



# Hamilton Public Library

**Date:** December 9, 2009  
**To:** Chair and Members of the Board  
**From:** Ken Roberts, Chief Librarian  
**Subject:** **Waterdown**

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## **Recommendation**

**That the Hamilton Public Library Board and the City of Hamilton partner to construct a new building on the site of the former Flamborough Town Hall and that this new building replace the existing structure, combining the services of the Hamilton Public Library Board, all relevant City of Hamilton Services and any community partners that are deemed appropriate by the City of Hamilton in a single facility.**

## **Background**

The community of Waterdown has a growing population of 20,000 or more. It is currently served by a library branch that is housed in a two-storey 6,000 square foot heritage building. The current building, while attractive, is not capable of providing an adequate level of library services to the community and cannot be modified to meet expected AODA requirements or current code requirements for public libraries.

Given the current population of Waterdown, standards call for a library branch of at least 15,000 square feet. Ideally, it should be closer to 18,000 square feet. Both figures are exclusive of any meeting room space. The current library branch does not meet community needs. More than 5,000 Waterdown area residents use the Burlington Public Library, since the existing library branch is inadequate.

The Hamilton Public Library has negotiated a reciprocal borrowing agreement with the Burlington Public Library which provides residents of Hamilton (Waterdown) with free library service in Burlington and provides Burlington residents with free use of Hamilton libraries. Burlington residents tend to use the Central Library.

The administration of the Burlington Public Library has made it clear that, while they support the principle of free reciprocal use, they are providing service Waterdown residents as a goodwill gesture to assist HPL as it plans for and builds an appropriate Waterdown facility. Burlington may cancel the reciprocal agreement unless progress is shown, leading to the construction of an adequate library branch.

The Hamilton Public Library Board now has a Council approved budget of 5.3 million dollars for this project.

The Hamilton Public Library Board has investigated multiple locations in the Town of Waterdown. Appropriate commercial land occasionally becomes available but the purchase of any such land is far too expensive.

In December, 2008 the Hamilton Public Library Board asked for approval from the City of Hamilton's Audit and Administration Committee to investigate the placement of a library on the former Town Hall site at 163 Dundas Street East. The intention of the motion was for the library and existing municipal services to co-exist on the site and it was assumed that this would mean either an addition or a separate building. The Audit and Administration Committee gave its approval.

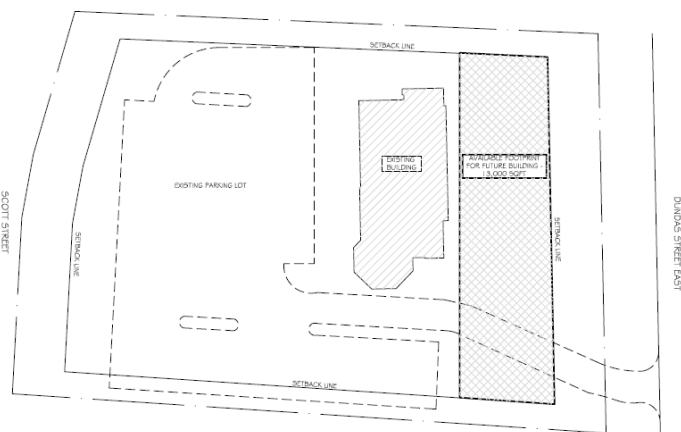
### Findings of the V2PM Investigation

V2PM was hired to conduct a third party investigation. The original mandate asked the consultant to determine if a new library fit the property.

