SITE SELECTION FOR RURAL PUBLIC LIBRARIES

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INTRODUCTION

A leisurely Sunday afternoon drive along any principle highway in America will inevitably bring the traveler to one of the many small towns that dot the countryside. The more perceptive observer will learn a great deal about the town by simply driving through it.

On the outskirts a small plaza of shops gives evidence of new life in the town. Further along, once identical company houses indicate some native industry which flourished in earlier days. The old wealth of the town is seen in Victorian mansions now serving as realtors' offices or funeral homes.

In the next block are the false-front shops which make up the downtown area. Here the needs of the citizens continue to be met by the following entities: a grocery store, a "five-and-ten," a few clothing shops, a bar-and-grill, some specialty shops, a drug store, a cozy family restaurant, and in the midst of this small business district, the public library.

Nowhere is it chiseled in stone that public libraries must be located downtown. Indeed, in many towns the public library is actually located a block or two away from town in a residential or community services area. But the nostalgic notion of going to town to check out a two-week supply of library books is more than just a slice of Americana for millions of people; it's a real

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part of day-to-day living in the 1980's.

A search of the library literature will show that a great deal has been written on site selection for new libraries in large cities. Mere paragraphs, however, are all that have been published on site selection for libraries in small towns.

The purpose of this article is to discuss the factors which should be considered in siting a library within any population area, and to relate those factors to the special considerations of small towns.

PRIOR CONSIDERATIONS

The Program. Before a town map is consulted, before the town leaders begin their discussions on the choice of a site for the library, a program should be completed. Galvin defines a program as:

". . . a written statement prepared by the librarian or other competent authority describing the purpose, scope and function of the library building. It should state as comprehensively as possible the specific needs of the library and should outline in detail the areas, their requirements, relationships, and functions within the building." (1)

The program, then, outlines the goals of the library and envisions the spatial requirements to achieve those goals. All too often, however, the program is incorrectly written to suit a preselected site.

As originally stated in 1876, the American Library Association's motto still holds true: "To reach the largest proportion of citizens with the best library materials and services, at the lowest unit cost." (2) If, according to the program, the town sees its library as a comfortable building with books where a

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citizen can spend a quiet afternoon, then a park or garden would serve as an appropriate location. If, however, the town sub-scribes to the concept of the library as a dynamic institution which should actively assist in the self-education of its patrons, then the wording of the program would indicate that the library must occupy a central spot where it can be recognized by the townspeople and not ignored.

The Professionals. If at all possible, a consultant should be hired to assist the library planning committee with the task. The difference between a successful library and a less successful one can depend on the choice of a good site. Galvin defines a consultant as a librarian who has studied library planning problems and who has been a member of the planning team on one or more successful library building projects. (3)

An architect with experience in library planning may also serve as a consultant. Architects, however, do not always understand the problem of site selection for a public library building. A less-experienced architect may favor a site which will provide an attractive setting for the building he designs. The committee must assure the architect that the true purpose of the building is to attract and serve the greatest possible number of patrons at the lowest cost. If the architect understands this very basic tenet, the work of fulfilling the program can begin.

The experience and advice of the architect (and other public planning officials) should be respected. With a background knowledge of the trends of community development, the architect

can point out aspects of a site which might escape a person less knowledgeable in the subject. When the chosen site possesses some less desirable aspects, the architect can appraise the feasibility of creating a design which would not only reduce the problems but would add to the aesthetic appeal of the building.

Miniter noted that of the librarians in his survey who noted dissatisfaction with their building sites, approximately 70 percent did not employ library consultants. (4)

SITE FACTORS

Access. The primary consideration in the selection of a site is that the location be one that can be easily reached by the greatest number of potential patrons. The entrance to the building should have as few obstacles as possible. Depending on the local area, patrons may arrive at the library in any of various ways. Chitwood expresses this idea rather colorfully:

"(Patrons) walk; they bicycle; they come by car as individuals and in small groups; they come in large groups by bus; in some areas they use horses and mules or other beasts of burden, including vehicles with the animals as the prime movers; they may use skis and sleds, or even helicopters and other types of airborne vehicles." (5)

Under most circumstances, however, towns will be dealing with patrons who walk or drive to the library. Not only adults drive to the library; young people use cars to plan educational/social meetings at the library during the evening hours.

A public library, then, needs to be located in a central area of the town where it can be easily reached by people working in town, people coming to town for shopping and other services, and adults and their children who live in the surrounding

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residential areas. Moreover, the library should be located at a main crossroads for people who drive into town to shop, pay bills, seek out services. The site should be near stops or transfers for any public transportation the area may support.

