



San Francisco Public Library

Consolidated Minutes of June 8, 9 & 11, 2022 Community Meetings on the Status of the Ocean View Branch Renovation

Meeting Dates: **June 8, 2022 (6:00 - 7:30 pm), Virtual Meeting on Zoom**
 June 9, 2022 (6:00 – 7:30 pm), I.T. Bookman Community Center
 June 11, 2022 (11:00 am – 12:30 pm), Ocean View Branch Library

AGENDA

- Welcome and Introductions
- Ocean View Branch History
- Guiding Principles
- Community Engagement
- Preliminary Project Assessment (PPA)
- Local Initiatives
- Next Steps
- Questions

Welcome Remarks and Introductions – Rebecca Alcalá-Veráflor

At this series of community meetings, the Library and Public Works shared the presentation: [June 2022 Community Meetings Presentation](#).

Rebecca welcomed everyone and introduced the following people:

- Michael Lambert, City Librarian
- David Long, Transportation Planner, San Francisco County Transportation Authority (SFCTA)
- Connie Wolf, Library Commission President
- Ernest Jones, Legislative Aide to District 11 Supervisor Asha Safai
- Bill Barnes, Legislative Aide to District 11 Supervisor Asha Safai (on Saturday)
- Jaena Cabrera, Ocean View Branch Manager
- Andy Sohn, Public Works Architect
- Al Perez, Commissioner (on Saturday)
- Marie Ciepela, Friends of SFPL Executive Director (on Saturday)

Ocean View Branch History

- **1903** First Ocean View Branch opens on Broad Street near Capitol Avenue
- **1923** Ocean View Branch moves to 111 Broad Street. near Plymouth.

- **1980** Ocean View Branch changed from Branch Library to Reading Center with decrease in staffing and hours
- **1998** Community members appeal to Mayor Willie Brown for a new branch with full library services
 - Michael Lambert acknowledged Mary Harris as the main person responsible for getting the Ocean View library here.
- **2000** New Ocean View Branch opens on Randolph Street.

Guiding Principles

- Libraries for the 21st Century
- Flexible and Adaptable Building Designs
 - In the past we built technology into the buildings but then it becomes out of date. How do we make a space that is flexible?
- Multifunctional Community Program Areas
- Transparency and Ease of Wayfinding—make it easy to find collections

Community Engagement

- **2018** Branch Capital Projects Feasibility Study conducted. Study was specific to current location and meeting info is available online.
- **2019** Community meetings on February 20, March 9 & 12. Showed designs of what’s possible with existing location and solicited feedback.
- **2019** Community Meetings on November 2, 6 & 23. Presented Ocean View Feasibility Study
- Presentations and minutes available at [Ocean View Capital Improvement \(sfpl.org\)](http://Ocean View Capital Improvement (sfpl.org))

Community Feedback

- Solicited feedback from community members about what works and doesn’t work at Randolph Street location.
- Size mentioned repeatedly; not just physical size of the building but the size of the collection.
- Community room is too small and needs afterhours access.
- The library needs a larger presence in the neighborhood
- Increase variety in collections and offer more items in Spanish.
- The current location is too small to be a community hub.

Michael Lambert noted that Ocean View has highest concentration of youth and families and the neighborhood wants the same access to technology, services, etc. that are available at other libraries.

Preliminary Project Assessment (PPA)

- The PPA is preliminary planning review, which provides planning and environmental feedback
- Submitted the PPA to Planning Department in February and received a response in April
- PPA results in an outline of planning procedures
- PPA next steps may include an Environmental Evaluation per CEQA (California Environmental Quality Act)

- The building design represents preliminary location and scale. It is for planners' use when establishing the environmental process.

Library Location Alternatives

- Library/Public Works (PW) looked at 4 location alternatives on Brotherhood Way. Site feasibility was done on Brotherhood Way locations because this is city-owned property.
- Evaluated alternatives based on seven criteria:
 - Neighborhood connectivity
 - Safe pedestrian access
 - Accessible path from transit
 - Existing vehicular infrastructure
 - Level building site
 - Synergy with existing site amenities
 - Within OMI neighborhood
- The recommended site meets all the criteria and has synergy with mini park and garden.
- Engaged with Bureau of Urban Forestry to analyze trees. Trees will be either kept, transplanted, or removed and replaced based on species and condition. There will be no net loss of trees.

