

Appendix D

Evaluation of an Existing Building for Ellsworth Public Library

As part of a long range planning process, two days of focus group discussions were conducted on March 19th and 20th by John Thompson, Director, Indianhead Federated Library System (IFLS). Each of the groups mentioned library space was an issue and space for such things as programming, materials, displays, and an enhanced children's area was needed. These community comments reinforce the observation made in the June 2009 Ellsworth Facility Review. In addition, community members felt a library could also contain some type of community space. The space most often mentioned was a community/senior center while some mentioned a possible library/village government space.

The library became aware of an existing building that might be available for use and requested John Thompson provide an evaluation of the building. As part of the evaluation process, the space need requirements included in the 2009 Facility Review was updated to include a new estimated 20 year design population. The population was based upon the percentage increase since the 1990 census. In addition, to this change the percentage of rural circulation has increased the overall design population. The facility assessment will be based upon the range of building size—13,431 square feet (2009 report) to 16,222 square feet (2012 update). The exact square feet required by the library will vary based upon shared spaces as well as space constraints that normally occur when remodeling an existing building. In general the most effective library spaces are ones that are open and have few if any fixed supports or walls.

On April 4, 2012 a walk through review was conducted of the building located in Downtown Ellsworth. The intent of the review was to determine if the building could be converted into a library and/or a library with one or more uses. The review was not designed to be a through structural and/or code review since the evaluator is not qualified for such a review. **One major issue with existing buildings is the requirement that libraries have 150 pounds per square foot live load.** Most existing structures do not meet this requirement. The building does appear to be well maintained.

Overall Space

- 3+ levels of space – 20,031 square feet
 - Main Floor (7,781)
 - Second upstairs level 3-4 stairs up from main floor (4,720)
 - Basement level (7,530)
- Main Floor and 2nd upstairs level would not fit within identified needs of the library
 - Shared meeting space in basement and other nonassignable space needs (such as HVAC) may reduce overall library needs

Location/Parking

- Good location on well traveled road
- Good onsite parking

Floor Load

- Review of blueprints indicate that the floor loads may be between 100-125 pounds per square foot live load per plan notation
 - Concrete slabs are visible in several locations in the ceiling area of the basement
- Lower shelving and wider aisle may be an alternative for reducing floor load requirement but this increases overall square footage needs
- Additional reinforcement may increase load bearing support

Remodeling Issues

- Building must meet existing ADA and Building Codes
 - Elevator may not meet existing code
- Building has had an exterior addition along with later interior renovation that divided some of the space
- Basement area contains a number of concrete walls that may be load bearing
- Evaluate the proper number and locations of fire exits from all levels especially the basement areas
- Multiple Floors
 - Current elevator stops at four different levels
 - Ramps may be needed between main level and 2nd floor
 - Due to topography the main level and the basement level can both be accessed on a relatively equal basis
- Variety of nooks and small spaces
- Overall condition of HVAC system must be evaluated for age and condition
- Roof/Skylights must be evaluated for age and condition
- Evaluate the ability at add electrical/data connections as needed
- Overall space will need to be painted; new carpeting; and a general refreshment to bring a sense of unity to the spaces
- Need to make the space as Green as possible
- Add additional natural lighting as possible on all levels

Additional Space

- There appears to be potential to add very useful space with a fill in addition

Overall, I believe the building merits closer discussion and review by an architect and engineer. I would recommend the Library Board approach the Village Board requesting permission for the Library Board to select an architectural firm that can assist the library with a complete review of the building as well as develop alternatives if needed.