In many rural places an actual town large enough to support a library does not exist. Beckerman notes that in these cases the library should be located on the "most heavily travelled vehicular route" (6) to attract the greatest number of potential customers. For example, the Groton (Conn., pop. 10,086) Public Library is centrally located on State Route 117 between U.S. Route 1 and I-95 on a former drive-in movie lot. Several thousand residents are within walking distance of the library. (7)

Centrality is key here, but safety of access is an adjunct factor. A library located on a very busy highway will require a separate street-type entrance or a driveway.

Setting. The site most accessible is generally in the heart of the town's business district, at the point where the two main streets intersect. However, town officials may not see this as the best setting for the library. A spacious tract of land adjacent to the public school grounds may be available at no additional cost to the town. Consideration may be given to this location if the school is located in the heart of town, on a main pedestrian street, where adults are constantly passing on their daily errands.

The Rebecca M. Arthurs Memorial Library in Brookville,

Pa. (pop. 4,568) is located three-quarters of the way up a long, steep hill in a pleasant residential area. The library is within a few blocks of the town's schools, but is a great distance from the business district and is difficult for patrons to reach without a car. (8)   Wheeler cautions that an attempt to locate the public library on or near school grounds simply to better serve the needs of the children should be avoided. (9)   School libraries tailor their collections to the needs of their own students;   a public library must serve the needs of all the citizens of the area and be accessible to them.

Towns may also have free land available in a downtown park. Thompson notes the following very real advantages to an open setting: Quiet, good daylight, safety from fire, and space for future expansion. (10)   However, noise can be overcome by acoustics, the need for good reading light can be achieved with light fixtures, firewalls and special tiles can reduce the likelihood of damage from fires. Remoteness from the people, however, cannot be overcome. Eisner states that a town that locates its library in a park risks vandalism, thievery and danger to its patrons. He suggests that the cost of protection could be put to better use in the library itself. (11)

Natural boundaries, such as oceans, lakes, or rivers, can also require a change in setting. Growth will not be circular for a town located along a shore, but will spread in a limited arc out from the central core. As a town ages, the waterfront area will generally deteriorate to a warehouse district.   If a

town determines that its pattern of growth is away from the core, Galvin recommends that the location of the library be planned for the new business district. (12)

Size. When the building program has been written, with calculations of the interior space and the estimate of the future requirements for expansion, the size needed for the building site will become apparent. Metcalf recommends that the size of the new building should be adequate for the present collections, staff, and readers, plus the anticipated growth for at least 25 years, and preferably for 50 years. (13)   A site too small for horizontal expansion would require that the building be designed for vertical expansion. A one-level building is less expensive to staff and easier to control than a multi-story building, but it would also require a larger initial land purchase. (14) Also, rectangular service areas within a building are easier to supervise; thus, rectangular sites which permit rectangular construction are preferred. (15)

Orientation. The library planning committee can usually rely on the opinion of the local architects and engineers to choose the most advantageous orientation of the building. Some factors should be noted, however.

The burning rays of the sun require special consideration only in the Mediterranean and subtropical climates. However, as a general rule, in the northern hemisphere the front of the building should face north, with an eastward position being the second choice. (16)   Western sunlight is difficult to control in

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most parts of the United States. Eastern sunlight is less of a problem because it is rarely hot by the time the library is open, and also because it penetrates a shorter distance into a room. Northern sunlight is noticed only early in the morning or late afternoon when it is less bright. Also, northern sunlight can usually be kept out during the summer months by relatively inexpensive landscaping.

In an effort to avoid western-exposure sunlight, a rectangular building with long north-south sides and short east-west walls is preferred. Because of the angle of penetration of the sun's rays, a building facing southwest or southeast will usually suffer from southern, western and eastern sun even more than if it faced due south.

Despite the orientation, the amount of direct sunlight (as well as heat and cold) which enters a room depends to some extent on the height of the windows, the percentage of wall space that the windows occupy, and the depth of the room from the windows to the inner walls. Where an architect anticipates problems from brilliant afternoon sun, windows can be excluded. Both stacks or service areas can be located along these blank walls.

Windows should not be excluded altogether, though. Display windows and interior views should face a heavily-travelled street or highway to catch the eye of the passersby. Windows can be put to architectural advantage, too, to enhance a feeling of openness, to allow welcome daylight in a reading room, or to highlight a particularly attractive view.

Reading rooms should face away from outside noises. But the noise of traffic or industry need not disturb library patrons. Sounds can be buffered by the placement of service areas and book stacks, and the proper use of acoustical insulation. By allowing windows to remain closed, air conditioning can further cut outside noise. If windows must be open for ventilation, however, the site should be studied to develop a plan for the building which would permit some isolation of outside noises.