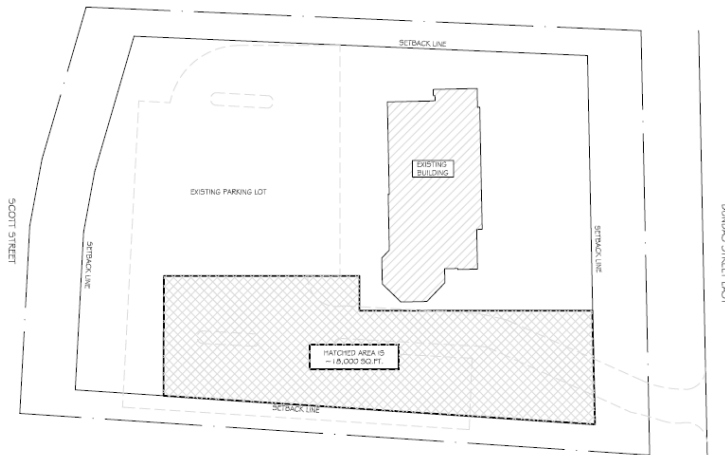
V2PM presented its findings to City of Hamilton staff and Hamilton Public Library staff on August 4, 2009.

While V2PM concluded that a new library could be located on the site, it was also shown that any new building would awkwardly wrap around the existing town hall. Library representatives expressed a concern that they might wrap a building around the existing town hall site, only to see that building demolished within a few short years.

Here are drawings of the options that were included in the first draft of the report.



Option #1



## Option #2

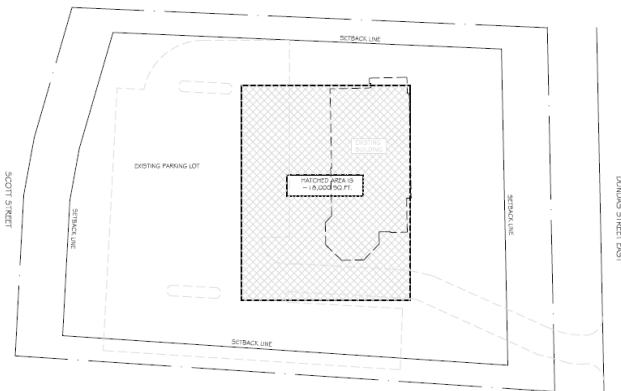
At the meeting, City of Hamilton representatives stated that the existing 1975 building is incapable of meeting AODA building requirements without major expenditures. City representatives also commented that the existing building was too large for current City of Hamilton needs. Library representatives commented that the Library Board's Principles, listed in their Facilities Master Plan, called for the library to establish multi-use facilities whenever practical in order to establish appropriate relationships and in order to ensure that expensive requirements necessary to meet accessibility standards can be shared, reducing costs. It was also recognized that new buildings with shared features can be far more energy efficient.

The Hamilton Public Library Board had already recognized the potential of a shared facility and passed a motion at its September, 2008 meeting expressing a desire to partner with the City of Hamilton.

All parties agreed that the best solution for customers and for cost efficiency would be to demolish the existing building and to build a multi-use facility in its place. V2PM was authorized to consider this option and to provide a second draft of their report. City of Hamilton and Hamilton Public Library representatives agreed to consult with City partners, including the Ward Councillor, about this possibility.

V2PM submitted its final report on August 28, 2009.

V2PM submitted the following schematic, showing how a multi-use facility could fit on the existing site.



Using a figure of \$225 per square foot construction cost, V2PM determined that the Hamilton Public Library Board's approved budget could accommodate a 14,000 square foot facility, exclusive of a desired 1,000 square foot community meeting room space. City of Hamilton Municipal Services staff estimated a need for 1,000 square feet.

Several City of Hamilton and community agencies occupy space in the former Town Hall. These include:

- Community Policing
- Councillor Office
- Culture and Recreation Office
- Fleet and Facilities spade
- Flamborough Historical Society Archives
- Flamborough Information and Community Service Centre
- Flamborough Chamber of Commerce
- Ministry of Health
- Occasional use of former Council Chambers for official meetings such as Assessment Review Board hearings.