Program Highlights:

- Full library program reflecting most up-to-date trends in library design. Similar to large regional libraries such as Half Moon Bay and Brisbane.
- Entry plaza scaled to neighborhood, provides view into building and a sense of welcome.
- Much Larger Collection; Robust Language Collections
- Large Children's Room
- Dedicated Teen Room
- Maker / Steam Lab
- Connection to Outdoor Space
- More Readers Seats & Tables
- Group Study Rooms
- Technology Rich; Laptop Lending, Desktop Computing
- Large Community Room-Up To 200 People

Key Design Considerations From PPA

- Pedestrian safety and access. Will work with SFMTA on color curbs, disabled parking, loading zone, drop off zone.
- Partnering concept and co-locating public facilities.
- Design should anticipate potential future projects.

Planning Summary

- Environmental Studies Required for Planning Application:
 - Biological resources tree study.

- Geology and soil geotechnical hazards study.
- Shadow analysis impact on open space.
- Noise impacts of mechanical equipment.
- Transportation TBD, contingent on loading analysis.
- Environmental Review:
 - The upcoming Concept Design and Planning Application process will determine degree of environmental review. A full Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is unlikely to be required.

Next Steps

- SF Planning PPA intake Feb 2022
- PPA Letter issued April 28, 2022
- Building Design Aug 2022 – Oct 2023
- Community Engagement Winter 2023
- Planning Application Fall 2023

Brotherhood Way Active Transportation and Open Space Plan - David Long, San Francisco County Transportation Authority (SFCTA)

Michael L. Introduced David Long and explained that SFCTA was invited as part of good government and collaboration. The library project is separate and not dependent on the SFCTA study. Our timeline is shorter.

- SFCTA received a grant from Caltrans to develop the Brotherhood Way Active Transportation and Open Space Plan.
- This initiative is a community driven planning process to develop near and long-term concepts for streets that improve safety, connectivity, and circulation within the OMI and Merced Extension Triangle neighborhoods.
- The study has not started but will probably begin within the next six months.
- Three rounds of outreach are planned once funds are received:
 - We will do an analysis to identify what the needs are.
 - Design concepts together with the community.
 - Present ideas for community review of the draft recommendations.
- We recognize that there are safety and connectivity challenges on Brotherhood Way, particularly on Orizaba, Sagamore and Alemany.
- Changes to one street impacts others so we are looking at improvements throughout the project area.
- SFCTA Study Schedule
 - Starts November 2022
 - Public Outreach Spring 2023 –Fall 2024
 - Recommendations Summer 2024
 - Final Plan Early 2025

Questions and Discussion – June 8, 2022

Note: “PW” signifies Public Works and the respondent Andy Sohn

Have you done a needs assessment? Not just comments from meetings but a systematic needs assessment. Do you have any statistics for the numbers of books, shelf space etc. planned for the new location? I am concerned about traffic and complexity of the intersection at the proposed location. Are there any statistics on traffic accidents, speed, etc? When was it settled where location would be?

- (LIB) We can provide information about the current collection size and will include in minutes. We don’t have designs yet so I can’t speak to future collection size. A needs assessment was done as part of the feasibility study. The study looked at what was needed and how the Ocean View Branch compared to other locations.
- Ocean View Current Collection Size:

OVI Collection Size FY21-22	
Material Type	Number of Items
Print Adult	5,179
Print Juvenile	7,832
Print Teen	898
Audio Adult	136
Audio Juvenile	81
Audio Teen	4
Video Adult	786
Video Juvenile	194
Video Teen	94
Total	15,204

What current data is available on traffic conditions? Brotherhood Way is on a high injury network.

- (LIB) The city understands Brotherhood Way needs safety improvements. We are at the beginning stages of figuring out what is needed.

Is this location a done deal or is the location still up for debate?

- (PW) We had 2 studies, feasibility and site selection, where we landed on this site. This site is the most viable location and the intention is to pursue this site.

I'm vehemently opposed to this location, particularly because of the traffic and noise. Why not build on existing location? City doesn't have much open space and once the space is lost it is gone for good.

- (PW) There is less than 2,500 square feet of site space on Randolph. The space can't support a 20k-square-foot building and it is not viable for an expanded branch. We looked at remodeling the existing building in the first round of meetings, but we heard loud and clear from the community that a renovation would not be sufficient to meet their needs and they needed a new library. METNA neighbors were at some of these meetings.