If strong winds and cold weather are a continuing problem, the entrance to the library should face the sheltered side. In northwestern Pennsylvania, for example, the stronger winds and storms usually come from the north and west. By placing the entrance on the south or east, the building design may not require a large entrance lobby.

Chitwood recommends that a library building be placed as close to the street as possible for three very practical reasons: To be closer to where the people pass by, to use more of the site for the building itself, and to eliminate the problem of garden maintenance. It is hard to argue against the beauty of a landscaped library entrance. In reality, few landscaped public areas are well-maintained. Limited library funds would be better spent on library materials and conventional library personnel. (17)

Another consideration for orientation is the provision of access to the rear of the building for service and delivery vehicles. If an alley is the only means of rear access, the

alley rights should be studied. Moreover, if bookmobiles are
to be stored in or behind the building, access must be ensured
for these large vehicles. Galvin notes that the large bookmobile
will be 30 feet or more in length, and will require a consider-
able turning radius. (18)

Occasionally, the only suitable location for the public
library is one which places constraints on the external design,
internal floor space, or proper orientation of the proposed
building. Strickland suggests that if these constraints are
serious, then another site may have to be found; if they are no
more than a challenge to an imaginative architect and librarian,
the resulting building may be entirely satisfactory. (19)

The theoretical differences of the placement of public
libraries on their grounds can be seen in two libraries located
only 30 miles apart in western Pennsylvania. The Clarion
(pop. 6,664) Free Library is set back from the street, with a
short staircase leading to a prominent entrance. The Brockway
(pop. 2,376) Public Library rests at street level with a wide
glass front facing pedestrians. Wheeler expresses this basic
conflict between two rather opposite ideas, and adds an insight-
ful comment:

"(a) that the library building should be a beautiful
building, located, designed and placed on its site to attract the
entire intelligent community to use it, and therefore easily
approached and entered and not set back from the sidewalk, nor
raised up on an elevated base requiring any steps to enter it,
but on the contrary giving a view to passers-by of the interest-
ing and busy interior of the library in action, and (b) that the
library should be 'set off' in landscaped grounds, set up on a
base or pedestal to make it more impressive, and given an aura of
'dignity,' often false and inappropriate because a good library

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has an inherent dignity derived from effective performance of its essential function of serving its community. It seems obvious that the latter concept must inevitably reduce the library's visual attraction to that considerable segment of a community's population, especially adults, which should but does not use it." (20).

An ideal orientation is by no means as important as an otherwise strategic site; the perfect orientation may place the library on the northern side of the street, but if the people walk mostly on the southern side of the same street, and the lot is available, the better choice would be the side where the potential patrons are.

Slope. Architects can design buildings to fit any space or any surface, but the shape and contours of any potential sites should be given due consideration. A clever structural design to correct an excessive slope (that is, one over 15%) can add considerably to the total cost of the structure, particularly if the design requires the use of special materials or techniques. (21)

Depending on the location, a considerable slope may be an advantage or a disadvantage. For any given site, usually one side is the obvious choice for the entrance--a point at which traffic to the library would naturally converge. If this entrance is at the highest level, and requires no stairs, it will be more inviting to potential patrons.

Metcalf asserts that, other things being equal, the sites to avoid are ones where the ground slopes upward from the entrance, or slopes from one side to another. A downward slope to the rear of the building permits windows at the basement level on as many

as three sides, and allows the design to include a loading platform at the rear of the building. A flat site, however, should be preferred to one that slopes objectionably. (22)

Underground Features. The library building committee need not worry about basement problems on sites large enough for the construction of single-level buildings. However, good sites in the heart of towns are generally small. Such sites would likely require the design to include a basement, ground floor, and first floor.

Library book shelving creates heavy, dead weight. Regardless of the location of the book stacks, the building must be strong structurally, built on a uniform foundation material. Solid rock, of course, makes a fine foundation for a library. New sites, strewn with boulders, would necessitate additional expense to remove the rocks. Sites with loose fine sand, soft clay, silt or peaty materials may require piles to be driven down great distances in order to provide an adequate foundation.

Underground conditions should be determined before the final decision on the site is made. The conditions of the soil and rock may be uniform or may vary from one site to another on the same street. Generally, the architects, engineers and builders in the area understand the local terrain. To be certain no surprises are encountered, though, test borings can be made to obtain samples of the underground formations to determine the stability of the site.

