Ribbon School, an exceptional police department, a volunteer rescue squad and fire department, as well as dedicated municipal departments, commissions and boards, all working hard to deliver the best possible service to Cranbury.

However, over the years – and especially during my time as the Chief School Administrator – I have witnessed the challenge of a shared school/public library. I believe the need for a new public library is clear, and I have recently joined the Library Foundation to help make this project happen.

Since 1967 the school library and public library staffs have made the shared space work. However, as the needs and scope of the library program have changed, I believe now is the time for us to build our own stand-alone public library to better meet the needs of our school and community. The new public library will complement the school's library, and everyone in the town will benefit.

There are only a handful of shared school/public libraries left in the U.S., and Cranbury has the last shared K-8/public library in New Jersey. There is a reason for separating school and public libraries: when combined, they simply do not work effectively. The goals and standards of a quality school and quality public library cannot be met effectively in a shared space.

In most schools, the library media center serves as the center of the school; that has never been the case in the combined Cranbury school/public library space. A school serving both elementary and middle school populations needs to provide detailed formal full-class research skills instruction, while providing opportunities for upper-grade students to use the library at will as directed by the classroom teachers. Since the Cranbury School students must be escorted in and out of the school library, they cannot have free access to the school library for research projects.

A shared space has led to many compromises, for both the school and the public:

- (1) Only one class can visit the school library at once.
- (2) Teachers cannot hold specialized events, speakers, or curriculum-themed activities in the library.
- (3) The areas for books, technology and gathering spots is limited by the overall space.
- (4) Adult and children's spaces are not sufficiently separated to allow for different noise and security levels.

Today's school library/media centers need to provide flexible instructional space and furniture. The media center should provide teachers and students with opportunities to work in both small and large groups, while providing opportunities for them to participate in inquiry-based learning activities. A high-quality 21st-century school curriculum must provide opportunities for students to master skills in communication, collaboration, critical thinking, and creative problem solving. This type of learning often requires teachers to design projects and lessons that require cooperation, collaboration and research among the students. This cannot happen in a space shared with a public library.

I believe that a new public library will allow for the school library and the public library to complement each other, to the benefit of the school and the broader community. In the school-only library, I can envision:

- Better programming of school-wide activities.
- Better use of technology.
- Space for cooperative learning activities.
- Improved library skills and research instruction.
- More inquiry-based instruction taking place.
- Space for team teaching.
- More collaborative student activities.
- More curricular-themed programs presented in the library.
- More flexibility in the overall school schedule.
- More child-centered library programs.

A stand-alone public library will be better able to offer community-themed programs for the general public, as well as a better collection and improved resources for the adult and teen populations. A stand-alone public library will also attract more teens to use the library in the evening, weekends and during the summer months. It will also eliminate scheduling conflicts between the two spaces.

A top-notch school such as Cranbury School deserves a dedicated school library that can teach students 21st-century research skills that students need to be successful in their future careers and a top-notch community like Cranbury deserves a place to gather, read, and learn together.

Let's face it: after nearly 50 years of sharing a library with the school, it is time for our community to have its own public library. I hope you'll join me in the final phase of the campaign to make this a reality.

**Dr. Robert J. Bartoletti, Chief School Administrator,
Cranbury School, 1989-2001**