It was agreed that if a unified facility were to be formally proposed, then the issue of tenants and their "right" to space would have to be addressed. It was agreed, as well, that a source of funding would have to be identified for each potential tenant in a unified facility. It was also agreed that many of the agencies who currently book space in the current building have already made alternative plans to occupy other space (e.g. Community Policing and Culture and Recreation). It was also agreed that the space that might be needed by community groups that provide services in the new building should be based on objective measures of need and not be based on the amount of space they may currently occupy.

### **Facilities Master Plan Direction**

In 2005 the Hamilton Public Library Board adopted the following relevant principles. They are included in the Board's Facilities Master Plan.

- *Library branches should be quality facilities that can also act as “community meeting places”.*
- *New branches should be located, whenever practical, in a multi-use facility shared with partners that possess a vision compatible with that of the library system.*
- *New branches should be located on main thoroughfares and should have a visible street presence.*
- *Library branches should be accessible and should meet provincial and city accessibility requirements.*
- *Library branches should meet all provincial guidelines or standards that affect public libraries.*
- *The Library Board is committed to delivering equitable service that is appropriate to each community and neighbourhood that the library system serves.*

In 2007 the Hamilton Public Library Board approved the following description of how it expect branch libraries to function. This description is included in the Board's Facilities Master Plan.

*Branch libraries must be designed in such a way that people passing by in a car, in a bus, or on foot become aware of the building and are attracted to enter and use the facility. The branch must appear open, inviting, and attractive with a clearly visible entrance. It is recommended that, where possible, each branch library be a single story building.*

*A branch library is a civic building that will be used at least fifty to seventy-five years. Therefore, materials used for the façade, as well as for the structure and interior, should be durable and easily maintained. Branch libraries must allow easy adaptation due to rapidly changing technologies throughout the life of the building.*

*Branch libraries must be fully accessible, meeting all provincial and federal standards and guidelines designed for public libraries.*

### **Legal and Financial Implications**

The Hamilton Public Library Board has the necessary funding, approved, to complete its Capital portion of this proposal.

The Hamilton Public Library Board has the capacity to operate a new Waterdown Branch within its operating budget, assuming that the current Waterdown and Millgrove libraries are closed. The Library Board's approved Facilities Master Plan assumed that the Carlisle Branch would also be closed when a new Waterdown location is opened. The Library Board has held several community consultation meetings and, as a result of those consultations, has agreed to try to keep the current Carlisle open until after the opening of a new

Waterdown Branch in order to monitor impact. While the library will make every effort to find efficiencies, a new Waterdown location may not be able to open the desired number of hours without some impact on the operating budget.

The City of Hamilton currently owns the property at 163 Dundas Street West. If the library is to locate on the property decisions must be made about the nature of any agreement. Agreements could be made either for the library to lease the property or for title to be transferred to the Library Board.

The following funds could be used to assist with the necessary Capital funds: sale of the current library branch, re-direction of funds set aside for the maintenance/repair of both the current library location and the former Flamborough Town Hall, potential re-zoning and sale of a portion of the former Flamborough Town Hall site, and savings resulting from the elimination of the obligation to renovate the former Town Hall building to meet accessibility standards. City of Hamilton staff may identify other sources of funding.

### **Potential Partners and Consultation**

City of Hamilton Facilities took part in the consultant's investigation and supports the recommendations.

City of Hamilton's Municipal Services Centre has been consulted and supports the recommendations, feeling that a combined library/MSD offers excellent partnership opportunities, such as shared accessibility washrooms and technology.

Community Services has been consulted and will no longer need their office once the Wentworth ice rink is constructed.

The Ward Councillor has been consulted and indicated support for the recommendations on the understanding that the needs of the Archives and of Flamborough Information and Community Service Centre are recognized and evaluated.

The community partners have not been consulted as the Library Board has no authority to do so.

The Library Board has a commitment to consult with the community and will do so, once the recommendation is approved.

### **[Appendix: Feasibility Study Report Flamborough Town Hall](#)**