

In December 2022, the Town of Williston undertook a Scoping and Feasibility Study looking at future community and Library Spaces. The Town engaged Black River Design, Architects and working with a Project Steering Committee, conducted a feasibility study which included an in-depth community engagement piece. The process culminated with the presentation of a Scoping and Feasibility Study report to the Library Trustees and Selectboard in October 2023. The report's recommendation to the Trustees and Selectboard was to move forward with the option of renovating and expanding the Library on the current site. Subsequently, the Selectboard supported moving on to the next phase, developing schematic designs for the project. Black River Design, Architects, has been engaged to move the project to the schematic design phase.

In June 2024 the DAML Schematic Design Advisory Committee had their first meeting. The committee is made up of Library Trustees, a representative from the Friends of DAML, a member of the Williston Historical Society, and an at-large community member. The charge of the committee is to review schematic design drafts and programmatic elements with the design team and to provide feedback. Additionally, the committee will provide updated information to the Trustees and a final recommendation with a cost estimate.

From the beginning, the Schematic Design Committee has looked to provide a library expansion that continues the harmonious relationship between the Library, WCS, and the Town Green. The decision for a two-story, "split-level" addition at the rear of the library was chosen because it reduces the overall height and minimizes the impact on the Town Green and the existing courtyard area. The current head-in parking will be removed in favor of a flat, paved parking lot between the library and WCS. The new parking lot will improve accessibility for those with mobility issues and young children. The new entrance will be closer to the school and there will also be an entrance into the Lobby from Library Lane. We've worked with traffic engineers to address safety and shared the plans with WCS and School District administrations.

The proposed configuration has a minimal effect on the view of the Town Green, as the parking and expansion will be hidden from the road. Some trees will be removed, but many of them are near the end of their life, and new trees will be planted. There will still be plenty of green space adjacent to the library for special programs.

The Town Band was also engaged in the process. In response to their feedback, a place for a performance area that will minimize noise from Route 2 is being considered. A landscape architect has designed creative landscaping and gathering areas to enhance the Town Green. The Williston Historical Society will stay in the library and the Schoolhouse will remain in its spot on the Town Green.

Our library is very special. This expansion will add community meeting spaces and provide space for current and future needs as Williston continues to grow, while also continuing to provide the programs and services our patrons have always enjoyed.

The design and cost estimate will be finalized in early winter and discussion on the project next steps is planned for early 2025.

Karla Karstens, Chair, Schematic Design Advisory Committee