

# WHITINSVILLE SOCIAL LIBRARY

## RENOVATION & EXPANSION PROJECT

Oudens Ello Architecture



### Why do we need a new library?

The Whitinsville Social Library has served the town well for over a century, but can no longer fulfill the requirements necessary to provide twenty-first century library services. The most significant needs relate to the dire lack of space: space for patrons, space for programs, space for staff and space for collections. Beyond the physical attributes of the building, the services expected have changed substantially. Programming was not considered an essential library need in 1913, while now it is a core function. The library's aging building systems also require modernization to address operational deficiencies, life safety and code compliance requirements.

### What is the Vision for the New Library?

The plan proposes to increase the library size from 14,500 gross square feet to some 25,000 gross square feet. The design reflects a deep interest in preserving the historic building, while recognizing the need to modernize the structure to provide twenty-first century library services. Defining features, such as the existing wood reading rooms, will be retained. Likewise, the scale and material of the addition draw inspiration from the existing library's footprint, height and stone construction.

Additional spaces in the expanded library will include a large Multi-Purpose Room, a dedicated Children's Activity Room, an Innovation Lab/Makerspace, and small conference and quiet study rooms. The Children's Room will be enlarged and separate teen space will give high-schoolers a place to belong. There will be more space for books, comfortable seats, and community collaboration. Building systems will also be upgraded to provide efficient and cost-effective service. The staff will gain workspace appropriate to their needs. The building will be made fully accessible to all, and parking will be increased.

### Why did we apply for the State Grant?

In January 2025, Northbridge was awarded funding by the Massachusetts Public Library Construction Program (MPLCP). This competitive state grant will pay for a portion of eligible project costs to renovate and expand the existing library building. The Town can reasonably expect to receive roughly half of the cost of the new library from the State. Remaining costs may be procured through the Town of Northbridge, the Library Board of Trustees, and community fundraising efforts.

### What is the project schedule?

Mar 2024	Planning process begins with public forums, focus groups and a user survey
May 2024	MPLCP application submitted including a detailed building program
Jan 2025	State grant funding awarded, authorized to begin 'Planning & Design' phase
July 2025	'Planning & Design' phase begins
Oct 2025	Community Open Houses
Dec 2025	'Planning and Design' phase concludes with submission of MPLCP deliverables <i>Followed by a waiting period before moving into the 'Construction Grant' phase</i>
2028 (est.)	'Construction Grant' phase estimated start <i>The 'Construction Grant' phase includes 10-12 months of additional design work and community engagement prior bidding and construction</i>

### What is the anticipated construction timeline?

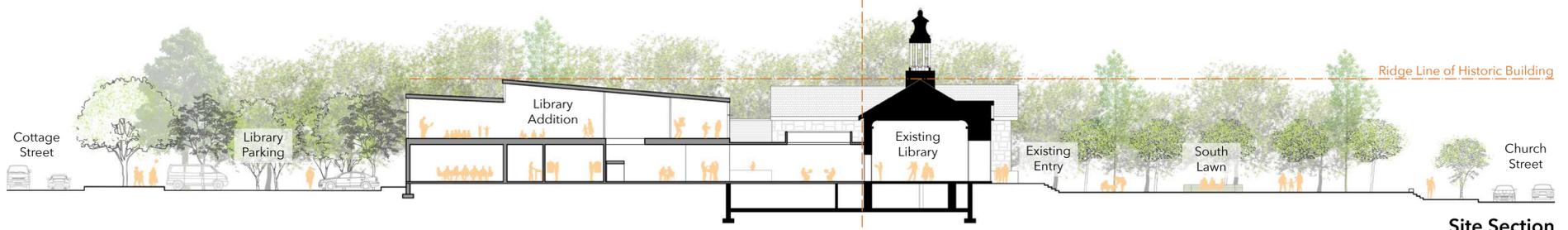
It will take between 18 and 20 months to renovate and expand the existing library. The start of construction depends on when State funding becomes available and on a Town vote accepting State funding. MPLCP grant funding most likely would come on line in 2028, with construction in 2029 and the grand opening of the new library in 2030.

### How can I help support the Library?

Share your support with friends, neighbors, community leaders and town meeting members. Make a donation. Consider joining the Friends of Whitinsville Social Library.

### Have Further Questions or Suggestions?

By e-mail: whitinsvillelibrary@cwmar.org



Gently sloped roof with the low-point adjacent to historic building, the roof slope and orientation support rooftop solar panels

Brick masonry, color tones to complement the stone exterior of existing library

New window proportions and spacing match the large windows of historic building

Low roof separation to delineate the new addition and existing structure



Exterior View from the Village Congregational Church

### Exterior Massing & Materials

The scale and materials of the proposed addition are inspired by the historic building. The new entrance features stone salvaged from the original stack volume, which will be demolished, while the brick masonry complements the tone and texture of the existing library exterior. Generous glazing, including north-facing clerestory windows, brings daylight deep into the interior. A gently sloped roof accommodates rooftop solar panels.