Basements can be most handy for storage. But the presence

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of underground springs or ground water can play havoc with foundations. (23) Waterproofing a basement is expensive, and difficulties arise sooner or later.

An otherwise good site should not be rejected because of foundation factors. The library building committee should make a sincere effort to learn about all potential problems in advance, though, to anticipate any added costs of construction.

Cost of Site. With few exceptions, the best site for the location of a dynamic library will be expensive property--property very desirable to commercial interest. The right site for a library does not have to be the choicest property, located at the busiest intersection, but the site should be very close to it. For a successful site, the cost may run as high as 1/3 or 1/2 the cost of the construction of the building. (24)

It would be a serious mistake, a waste of taxpayers money, to select a site on economy alone. A poor site greatly reduces a library's potential use. In the long run, it costs nearly as much to run an unused library as it does to run a well-used library. (25)

In both cities and towns across America the front foot value of downtown property continues to be far higher than that in any outlying shopping center or residential location. The reason that downtown property continues to be most valuable is that it still attracts the greatest number of persons by location alone.

The annual operating costs of a library are usually from 1/4 to 1/2 the cost of the building. For matters of illustration,

assume the annual operating cost of the Bedrock Public Library to be $25,000, or 1/4 the original cost of the building ($100,000). Assuming zero inflation, within 20 years the accumulated operating cost will be five times the original cost of the building ($25,000 x 20 or $500,000)! Thus, within a brief period of time, the initial investment in the building and its site will be dwarfed by the operating expenses.

Maximum use is synonymous with lower service-unit costs. If it shows good business sense for a successful merchant to purchase an expensive site for his retail store, then it is equally important for the library to demonstrate the same good business sense. To use a parallel example, the U.S. Postal Service selects prime real estate for its downtown offices. The Post Office employs a minimum number of clerks to perform the daily services. If, because the location is so good, each clerk is able to sell 10,000 stamps per day, as opposed to 100 stamps per day, the per unit cost of services sinks to a miniscule amount.

Indeed, the cost of a good location is worth the money spent. However, if by purchasing the choicest site funds needed for construction are severely depleted, Galvin recommends that the site still be acquired, and the design of the building be drawn to include future expansion. (26) If a usable building already exists on the site, the building can be used or rented until additional funds can be raised.

Parking. Consideration should be given to parking, but this

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should not be an overriding factor if the site is otherwise acceptable. Space is needed for library vehicles, staff parking, and at least a few cars. Any free space beyond the minimal amount may be abused by people not using the library.

In rural areas, cars are used extensively for transportation. To totally ignore the automobile could prove disastrous. A small community library, because of the nature of its use, could be greatly affected by a total lack of parking space. Parking should be provided by the municipal authority, not the library. On-site parking is not necessary if a public lot is located nearby.

It should be remembered that in many small towns the complaint is often heard that, "They roll up the streets at 5:00 p.m.," referring to the fact that most in-town businesses are not open during the evening hours. Logically, then, parking in the town area during library evening hours should be quite easy.

If it is felt that additional space is definitely needed, 200 square feet per vehicle might be provided near the building. In DuBois, Pa. (pop. 9,290) the public library is located on a heavily-travelled highway, a short block from the town's busiest intersection. The library planners placed parking space in front of, behind, and under the library.

Parking space on the building site, whether it be next to the building, under the building, or even on top of the building, takes needed space away from the building itself. Indeed, the consultants (Clarence Paine, Hoyt Galvin and Joseph Wheeler) for

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three rather new Clayton County, Ga. libraries stated that library parking was not an essential factor. None of their building programs specifically recommended on-site lots. (27)

Local Restrictions and the Neighborhood. Building and zoning restrictions, plus utility service specifications, should be carefully investigated before any land is purchased. Building codes usually set minimum standards affecting occupancy, fire zone restrictions, type of construction, design, structural details, and application of materials. Other provisions of local building codes may include statements on the installation of heating appliances and fire resistance ratings of structures. Zoning ordinances regulate land use. These frequently provide for the distance the building may be set from the street and property lines, the height of buildings, on-site parking, etc. Public buildings, including libraries, are usually exempt from these restrictions. However, all possible difficulties should be examined beforehand to eliminate any surprises when construction begins.

Notice should be taken of the buildings surrounding the proposed site. Retailers occupying nearby antiquated buildings may be considering moving to more desirable structures. However, if the buildings are sturdy, and if the planning committee senses a renewing of pride in the history of the downtown area, these same aging structures may prove to be the source of new life for the town.

Consideration should also be given to surrounding land-use

patterns, including the attitudes of the neighbors. Some basic research and a bit of public relations may eliminate any potential problems.