Every mention is about OMI but no mention of METNA even though we will be impacted. I found out about this last week and am very disappointed there was no outreach.

Other attendees also expressed concern about a perceived lack of outreach.

- (LIB) Meetings were held in the neighborhood in February, March and November of 2019. Some were at IT Bookman and some were at the branch. Meetings were publicly advertised at library and through our community partners. Someone from METNA attended at least one of the meetings.

I found the outreach to be problematic and I was not directed to the right people when I had questions about it. I looked at David Long's plan for traffic and the solution is flawed. The problem is that the traffic is a major problem and examples of how to solve the problem mean the library is in the wrong location.

- (LIB) I'm sorry you were mis-directed, and I will connect with team to make sure information is clear and you get directed to the right people.
- (SFCTA) Regarding traffic solutions we haven't talked to community members about needs so we have not developed any concepts or recommendations yet. The source of concern is coming from a draft document created for a different purpose and that is not being considered.

It's preposterous to put this library here. You have to use five crosswalks to get to library and even Google Maps captured an accident at this site. My second concern is that the city grabs open space to destroy trees and build things. Quit taking open space.

I would like copy of everything discussed and presented so that moving forward we can discuss this in a rational way. Closing Brotherhood Way won't work.

I don't want to wait until the next community meetings in November before discussing this again. There are a lot of reasons closing Brotherhood Way won't work.

Several attendees were under the impression that Brotherhood Way was being closed.

- (SFCTA) Sorry for any confusion. Our transportation study was just funded and is not kicking off for another six months. No decisions have been made yet and won't be made without community input. The plan showing Brotherhood Way being closed was a draft that should not have been circulated and is not being considered.

I live at Summit 800 and my children go to school on Brotherhood Way. I have concerns about closing Brotherhood Way and diverting the traffic to another neighborhood. It doesn't solve the problem but just makes it someone else's problem. There is speeding and red light running but no enforcement.

Other attendees expressed similar concerns about traffic and safety.

Early on we were told that the city wanted this site because they already owned it and wanted the land to be free. If the city selects this site will they put in traffic changes to make the site safe?

- (SFCTA) We hope to recommend short term solutions right away, but our study is proceeding separately from the library project. The projects are proceeding independently but coordinated.

Do you think the proximity of new location to the existing location will impact patronage positively?

- (LIB) Yes. The new location will be more visible and within walking distance of the old location. It will also provide after-hours community room use and an increased collection.

Several attendees expressed concern that no additional parking is planned for new site. Other attendees pointed out that current library doesn't have dedicated parking.

Can you clarify the timeline?

- (PW) The timeline is in flux. If additional environmental studies are needed it would add a year and half to the timeline.

How are qualified firms selected for the architectural work?

- (PW) The Bureau of Architecture is the architect. There won't be a Request for Proposal (RFP) but we have engineers and architects on contract to assist.

What will the present library be converted to?

- (LIB) The Library will work with the Department of Real Estate to determine the best use for building.

Can you share slide deck?

- (LIB) It will be shared on the web site. We can also share via email to everyone attending.

I've lived in the OMI neighborhood for 50 years. I didn't use the library when it was a storefront but got community members together to appeal to Mayor Willie Brown for a new branch with full library services. We have outgrown the library, so we had community meetings to discuss

remodeling the existing site. Our District Supervisor came to these meetings and proposed a new library. We started to look at sites, but most wouldn't make enough impact because they were not large enough. I'm excited when seeing pictures. We can find ways to make the area safer and we have two years to work together and make this a wonderful place.

Many attendees expressed that current library is too small, and that the neighborhood is underserved and deserves the same library services as other neighborhoods. Traffic and safety is a concern but this can be mitigated and there is time to do so.

I'm excited to see the thoughts about new technologies etc. that current library doesn't have.
Future-proofing library.

- (LIB) Our ideas are just ideas; we want to hear from the community. We're very focused on Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts & Math (STEAM) and new ways to interact. Future proofing the library by making buildings flexible instead of building in technology that goes out of date.

Will the library cover up the Head and Brotherhood Mini Park? Can the park be improved?

- (PW) The park won't be covered. Rec & Park works with us and is aware of this project as well as the aspirations for park improvement.

Will library construction interfere with park access?

- (PW) Head Street won't be impacted.

Questions and Discussion – June 9, 2022

What will happen to the current space?

- (LIB) The library at its current location will stay open until the library opens in the new location, then the property will be sold to abate the cost of the new building.

