

Hopkinton Public Library

13 Main Street Hopkinton, Mass. 01748

Main Library: 508-497-9777

Children's Room: 508-497-9779

FAX 508-497-9778

January 21, 2011

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Board of Library Commissioners
98 North Washington Street, Suite 401
Boston, MA 02114-1933

Dear Commissioners:

We are writing to express our support of the proposed expansion of Hopkinton Public Library. We believe that the details we included tell an important story about the history of the library and underscore the need for Hopkinton to continue that history in a 21st century building.

Established in 1895 by a group of private citizens, the Hopkinton Public Library has been privately owned and maintained by a seven-member, self-perpetuating Board of Trustees for 115 years. The Trustees were solely responsible for all Library expenses until 1955, at which time the Town began paying for operating expenses, including staff salaries and utilities.

In 1967, the Trustees acquired the adjacent property, St. Paul's Episcopal Church, which was also built in 1895, and expanded the Library to its current size of approximately 5,783 square feet. Hopkinton Library remains conveniently and prominently located at 13 Main Street in the heart of Hopkinton.

The addition of the church in 1967 was the most recent expansion of Hopkinton's Library. At that time, the town's population was 5,659. By 2000, Hopkinton residents numbered 13,346, and the Trustees recognized that Hopkinton was outgrowing its beloved library, and needed an updated and expanded Library in order to meet the demands of its growing community.

In 2001, the Trustees used funds from private donations to purchase the property located at 9 Church Street for \$380,000 for the purpose of expanding the Library at some future date. Nine Church Street is a three-family residential property located directly adjacent to and behind the Library. This acquisition offered enough land to double the size of the lot for the Library to more than half an acre (.58 Acre), thereby providing the space needed for a Library expansion and on-site parking. In order to provide liability protection, this property was incorporated as Nine Church Street Corporation, Inc., with Library Trustees to serve as officers.

In 2007, the Trustees began planning to apply for the next round of the Massachusetts Public Library Construction Grant. At this time, the Library Director and Trustees solicited input from the community to revise the Hopkinton Library Long Range Plan. The Trustees also worked with the Library Director to



revise the Library's Long Range Goals, hire and oversee a Library Consultant to prepare a Library Building Program, and interview professional fundraising firms. In November 2009, the Trustees appeared at a series of Board of Selectmen meetings to relay information regarding the proposed 2010 Library Construction Grant Round. The prospect of Hopkinton's participation was well received by the Selectmen. Thereafter, the Trustees and the Town acted collaboratively to move the Library project forward.

In the winter of 2009-10, Trustees begin careful consideration of options for an expansion of Hopkinton Public Library, including discussions regarding its ownership. Given that a new Library would be funded, at least partially, by Town residents, it seemed more likely that Hopkinton residents would support a renovation and expansion of the Library if owned by the Town. The Trustees also concluded that in the 21st century, the Hopkinton Library would best serve the public as a municipal entity.

In January 2010, the Trustees unanimously voted to donate the Library building to the Town. In May 2010, Hopkinton Annual Town Meeting voted overwhelmingly to accept the gift of Library building, along with the transfer 9 Church Street for purpose of expanding the Library. In January 2011, the Library property was conveyed by deed to the Town of Hopkinton, making the Library an entirely municipal owned and operated entity. At the same time, the Town and executed a Purchase and Sales Agreement to acquire the property located at 9 Church Street. By its acquisition, the Town will assume costs of maintaining the Library building and property, which has been approximately \$20,000 in recent years. Some of these costs, including snow removal and lawn care can be performed by an existing Town department.

As part of the transition to a municipal entity, the Town assumed responsibility for the Library Expansion Project. In June 2010, the Hopkinton Permanent Building Committee was assigned to oversee the Library Expansion Project. For the Library Project only, the five-member PBC seats an additional three voting members (selected by Library Trustees) to create an eight-member Library Building Committee. The Library Director was non-voting, but attended all meetings and was consulted on all aspects of the project.

In the future, the Library Trustees will continue to serve an important role. The deed to the Town of Hopkinton transferring the property provides for a five-member Board of Trustees. The Trustees will continue to act as library advocates, and shall be responsible for oversight of the operation of the Library, including setting policies and goals, working with the Library Director on budgetary issues and administration of annual budget, and appointing Library personnel.

In recent months, we have observed wide-spread support for the proposed plan to expand and renovate Hopkinton Library. Supporters range from local business in downtown Hopkinton that will receive the benefit of increased use of the library, to parents of young and school-aged children that will be enjoy the larger space offered by the new library. We hope that you will recognize this support when our grant application is reviewed, and help us provide the residents of Hopkinton with the library they deserve.

Very truly yours,



Hopkinton Public Library Board of Trustees
Sarah Duckett, President