Town Planning. The final problem in regard to site selection is almost entirely a problem concerned with political community pressures. For example, in one area the municipal planning authority stated that a site was available--but couldn't decide if the library or the jail should be placed there. (28) In a case such as this, the library planning committee must exercise its best judgement and resist pressures which may result in the library being located in a spot totally inappropriate for the fulfillment of its goals. If the committee allows this to happen, then the committee reneges the trust the people of the town place in it.

Along a similar line, local officials are often impressed with statements such as, "The site of the public library should be coordinated with general area planning." However, "coordination" frequently means placing the library in some group of civic buildings where it does not belong. Again a post office example: Post offices are not located in civic clusters or on school grounds; that would be an inconvenience to their customers. Post offices are located in the heart of downtown where most of the area's citizens can be reached.

THE RURAL DOWNTOWN SITE

Once the pulse of every community, main streets across the country slipped in importance when shopping centers began

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sprouting up on the outskirts of towns in the years following World War II. While cities may be able to afford the placement of branch libraries in the plazas that surround the residential areas, small communities certainly cannot afford that kind of convenience. So the downtown location (which is, in many cases, the crossroads of the plaza traffic) remains the best choice of site for small town libraries.

Restoration of Rural Downtowns. In many communities, a frequently raised question is, "Why locate downtown? The downtown is dead." But in the past eight years small towns all over America have experienced a renaissance, thanks to the non-profit Main Street Center of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. With the aid of grant money, local governments, merchants, property owners, chambers of commerce, and other civic groups have banded together to reverse the depressed economic course and the dismal public image of numerous small downtowns.

Brookville, Pa. (pop. 4,500) is one of the many communities of less than 50,000 people taking advantage of the National Trust's assistance. Greene states that,

"An important part of a town's architectural heritage is usually found downtown, and in addition, it makes good sense to save a sturdy, attractive building that is already standing. Buildings returned to use bring money back into the local economy, both to the private investor and the tax collector. Streets in frequent use discourage crime. And the downtown is a social center long established in American small-town myth and reality, as well as a convenient place to find goods and services." (29).

Historic preservationists follow a four-part approach to downtown revitalization:

1.   Economic restructuring--recruiting new businesses,
rethinking building uses to include offices, housing, and
educational/recreational facilities (libraries) as well as
stores.

2.   Promotion--marketing the downtown as a place to go for
special events, such as parades, fairs, exhibits (which libraries
could easily participate in) as well as for shopping and meeting
friends.

3.   Organization--bringing private and public leaders
together to plan the revitalization and then to manage the
downtown effectively.

4.   Design--enhancing the area's physical character by
beautifying (often just cleaning) the buildings, signs and public
spaces. (30)

In Brookville, local businesses will spend about $1.2

million dollars on refurbishing their buildings, some of it grant

money, much of it private investments. Already evidence of

renewed life is being seen in the town. "What I saw (upon

returning to Brookville) were stores where there had never been

stores before, and I didn't think there would ever be any

because of the condition of the buildings," said Keith Witt,

executive director of the Brookville Area Chamber of Commerce.

"Every day you see people walking up and down (Main Street).

Three years ago there wasn't any of that. (31)

In a clever parallel to this paper's discussion of a

downtown location for small town libraries, the owner of a

framing gallery on Brookville's Main Street, stated that "Loca-

tion is the key in our business and in any business. We attract

more browsers and impulse buyers now." (32)

Building Adaptations. Much of this paper has dealt with the

selection of a site for a new library in American small towns.

However, many of those same factors which were previously discussed could also be applied to the selection of a pre-existing building for library use in the downtown area of a small community. A common practice is for a library committee to buy, frequently at a bargain price, a well-located store or other building and remodel it to suit the needs of the library and its patrons.

The ease with which a building can be adapted for library purposes depends, obviously, upon the alterations which are required. Thus, such buildings as stores, churches, garages, and banks (if structurally sound) adapt easily. The lack of, or sparsity of, interfering walls in such structures makes them more flexible for library purposes.

Clairton, Pa. (pop. 12,188) purchased a furniture store, two stories and a basement, on its main street, in the same block with the most strategic retail corner. The cost for the site and its remodelling was about $12.00 per square foot. The attractive glass front and the open interior worked well for the library. (33)

The Cameron County (Pa. pop. 6,674) Public Library is located in a former bank building. The librarian cites as its advantages that it is visible, convenient for people downtown, and centrally located with front window displays on the main street. (34)

Churches which have been converted into libraries offer considerable window space for a feeling of openness. Choir lofts

can be used as mezzanine stack areas.