Why will you close Brotherhood Way?

- (SFCTA) The idea to close Brotherhood Way is an outdated concept that came from a discarded draft and is currently not a recommendation. The study to improve safety and connectivity within the OMI and Merced Extension Triangle neighborhoods is starting from square one and will begin in the fall.
- (LIB) There are no plans to close Brotherhood Way, and the Library will build the new branch regardless of the study.

What studies have been done regarding the impact the Library will have on parking, congestion and traffic in the neighborhood?

- (LIB) This project is in its early stages and a lot of work still needs to happen. We are aware of the transportation and parking issues and will meet with the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA) to discuss ways to mitigate the traffic.

Brotherhood Way is a major thoroughfare. Will there be handicapped or twenty-minute parking?

- (LIB) We haven't done any design work yet, but pedestrian safety will be supported through our design process and our conversations with SFMTA.

I am excited about the project and assume the Library will address the safety issues.

- (LIB) Yes, we will partner with SFMTA to improve and enhance access to the site.

I am also excited by the project. District 11 has the highest percentage of students and building this new branch is a huge opportunity for this neighborhood. Having said that, as a disability advocate, pedestrian safety is a must.

Will there be more community meetings before the Library settles on a design? Traffic issues should be an ongoing conversation and a study needs to be done. Why are the Library and traffic projects not aligned?

- (LIB) The projects will not be done at the same time, but we will pursue interim mitigation. Transportation is a priority, and we will explore all possibilities to improve transportation and pedestrian safety. We mention the study by SFCTA so that you are aware of the project. A solution, however, is not dependent on the study.

The OMI (Ocean View, Merced-Heights, Ingleside) neighborhood has the most amount of youth in the City and they need services that will allow them to learn, grow and play.

- (LIB) We are still in the beginning stages of the design process. To get an idea of the possible services this project could provide, please see the [Library's renovation page](#) for our engagement with other projects.

If the Library builds on this open space, then other departments will follow and build on other green spaces. Can you guarantee that the open space will be preserved?

- (LIB) Our focus is on providing the best possible library services. We are neither in charge of nor are we a part of any talks about other development projects. We will however, partner with San Francisco Rec & Park to enhance the space that surrounds the branch.
- (PW) Uses for public open space is limited to services that are deemed appropriate, and commercial development wouldn't be deemed appropriate.

I'm concerned that a three-story library will be built in a neighborhood where congestion has been increasing.

- (LIB) We are budgeted for a 20k square foot building, which is two floors. We will see if it is possible to add a third floor after submitting the Preliminary Planning Assessment.
- (PW) We over scale projects because it is difficult to add to a project later. We would partner with another agency, who would occupy the third floor.
- (LIB) The preliminary building design has a third floor, but we won't necessarily have one. The preliminary building design sets our boundaries and allows us to be creative within them.

There have been many traffic accidents at this location. It is unsafe for seniors and those with disabilities. This project is not designed for District 7 residents.

- (LIB) This branch serves District 11, the Ocean View neighborhood. We are not deprioritizing District 7, in fact District 7 is the only district with four branch libraries. This facility will serve the entire OMI region.

At what point do you decide that the current site is not the right location?

- (LIB) We could reconsider the location if there were problems that couldn't be solved.

The expectation that people will take public transportation is a myth. The branch will draw people from other districts, many of whom will drive and make parking even more difficult for residents.

- (LIB) We are at the early stages of this project and are just beginning to have the many conversations that are needed. We have these meetings so that we can problem solve, and there will be plenty of time and opportunity for the community to engage with the library.

Why wasn't a formal needs assessment done? Were other sites considered?

- (LIB) The Library has done its due diligence. Feasibility studies were done in 2018 and 2019, which were presented at Library Commission meetings and are available on our website.

Questions and Discussion – June 11, 2022

Do you envision that the new library will serve similar demographic? Do you know how the current demographic gets to the library and do you expect them to get to the new library the same way?

- (LIB) Yes, we expect the new location will serve the existing demographic and looked at potential locations with this in mind. We also recognize that with expanded services more people will use the space and we are planning for a regional library

How do you plan to allow for additional cars?

- (LIB) Michael Lambert will meet with SFMTA director Jefferey Tumlin. The drive from the new library to existing library is ¼ mile and the walk from the current library only took a few minutes. The plan is to explore how to increase public transit access and make a safe corridor for pedestrians.