Stone salvaged and re-installed from demolished stack area

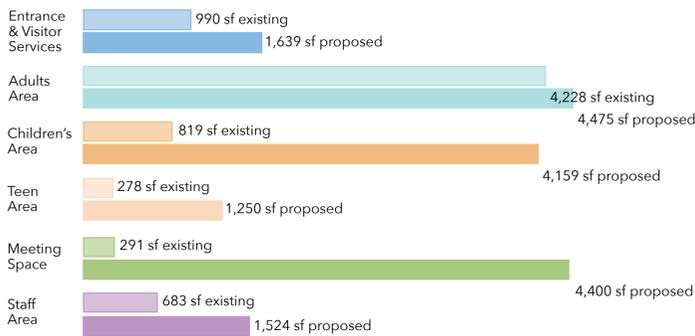
New entrance at connection between the historic building and new addition

Existing building to be preserved and restored, including new windows, slate roof repairs, and repairs and painting of wood ornamentation

### Existing vs. Proposed Area Comparison

Existing Building	14,500 sf
Proposed Renovation/Expansion	25,000 sf (+10,500)

### Square Footage by Use



### Basement Plan

The basement level of the renovation and expansion is designated for storage, mechanical, and other back-of-house functions. Due to its low floor-to-ceiling heights and limited natural light, this area is not suitable for public use. Existing storage and mechanical rooms will be upgraded and reconfigured as needed to accommodate new storage shelving and building systems infrastructure.



### First Floor Plan

The first floor features two accessible public entrances—an existing front entrance and a new side entrance—both leading patrons into a central hub anchored by the main circulation desk. The existing reading rooms will be preserved and upgraded with modern building systems, maintaining their historic character while improving comfort and efficiency. Most meeting spaces are located in the northwest wing, providing convenient access from parking and supported by adjacent restrooms, a kitchen, and dedicated storage areas.



Exterior View from Cottage Street

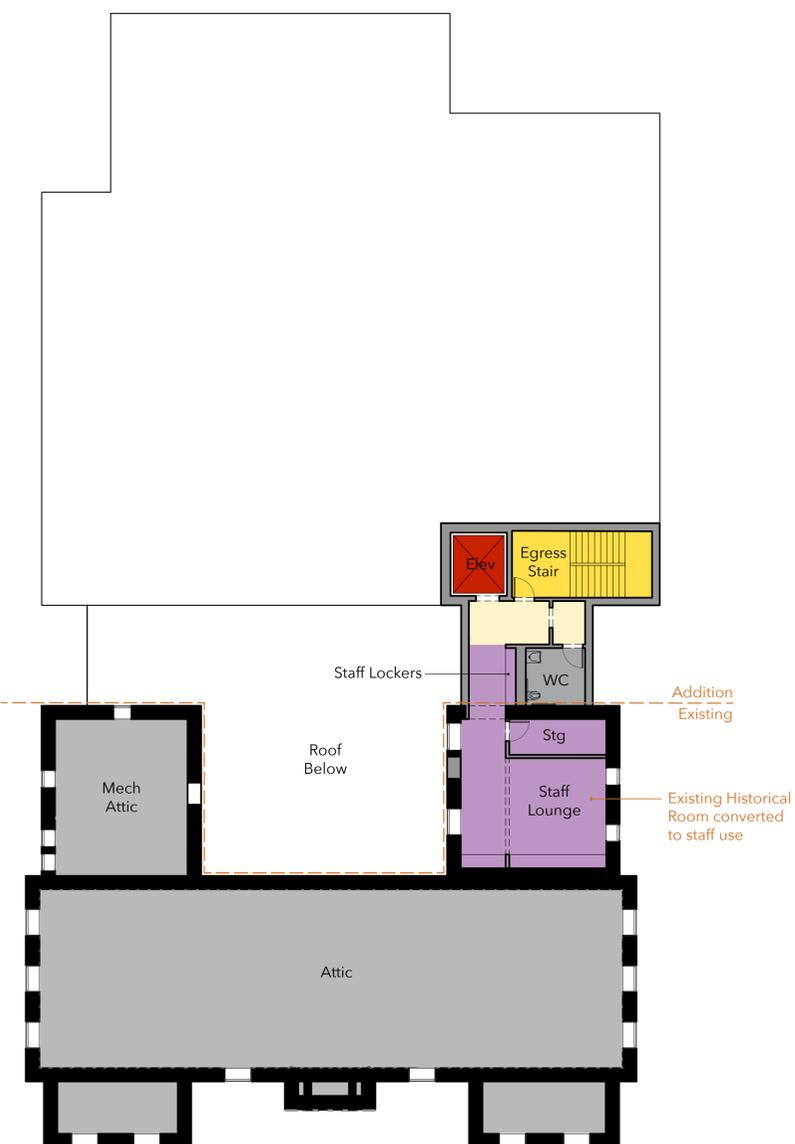
Clerestory windows bring daylight deep into the library interior

Brick masonry, color tones to complement the stone exterior of existing library

New library parking area along Cottage Street

Multi-Purpose Room with a large corner window

New pedestrian path linking Cottage Street, the new library entrance and the South Lawn



Addition Existing

Existing Historical Room converted to staff use



Addition Existing

Low roof area between the historic building and new addition providing a clear delineation between the structures

**Second Floor Plan (Existing Building)**

The northeast wing of the existing building will be repurposed as a staff lounge and support area. Because this portion of the building is remote from public service points, its location presents challenges for public access, making it best suited for staff use. It should be noted that the existing building has limited floor-to-floor heights of 8'-6", and its second floor does not align with the addition's second level, which features more generous 12'-6" floor-to-floor heights.

**Second Floor Plan (Addition)**

The second floor of the addition is devoted to Youth Services, featuring a spacious Children's Room, a dedicated Activity Room, a Teen Room, and an Innovation/Makerspace. A centrally located open stair and elevator provide convenient access from the first floor and support clear wayfinding. This level also includes two family restrooms and a wellness room for patron comfort and accessibility.