Miller states that it is generally difficult to transform a house into an efficient library. Rooms are usually small and, even if all partitions are removed, the overall space on one floor is limited. This generally forces a two-floor operation which is neither satisfactory nor economical. Removing the partitions also removes some of the support for the upper floors. And, unlike a commercial property, a homesite is less apt to be in a good library location. (35)

The Ridgway (Pa. pop. 5,604) Public Library is located in a lovely white-columned mansion one block from the main street of town. True to Miller's statement, the rooms inside are indeed small and cramped with shelving tucked into every available space. Despite the librarian's best efforts to make the rooms attractive and comfortable, the overall impression remains one of claustrophobic clutter.

For rural areas which lack an actual town, reconverted barns have been used as libraries. Ordinarily it is not advisable to spend the money to remodel such structures unless they are proven to be substantially built. Many barns are little more than enclosed frames. (36)

When a town chooses to share its library facility with another agency or business, some of the cost of a desirable but expensive site may be offset. This is the case with the Johnson-burg (Pa. pop. 3,938) Public Library. Although sharing the building with business and law offices, the librarian is delight-

ed with the central location on ground level. She reports that circulation has increased, the reference section is being consulted more, and more men are discovering the library! (37)

The combination of community services within a single building has immense appeal to planners with no practical experience of the problems of library service. The librarian at the Sykesville (Pa. pop. 1,537) Public Library is quite satisfied with the library's location on Main Street in the Borough Building. (38) But the arrangement has not been so happy for the Punxsutawney (pa. pop. 7,479) Memorial Library which is part of a new municipal complex. The building is indeed centrally located in the town (although separated from downtown by a park), modern and bright, (39) with the library serving as the home of the world-famous weather-forecasting ground hog, Punxsutawney Phil and his mate. But the complex also houses the town's police station and fire hall. Such an arrangement is hardly one of related services!

CONCLUSION

Libraries seldom belong in the geographic or population center of town. Such locations rarely coincide with the pedestrian and business centers of towns. Librarians recognize the need to make their facilities inescapable by the masses; the elite will come to the library anyway. And the success of the American way of life depends on elevating more and more of our citizens into the educated groups. For my money, the best site for a public library in a small town is on the main street, near

but not necessarily at the intersection of the greatest pedestrian and vehicular traffic, where it can be an ever-present invitation to shoppers and downtown employees.

Usually misconceptions about the siting of a library in remote places such as a quiet neighborhood or a park are held by people who do not understand the significance of the library to its patrons. Libraries are not meant to be mausoleums. Bowker reminds us that libraries "are dynamic educational centers whose services and resources must be easily accessible to the greatest number of potential readers." (40)

In a 1913 publication, Matthew S. Dudgeon compared the siting of a library to the siting of a book store:

> "Would (the keen business man) locate (his store) one or two or three blocks off the main street to get sightly surroundings? Would he put his building twenty or fifty or one hundred feet back from the sidewalk, rendering it necessary for the passer-by to make a considerable detour before even a casual inspection of his books would be possible? Would he put the main floor from four to ten feet above the sidewalk level, thus discouraging readers by a stair ascent? Would he place his windows high in the wall, far above the walk, so as to conceal the contents of the building? (41)

Surely not!

The statements that I have made about the location of libraries in small towns should be basic. But I must agree with Hills that any set of proposed criteria are only generalizations which may have proved themselves repeatedly in specific situations in the past but which must be modified to meet existing needs in local communities today and the changing conditions of tomorrow. (42) Ultimately the fundamental requirement must be met: The site must be available at the time it is needed, in the

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right place, of the right size, and, for the sake of the town's treasury, at a price it is prepared to pay. (43)

The success of the choice of site can be measured in many ways, by using various complicated statistical analyses. But the true success of the site is measured simply by the number of people attracted to the library day after day, year after year.

Date_____

1. Name of Library_____

2. Address_____
   _____

3. Phone number_____

4. Name of Librarian_____

5. 1984 Circulation: Total_____Average per month_____

6. Area(s) served:_____
   _____

7. Total population of service area:_____

8. Location of library: Downtown_____   Residential area___
                         Schoolgrounds____Other_____

9. Type of building: Erected as a library____ Formerly   a
                                                residence_____
                      Formerly a retail store____ Other_____
                                                   (Describe)

10. How long has your library been at it's present site?_____

11. Is the library building shared with any other agency?
                              Yes_____ No_____

12. If yes, what group(s)? _____

13. Are all regular library collections (adult, juvenile, A-V,
    etc.) housed within your building? Yes_____ No_____

14. Is nearby parking available for your patrons?
                                     Yes_____No_____

15. If yes, what type? (Check all that apply.)
                      On site_____   On street_____
                      Public lot_____ Other_____

