

**HALTON HILLS PUBLIC LIBRARY
GEORGETOWN BRANCH
EXPANSION - FEASIBILITY REVIEW**

**9 Church Street
Georgetown, Ontario
L7G 2A3**



Prepared for:
Halton Hills Public Library

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Prepared by:

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Commissioning of Study:

This expansion feasibility study was commissioned to The Ventin Group Ltd., Architects in March, 2006 by the Halton Hills Public Library. This study is divided into Goals of this Review, Site Analysis, and Solution.

Goals of this review

Due to imposed time constraints and necessity to produce this report in an expeditious manner, the intent of this study is to provide a general overview of the existing Halton Hills Library in Georgetown. This study is to determine whether the existing site and potential purchase of adjacent property will be feasible in providing adequate area for future needs of the library. Due to existing programmatic relationships, the functionality of the expanded library is also taken into consideration. In addition, the multi-use qualities of the project should be preserved and enhanced.

This Library is a central element and growing institution within the Town of Halton Hills Library and Cultural Centre. In turn, the centre itself is important for the lifeblood of the Georgetown's downtown core and local neighbourhood. Programmatic spaces include an art gallery (historical church) and theatre. Within this facility there are shared public spaces, including the main entrance, lobby, and public washrooms. A common loading / receiving area, vestibule, exit stairwell and elevator serves the library and theatre back of house areas.

This study is based upon site visit inspections of the existing building, site and adjacent property by key staff members from The Ventin Group Ltd., Architects. Planning officials were consulted with regards to determining planning restrictions and parking requirements. Upon review of the site plan and architectural drawings, a schematic diagram illustrating a possible expansion of 13,781 square feet (on two floors) was created. Please note, there was no legal survey provided. Information was compiled from architectural drawings completed in 1980 by Keith H. Wagland Architect, for the renovations and addition to the library housed within the historical church.

Site Analysis

The zoning information was taken from the Georgetown Urban Area: Restricted Area By-Law No. 57-01 Schedule "A". The current library site 113-00 Library (Lots 44, 43 & 42) and potential property to be purchased 271-00 (Lot 41) are zoned **R3** (Third Density Residential Zone).

Although zoned residential, there are zoning provisions for Institutional Uses under Section 5 Residential Zones (Note: Any uses must conform with the established character of the zone in which it is situated.):

5.1.12 Yards for Institutional Uses which require:

- minimum front yard depth of 40 ft (this was waived by a variance during the previous addition and renovations in 1980);
- minimum side yards width shall be the height of the building (this was waived by a variance during the previous addition and renovations in 1980);

5.1.13 Parking - Minimum Requirement: (4) Libraries:

- space for minimum 12 cars (this was waived by a variance during the previous addition and renovations in 1980).

Please note, waiving the setback requirements may affect timing of construction due to the re-zoning process.

By-Law No. 79 - 67 states the library was a Designated Property - Heritage Halton Hills (LACAC) due to its architectural and historical value and interest.

Although there are design flaws within the existing cultural centre, with careful, considerate planning and material upgrades or enhancements through additions and renovations, the real value of the facility can be maintained.

Upon entering the lobby, one is confronted with a dark (northerly-facing), noisy (tile flooring), and during busy times, congested (small) foyer. The open, exposed ceiling throughout the main library space, enables noise to reverberate from the lobby to the librarian's office (through its open ceiling) and inhibits privacy. Also, the large, exposed mechanical HVAC ducts and the low height of the lighting fixtures not only restrict the height of the bookshelves but feels obtrusive within an otherwise light-filled, open space. There are no windows on the south-easterly exposures to take advantage of the morning sun. The electrical wiring for lighting does not have any switches, thus, lights must be turned on and off at the circuit breaker panel. The quantity and quality of storage space could be improved upon by having full height storage space all on the same level. Larger staff workrooms with new module furniture are also required.

The existing design is not without merit. The windows along the Market Street elevation provide views to the residential neighbourhood, which should be preserved as well as allow daylight, which is welcome during some parts of the year.

Solution

The Proposed Library Expansion drawings are based on information taken from the architectural drawings - no legal survey was provided. These drawings delineate approximate locations of street lines, existing exterior ramps and steps, walkways, sidewalks, driveways, property lines, setback dimensions, landscaping, driveway and loading dock. General existing spaces such as art gallery and theatre are labeled and all walls are delineated in solid black. The existing library space (approximately 15,000 sq. ft. gross floor area, includes shared spaces such as elevator, stairs, loading) is hatched in blue and harvested library areas are shaded in yellow.

Existing Library Gross Floor Area: approx. 15,000 sq. ft.

Proposed Library Addition Gross Floor Area: approx. 13,781 sq. ft.

With the addition, the library should accommodate a minimum 20,000 sq. ft. of library space, but ideally at least 26,000 square feet. Assuming the existing library space is approx. 15,000 sq. ft. (gross floor area), our proposal meets this ideal by accommodating an additional approx. 13,781 square feet of library space. This floor area is assuming similar setback and parking variances allowed for the original building will be granted. Please note, waiving the setback requirements may affect timing of construction due to the rezoning process.

The most important architectural design challenges are to:

- 1) maintain the existing relationships between the lobby and library entrance utilizing a single point of entry, thereby avoiding a second library entrance
- 2) maintain a functional loading / receiving and elevator relationship. The avoidance of relocating the elevator, while maintaining a seamless connection between the existing library space with the extension, is preferred.

We have determined it is not desirable to put a new library entrance at the current loading dock (or opposite end of the building), thus have proposed a second lobby entrance directly south of the existing church building. This simplifies the library entrance (with a single control point) and enables controlled views. It provides a larger, enhanced lobby (two entrances) for all of the facility's users with ample daylight. By relocating the loading dock / receiving area to the north side of the property, the delivery aisle can be accommodated within the sideyard setback and both the theatre and library can maintain functional access to the existing elevator.

This proposal allows a seamless, transition within the library space, continuing the window wall for daylight and views along Market Street. With the administration offices adjacent the theatre wall, there is more privacy for staff and seating / lounge areas can be located along the window wall.

It is our recommendation that before venturing forward with the design, a needs committee be assembled to address the details of the layout, which still requires a lot of work and confirmation in terms of staff / board consultation, etc.

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