

Caledonia Library expansion and Restoration Project Update

08-11-23

The Caledonia Library Association would like to provide an update for the community regarding our ongoing library expansion project. As most are aware, we have completed extensive work restoring the existing historical library building, and construction of much of the expansion to include the basement, enclosed structure, roofing, windows and exterior glass walls. We are currently awaiting anticipated funding to continue with the project. But to fully recognize the significance of the work completed so far, it is necessary to review the history of the project.

Throughout the last 50 years, the Caledonia Library Association, through its many dedicated past and present board members, has worked toward an expanded facility to address the needs of the community. As trends in society, technology, education, economics, demographics, politics, and the environment continue to shape the world, the role of the community library has expanded greatly. Today's library is a community center for stability through knowledge and interaction.

In 2017, the current Library Association Board made the unanimous decision to move forward with the long overdue expansion project. The Association had amassed \$380,000 over many years, much of it through donations from residents and fundraising efforts of the library boards. The community had been working towards this goal for decades and it was time to act. Through a process of interviews and presentations, an architectural firm was chosen, and their plan adopted and refined. It was apparent at that time that additional funding was necessary to complete the project. Board members began attending grant writing classes and submitting grant proposals, while also campaigning for corporate donations and soliciting the community itself. It was a huge undertaking, with several community members joining the various committees that were created to manage the task.

The Library Association Board, as an integral part of the process, hired a consulting firm to do an assessment of the existing library building, a structure listed on both Federal and State historical registries. The survey revealed significant restoration work to be done on the existing library. As work commenced in 2018, more and more hidden issues, such as asbestos, were exposed. Throughout 2018 and into 2019, \$225,000 was spent on renovations. All the work was necessary for both the continued safe use of the library by the community and because the historical library will remain a significant portion of the newly expanded facility. Funding for the renovations came from existing library funds and grants through the New York State Library Construction Grant Program. A list of work completed can be found below. Roughly \$60,000 worth of work remains to resurface the parking lot and install central air conditioning.

In 2019 the world changed. COVID not only killed over a million people in the US alone, but it also effected the global economy. As all of us suffered through illness and fear, we watched

sudden shortages of everything from food to paper goods to medicine. Building materials were not immune, and the library board helplessly watched the cost of materials, and thus the entire expansion project, go up more than 30 percent. COVID dealt a blow that caused delays in construction and materials. But the dedication of the library board and the community has allowed us to reach our current status with the project.

Our initial estimate received for the total Restoration and Expansion Project was 1.8 million dollars. Our own research indicated we could accomplish the project for approximately \$960,000. However, changes to the world by the COVID pandemic increased our projected costs to 1.3 million dollars. We initially started with the library's \$380,000. We have been awarded three separate NYS Library Construction Grants totaling \$287,704. We have received \$258,932 of that funding. Based on our current grant application for this year, the OWWL Library System has proposed we receive \$456,583! With the anticipated State approval, we should receive that funding at the end of the year. With those monies, plus our fundraising efforts and donations from the community, we will only need \$200,000-\$300,000 additional funds to complete the expansion project. We have the siding ready to install and we are working hard toward raising the funds we need to move forward as we wait for the grant money. We anticipate completing the expansion project in the spring of 2024. Additional funding is needed to meet that goal and any assistance is greatly appreciated. We've very much done the impossible, and our 50-year goal is now in sight! Here are more specific statistics on both the restoration of our historic library building and the new expansion project:

Restorations completed to the existing library

- A new furnace, relocated to accommodate new construction
- New electric and plumbing in the main room
- New internet ports in the main room
- Repointed and repaired all exterior stone walls (including on the roof), and basement interior stone walls
- Abated all asbestos in the basement, ductwork, on the roof, and under floors
- Removed and replaced the floors (five layers) in the main room and Children's room
- Insulated all floors with spray foam insulation
- New carpet installed
- Newly constructed custom step into the Children's room
- Asbestos abated in the vestibule and new walls and ceiling installed and painted
- New trim installed
- All windows were restored
- Existing roof was removed, new rafters set to level, and a new roof installed
- New roof gutters installed
- The fireplace was converted to gas with ceramic inserts
- The front of the library was professionally cleaned to remove stained areas
- Emergency lighting was installed

- A new septic system was installed
- Both the existing bathroom and kitchenette were updated
-

Work completed on the expansion project

- Site management
- Excavation
- Basement Installation
- Frame and enclose addition
- Install all roofing
- Install Windows
- Install glass walls and rear glass entryway
- Install concrete sidewalks and breezeways