16. Is the parking metered? Yes_____   No_____

17. State a few of the advantages of your library's current
    location:_____
    _____
    _____

18. State some of the disadvantages of your library's current
    location:_____
    _____
    _____

SITE SURVEY STATISTICS

Surveys:
     # mailed - 12   # returned - 11   % returned - 92%

Circulation:
     annual average - 50,505   monthly average - 4267

Population:
     average - 11,318

Location:
     Downtown - 82%   Residential area - 18%
     School grounds - 0%   Other - 0%

Type of building:
     Erected as a library - 46%   Formerly a residence - 18%
     Formerly a retail store - 9%   Other - 36%
     Describe: Bank, office building, municipal complex,
               borough building

Years at present site:
     average - 25

Shared building:
     yes - 45%   no - 55%
     Groups - law offices, public auditorium, commercial offices,
              industrial offices, borough offices, police
              station.

Regular collections housed in building:
     yes - 100%   no - 0%

Parking available:
     yes - 100%   no - 0%
     Type (more than one may apply)
     On site - 45%   On street - 64%
     Public lot - 18%   Other - 9% (private)

Metered:
     yes - 45%   no - 55%

Advantages stated:
   Central location, close to businesses, close to schools,
   ample parking, visible, front window displays on main
   street, convenient for people downtown, have much walk-in
   traffic, attracts people to business district and vice-ver-
   sa, ground level, modern building, lots of sunlight, close
   to downtown but on a less busy street, easy access, on main
   street.

Disadvantages stated:
   None, not convenient without a car, not near business
   district, much too small, limited parking, little or no
   space for expansion, metered parking, declining downtown
   area, no meeting rooms, some impractical design features.

SURVEYS

Baker, Jacqueline. Librarian, Clarion Free Library, Clarion, Pa. Written survey, October 4, 1985.

Barton, Margaret. Librarian, Joseph & Elizabeth Shaw Public Library, Clearfield, Pa. Written survey, October 4, 1985.

Hipple, Tom. Librarian, St. Marys Public Library, St. Marys, Pa. Written survey, October 3, 1985.

Hoff, Betty. Librarian, Ridgway Public Library, Ridgway, Pa. Written survey, November 5, 1985.

Mathewson, Betty M. Librarian, Rebecca M. Arthurs Memorial Library, Brookville, Pa. Written survey, October 4, 1985.

McPoland, Elizabeth G. Librarian, Punxsutawney, Pa. Written survey, October 4, 1985.

Miller, Lois. Librarian, Brockway Public Library, Brockway, Pa. Written survey, October 3, 1985.

Neate, Janette. Librarian, DuBois Public library, DuBois, Pa. Written survey, October 4, 1985.

Rosman, Michele. Librarian, Sykesville Public Library, Sykesville, Pa. Written survey, October 7, 1985.

Thorwart, Virginia. Librarian, Johnsonburg Public Library, Johnsonburg, Pa. Written survey, October 3, 1985

Vercellino, Ray. Librarian, Cameron County Public Library, Emporium, Pa. Written survey, October 3,

NOTES

1. Hoyt R. Galvin and Martin Van Buren, The Small Public
Library Building (Paris: UNESCO, 1959), p. 29.

2. Joseph L. Wheeler, "A Reconsideration of the Strategic
Location for Public Library Buildings," Reader on the Library
Building, ed. Hal B. Schell (Englewood, Col.: Microcard Editions
Books, 1975), p. 126.

3. Galvin, p. 33.

4. John J. Miniter, "Public Library Sites: An Informal
Survey," Texas Libraries, XLIV, (April, 1983), p. 80.

5. Julius R. Chitwood, "Elementary Notes on Site Selec-
tion," Library Buildings: Innovation for Changing Needs,
ed. Alphonse F. Trezza (Chicago: American Library Association,
1972), p. 153.

6. Edwin P. Beckerman, "Planning and Construction of
Buildings," Local Public Library Administration, ed. Ellen Altman
(Chicago: American Library Association, 1980), p. 217.

7. "Library Construction in Connecticut," Connecticut
Libraries, XX, no. 1, p. 29.

8. Survey form completed by Betty M. Mathewson, Librarian,
Rebecca M. Arthurs Memorial Library, Brookville, Pa., October 4,
1985.

