

**Friends Of the Northeast Library**

May 8, 2012

Ginner Cooper

Director, District of Columbia Public Library

901 G St. N.W.

Washington, DC  20001

Dear Ginnie,

On behalf of the Friends of the Northeast Library, I wanted to convey our opinion about the planned renovation. We appreciate the fact that DCPL has committed more than $10 million to the repair and restoration of our neighborhood branch. And we’re also grateful that the library system has worked closely with FONEL and allowed us to serve as the primary voice for the community. I wanted to share a few thoughts on the renovation:

First, we want to encourage you to keep the children’s section on the 2nd floor. We think that works better for parents and children alike and helps keep the branch welcoming and useful to the majority of the adult patrons who visit.

Second, we also want to reiterate our interest in having a dedicated space set aside for the Friends once the renovation is complete. That storage room should include enough space for donated books and plenty of shelves on all walls, but also a small space for daily sales on the first floor.

And we’d like to maintain some convenient location in the branch for patrons to donate books, like we have now with the bin that’s stored in the stairway. If possible, it would be good to have some additional shelf space set aside in the large meeting room for us to use as additional storage space.

A third concern for us is finding ways to protect any existing lighting, furniture or other historical features at the branch that could be repaired and put back into use once the library reopens. There are a few benches in the branch in this category,

 along with the circulation desks on the first and second floor that come to mind.

Fourth, we do not want to see the renovation budget be used to hire someone to maintain the outdoor yard and garden space. That exterior project was a fine improvement of the NE grounds but in the years since it has become obvious that it is not routinely maintained by DCPL. It’s our feeling that DCPL should carry the costs of caring for its own renovated outdoor yard and not take those costs from the limited interior renovation budget.

Finally, we want to specifically request that the contractor and DCPL continue to hold regular monthly meetings with FONEL throughout the process so that we will have additional opportunities to provide feedback. As soon as possible, we’d like to get an updated schedule for the entire project.

Thanks again for being a good partner in this process and we are excited about how great the branch is going to look when it reopens for business.

Sincerely,

Vincent Morris

President, Friends of the Northeast Library