I'm a Lakeview resident and I never come to this library because it is too small and has limited services. Rather than opposing this location because of traffic safety the question should be why don't we have the same safety as other neighborhoods? This is an underserved neighborhood and we shouldn't let lack of transportation be a reason to not build this library.

I'm a heavy user of the current branch and I saw nothing to address senior needs. Whether by walking, biking or public transport there is no safe way to get to the new library. What are you doing for seniors?

- (LIB) We're going to program the space for seniors and everyone in the community. We don't have the design yet and need your voices. Assistive technology can be part of the design.

I'm a resident of the Merced Extension Triangle and am concerned about the grant proposal study that showed closure of Brotherhood Way at Orizaba.

- (SFCTA) That was in year old draft that should not have been released. We are starting from scratch.

Park Merced and Stonestown are expanding and Brotherhood Way is a conduit.

Why are the community engagement meetings scheduled so closely to the planning application?

- (LIB) There will be more engagement than what is on schedule. Michael Lambert assured the attendees that there will be additional meetings. Also clarified that the Winter 2023 community engagement refers to February/March of 2023 and is only eight months away.

One of the key design considerations from PPA is that the design should anticipate future projects. When will we hear about future projects and will they involve a 3rd floor?

- (LIB) Michael Lambert told the audience that his vision for library is a joint use facility with a robust library experience and a robust park experience. We're not committed to a 3rd floor but it's a worthwhile exercise to ask the question. We are budgeting to build a 20,000-square-foot library.

What other locations were looked at and why were they declined?

- (LIB) The library worked with the city's Real Estate division to look at properties for sale, but we came up empty. We tried twice but there were no properties available that met our needs.

My main concern is Arch Street because it carries 37k vehicles a day. Is closing Arch Street on the table?

- (SFCTA) We don't have any formal recommendations, but I can say with confidence that what was shown on the discarded draft planning document is not likely to happen.

SFMTA has proposed a bike path but we have been arguing with city about where bike path will be. There is a bike path on plan, but it shouldn't be approved yet.

Is this just an overview of the plans?

- (LIB) Yes this is just an overview. We want to reengage with the community and reintroduce our aspirations for neighborhood.

Slide 20 with the possible floor plans is vague and generalized. Is there more detail?

- (LIB) There is not any additional detail. This is intentional because we still need to work with the community.

This is a long-underserved area and we should identify what services aren't available locally. People shouldn't have to go to the Main Library for services. Think about what you'd like to see.

I'm a landscape architect and site analysis is one of our jobs. Supervisor Safai's office has not offered a promise to not have future development on green belt. Also, I have several design concerns: Traffic across 5 cross walks is an attractive nuisance. A 200-seat community room means people will come by car, so there will be 100 cars coming down Orizaba. This plan competes with the IT Bookman center. During the Zoom meeting this was presented as a District 11 library until it was raised that library is used more by District 7 than District 11.

- (LIB) This isn't a competition between districts 7 and 11. Technically the library is in District 11 which is also an equity zone. The Excelsior Branch is the only other library in District 11. The plan is for a regional library that serves District 7, 11 and all of the OMI neighborhood.

The project on the table is supported by Supervisor Safai.

The only reason Brotherhood Way even exists is because freeways were more important than Black lives. There are plenty of options to solve the traffic and safety concerns.

I believe agencies will find ways to mitigate issues and this plan should be supported.

I'm concerned about parts of the green space marked as a development opportunity. Why is this on the map?

- (DPW) Development Opportunity doesn't always mean buildings. It can mean Rec & Park facilities, infrastructure, etc.

Michael Lambert – our timeline is different than SFCTA. We are doing all due diligence but want to get library built.

I think there has been a lack of communication and lack of opportunity for input. We need to hear from community at large and I would like to offer assistance with surveys.

- Community member provided their contact info to library.

We need to cultivate the kids in this community and need to make this happen.

- (LIB) Rebecca shared her own personal story about the impact of libraries on her and her family and why she is so passionate about public libraries. The community is very important and we need community engagement.

This is such an important opportunity. We need to stay engaged and involved and I'm certain we can work together to solve the various issues.

Prior to 2002, the Merced Extension Triangle neighborhood was in District 11. It's now in District 7 but will probably be back in 11 at some point. This isn't about us vs. them.

Michael Lambert thanked the attendees; said he heard them loud and clear and that this was the first of many conversations.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Michael Roman and Florinda Battad.