9. Wheeler, p. 130.

10. Anthony Thompson, Library Buildings of Britain and
Europe (London: Butterworths, 1963), p. 9.

11. Joseph Eisner, "Library Location--Two Points of View,"
The Bookmark, XXIII (January, 1964), p. 99.

12. Galvin, p. 49.

13. Keyes D. Metcalf, "Selection of Library Sites," Reader
on the Library Building, ed. Hal B. Schell (Englewood, Col.: Mi-
crocard Editions Books, 1975), p. 136.

14. Chitwood, p. 154. A library requiring 10,000 square
feet or less will usually be more satisfactory if it is all on
one floor.

15. Roberta Bowler (ed), Local Public Library Administration (Chicago: The International City Managers Association, 1964), p. 297.

16. Galvin, p. 49. In the southern hemisphere, the front of the building should face south or east.

17. Jack Chitwood, "Library and Community," Libraries-- Building for the Future, ed. R. J. Shaw (Chicago: American Library Association, 1967), p. 27-28.

18. Galvin, p. 49.

19. J. T. Strickland, "Library Building," Studies in Library Management, ed. Brian Redfern, I (Hamden, Conn.: Linnet Books, 1971), p. 93.

20. Wheeler, p. 132.

21. Beckerman, p. 218.

22. Metcalf, p. 141.

23. Metcalf, p. 142. In certain ground formations, the entire side of the hill may slide in wet weather.

24. Galvin, p. 51.

25. Ibid.

26. Ibid.

27. Walter Murphy, "Three Consultants, One County," Library Journal, XCV (June 1, 1970), p. 274.

28. Horace S. Moses, "The Topeka Public Library," Planning a Library Building: The Major Steps, ed. Hoyt R. Galvin (Chicago: American Library Association, 1955), p. 58.

29. Elaine Greene, "Revitalizing Main Street," House and Garden, CLIV (March, 1982), p. 14.

30. Ibid.

31. Sharon O'Malley, "Main Street Makes a Comeback," Penn Lines (United Electric Edition), XX (October, 1985), p. 12.

32. Ibid., p. 13. Unfortunately, Brookville's public library is not located in the downtown area.

33. Joseph L. Wheeler, "The Small Library Building," Final Report: The Small Libraries Project, 1961-1963, no. 13 (Chicago: American Library Association, 1963), p. 3.

34. Survey form completed by Ray Vercellino, Librarian, Cameron County Public Library, Emporium, Pa., October 3, 1985.

35. Ernest Miller, Buildings for Small Public Libraries (Chicago: American Library Association, 1950), p. 27.

36. Ibid., p. 36.

37. Survey form completed by Virginia Thorwart, Librarian, Johnsonburg Public Library, Johnsonburg, Pa., October 3, 1985. The librarian also notes that the library moved a few years ago from a second and third floor location in a community building which also housed a gymnasium and pool. Residents of the town report that the smell of chlorine and the sound of pounding feet from indoor joggers could be rather distracting to library patrons!

38. Survey form completed by Michele Rosman, Librarian, Sykesville Public Library, Sykesville, Pa., October 7, 1985.

39. Survey form completed by Elizabeth G. McPoland, Librarian, Punxsutawney Memorial Library, Punxsutawney, Pa., October 4, 1985.

40. Bowler, p. 299.

41. Chitwood, "Library and Community," p. 27.

42. Theodore S. Hills, "On Location of Library Buildings," Library Buildings: Innovation for Changing Needs, ed. Alphonse F. Trezza (Chicago: American Library Association, 1972), p. 159.

43. Strickland, p. 92.

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    213-224. Chicago: American Library Association, 1980.

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    Chicago: The International City Managers' Association,
    1964.

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    for the Future, ed. R. J. Shaw, 23-28. Chicago: American
    Library Association, 1967.

Chitwood, Julius R. "Elementary Notes on Site Selection,"
    Library Buildings: Innovation for Changing Needs, ed.
    Alphonse F. Trezza, 152-154. Chicago: American Library
    Association, 1972.

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    Bookmark, XXIII (January, 1964), 98-99.

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    Building. Paris: UNESCO, 1959.

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    CLIV (March, 1982), 10-14.

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    Buildings: Innovation for Changing Needs, ed. Alphonse
    F. Trezza, 155-159. Chicago: American Library Association,
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"Library Construction in Connecticut." Connecticut Libraries,
    XX, no. 1, 29-35.

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    Library Building, ed. Hal B. Schell, 135-143. Englewood,
    Col.: Microcard Editions Books, 1975.

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Chicago: American Library Association, 1950.

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    Texas Libraries, XLIV (April, 1983), 79-80.

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    Library Building: The Major Steps, ed. Hoyt R. Galvin,
    p. 58. Chicago: American Library Association, 1955.

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