

# Library project a step closer to becoming reality

By Bill Laforme

The Lynnfield Library project took another step closer to becoming a reality with Monday night's Town Meeting vote authorizing it to seek state grants for the project. In the same warrant article, voters also approved a schematic design for the library, which would be located next to the Reedy Meadow Golf Course.

The Library Board of Directors has been working with William Rawn Associates on a design that will include views of Reedy Meadow, more parking, an outdoor reading area, and a community meeting space that will be available after library hours. Designers spoke of an "interior town common" theme for the building.

In a presentation before Town Meeting voters, Library Board of Directors Chairman Bob Calamari reported that the design process had taken some two years, and that no town funds were being requested in that evening's warrant article.

The library and designers had also considered the possibility of



**New Lynnfield Library Director Holly Mercer discusses the institution's long-term plans at Monday night's Town Meeting.** (Advocate photo by Bill Laforme)

renovating the existing structure across from the town common as opposed to building a new one a short distance down Summer Street. However, this idea was dropped after it became apparent that the lack of parking would make grant funds impossible. The current building, as noted during Monday night's presentation and at past library forums, greatly lacks space for staff

and storage, with a basement that is prone to flooding and with insufficient provisions for current technology. "It was pretty much clear we would not be able to accommodate the needs of the community in the present structure," Cliff Gayley of William Rawn Associates told voters, adding that "you have a great site with Reedy Meadow." Representatives from William Rawn Associates also spoke

with residents at the several community forums on the project held in recent months.

Gayley added that the future library would be one story high to keep it consistent with the surrounding neighborhood, and that operations at the adjoining Reedy Meadow Golf Course would not be impeded. He also added that the design is not yet set in stone – there will be additional opportunities for residents to provide feedback, assuming the project gets a green light in the state grant process.

The new library would be around 23,000 square feet, up from the current 14,500 square feet facility. If the library does move to a new facility,

the current building would be repurposed by the town for some other use.

A state grant would pay for an estimated 40 to 60% of the total cost for a new library, and on Monday night, the chairman of the Library Building Committee, Russ Boekenkroeger, told voters that there is not yet an estimated bottom line cost for the project.

The library has until January to apply for the state grant, and should know by July, 2017 whether it has qualified for funding. The library plan also envisions a special town meeting in January of 2018 where local funds for the rest of the project would be requested. More information about the project is at [LynnfieldLibrary.org](http://LynnfieldLibrary.org).