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## Next chapter for proposed town library

By Leah Dearborn

If voters approve a new library for the Reedy Meadow Golf Course site, it will be the first public facility built in town in more than a decade.

Lynnfield was one of a handful of communities in the 1890s to accept an offer by the state for \$100 to any town willing to raise an equivalent sum towards a free public library.

At the time, the first town library was born with a collection of 554 books. But since then, not much has changed. The library was last renovated in 1991 when the basement was converted into usable space.

“If a new library works out, and a lot of things need to fall in place for this to happen, it would be a great addition to the town of Lynnfield,” said Philip Crawford, chairman of the Board of Selectmen. “The library is one of our crown jewels and it will be up to the voters whether or not a new facility is built.”

In April, voters gave initial approval to seek state funds to help defray the cost of the design, construction and equipping of a new library.

William Rawn Associates Architects, a Boston-based firm, was selected to design the new facility.



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**LIBRARY,**  
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"Libraries are incredibly important buildings in our communities," said Clifford Gayley, principal. "They are one of the few places in our society that are free and accessible to everyone. They used to be just places to find books and not make noise and now they welcome you in, help you find what you need and make technology accessible. They are also places to go to work solo or in groups and food is allowed and cafes are springing up."

The Boston-based firm designed the \$90 million Cambridge Public Library. It included a new 76,700-square-foot glass building that joined the restored 27,200-square-foot landmark. More recently, they completed the 15,000-square-foot East Boston

Lynnfield High School opened in 1964. Prior to that year, Lynnfield students attended Wakefield or Lynn high schools.

The Summer Street School was built in 1956 and the Huckleberry Hill School followed in 1960.

Thomas Geary, finance director for the schools, said there are no plans for any additional renovations at any school in the near future.

Geary added that renovations made on the high school five years ago modernized the building to accommodate increased enrollment.

Lynnfield Town Hall is also a product of the 1960s.

The original Town Hall was built in 1891 and served the community until it was demolished in 1964 to make room for its replacement.

Few new buildings have appeared in Lynnfield in recent years,

branch library which cost \$17.2 million. It features an open floor plan with areas for children, teens and adults. Other features of the library include free wifi, more than four dozen computers available, a flexible multipurpose room, and a quiet reading room with materials dedicated to the neighborhood's history.

Holly Mercer, the library director, said she doesn't know how much the new facility will cost, but an estimate will be included in the grant application the library plans to submit by year's end.

"I agree it's going to be a big change," Mercer said when asked about the impact the new library will have on Lynnfield. "But it's a positive change."

Opened in 2003, the Lynnfield Middle School is the newest public building in town.

During the 1950s and 1960s, Lynnfield population nearly doubled in the post-World War II boom. As public services raced to keep up with the growing suburb, several new schools were built.

but there have still been changes.

Robert Curtin, assistant to the administration at Town Hall, said the senior center was also renovated at the same time the middle school was being built.

A number of additional changes were made to the police and fire stations in the 1990s to make them handicapped accessible.

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