

*Town of Weymouth
Massachusetts*

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Press Release

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Proposed new library will stay in Weymouth Landing

Library Construction Committee hopes to present schematic design and site plans to Town Council by January.

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Weymouth, MA – Mayor Robert Hedlund announced today that the Town plans to construct its new main library at the site of the existing Tufts Library located in Weymouth Landing. Schematic design plans are already underway, and Town staff hopes to have them ready by early January for the Town Council’s review. Construction of the new library is contingent upon a successful application to the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners’ Massachusetts Public Library Construction Program (MPLCP).

“We had two potential sites for the library – either Weston Park where the current library stands or Libby Field, located across from the Abigail Adams Middle School,” **said Mayor Robert Hedlund**. “After listening to residents and Councilors about their preference, as well as evaluating the different costs and opportunities of building at either site, we’ve determined that the existing location in Weymouth Landing is our best option.” With the library staying at Weston Park, Libby Field will be developed as a state-of-the-art turf baseball diamond, funding for which was recently approved by the Town Council.

A recommendation to keep the library at its current site came unanimously from the Mayor’s Library Construction Committee. The board is composed of the Town’s Director of Library Services, Director of Planning and Community Development, Director of Facilities and Asset Management, Administrative Services Coordinator, Chair of the Board of Trustees of the Public Library, and a member of the community at large. According to the Committee, geotechnical factors make building on Libby Field more expensive compared to the existing site at Weston Park. A new contemporary library is also more

likely to thrive in a mixed-used, transit-oriented neighborhood like one being developed in the Weymouth Landing.

Built in 1965, the existing Tufts Library is more than 50 years old and suffers from serious building deficiencies which make any renovation to the library cost prohibitive. The library also falls short of any reasonable standard of accessibility, and its building systems are well beyond their expected service life. Replacement of the HVAC alone would cost the Town upwards of one million dollars.

Mayor Hedlund and his planning staff recognized the need to reinvest in the Tufts Library shortly after taking office. He assembled the Library Construction Committee, initiated development of a Library Building Program, and committed \$100,000 to hiring an architectural firm to prepare a schematic design of the proposed building. The Town is now on track to submit a completed MPLCP application by January 26th of next year.

In the current phase of the application process, the Town is working with the firm Johnson Roberts Associates of Somerville to prepare a schematic design of the new library. This level of design is a prerequisite for funding under the MPLCP, and Johnson Roberts has historically been responsible for more designs per grant round than any other firm in Massachusetts. Since starting their practice 22 years ago, Johnson Roberts has successfully prepared 35 submissions for library construction grants, resulting in 35 awards.

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