



REPORT TO THE 2023 ANNUAL TOWN MEETING
Cary Library Board of Trustees

Children's Room Renovation Project (ChiRP!)
Update
March 20, 2023



Message from the Executive Board of the Cary Library Board of Trustees:

The Executive Board of the Cary Library Board of Trustees respectfully submits this status update for the Library’s Children’s Room Renovation Project. In March of 2019, Town Meeting members approved *2019 Town Meeting Article 20(h)* which included \$100,000 to explore the feasibility of renovating the Children’s Room.

FY23 Executive Board Members:

Suzie Barry	Select Board	Trustee Chair
Rabbi Amy Hertz	Clergy	Trustee Vice Chair
Rev. Barbara Callaghan	Clergy	
Eileen Jay	School Committee	
Joe Pato	Select Board	

About the Library Trustees:

In accordance with the provisions of the 1868 gift of Maria Hastings Cary establishing a public library in Lexington, the Board of Trustees of the Cary Memorial Library consists of the members of the Board of Selectmen (now Select Board), the School Committee, and the “settled” clergy. The power of the Trustees was defined by a Town Meeting in 1917 when it was voted that “the Trustees of the Cary Memorial Library shall have full and complete charge of the Library, its employees and all matters of every name and nature pertaining in any way to the care, operation and management of said Library, including the building in which the Library is established...”

The Library Board of Trustees elects an Executive Board each year at its Annual Meeting. The Executive Board meets regularly with the Library Director and guides the work of the Library. The Executive Board consists of 5 members of the current Board of Trustees, including the Chair and Vice Chair. Select Board, School Committee, and clergy have at least one representative on the Executive Board and no group has more than 2 members.

Original Project Overview and Scope:

In 2018, the Library began discussing the need for a complete renovation of the Children’s Room and Large Meeting Room. The initial driving factors for this project were:

- Wear and tear on the space after 15 years of service to the community. More than 50% of the Library’s circulation and foot traffic is generated by our Children’s Room.
- Accessibility issues in the design of the space
- Safety and security of children using the space, particularly due to a lack of sightlines to key areas
- Inadequate staff space
- Needed updates to meeting rooms based on current usage (Story Time Room, Large Meeting Room)

In 2022, the Department of Public Facilities completed a comprehensive evaluation of Town buildings which included a timeline for building infrastructure replacements. The Library’s HVAC system will reach end of life in approximately FY30. This prompted conversations about how to best approach the Children’s Room/Large Meeting Room renovations (already in process) and this major infrastructure project.

Project Timeline (Town Meeting actions in bold):

March 2019	The Library submitted a request to 2019 Town Meeting (Article 20h) for \$100,000 to study the feasibility of renovating the Children’s Room – Article approved.
Fall/Winter 2019-2020	The Library hired a space planning consultant to develop a Needs Assessment Report. Community engagement opportunities for children and families and other stakeholder groups were hosted.
April 2020	The project was put on hold due to the Covid-19 pandemic as library staff were needed for materials pickup services and virtual programming.

January 2022	Work resumed on the project. The architecture firm of J. Stewart Roberts Associates was brought on board to develop a preliminary design/project estimates based on community and staff feedback.
March 2022	A consultant was hired to determine if the Lower Level HVAC system could be replaced as part of a Children’s Room project, and if the Main/Upper Level HVAC system could remain in place until it obsolesces around FY30. It was determined that the systems can be split and then integrated at a later time.
Fall 2022	During the Town’s annual budgeting process, the Library had conversations with the Town Manager and Assistant Town Manager for Finance, the Department of Public Facilities, and Capital Expenditures Committee to determine how best to address the library’s capital needs (including the need for a full-building HVAC replacement in the not too distant future). Due to cost and timing concerns with coming high school project, the library was encouraged to consider explore a split renovation project with the Lower Level moving forward ASAP and the remaining capital needs being postponed until FY30 or later.
Spring/Summer 2023	<u><i>Due to timing issues, the Library was not able to submit a request for design development funds to this year’s Annual Town Meeting.</i></u> Because of the importance of this project, the Library Trustee has voted to expend up to \$500,000 from private funding sources in order to continue the design development process. We hope that Town Meeting and community members will see this as evidence of our commitment to this project.
Fall 2023	The Library will submit a capital request for construction funds during next year’s annual budgeting process. We also anticipate submitting a request for CPA funds for part of this project. This capital request will be considered along with other Town capital needs as part of the budgeting process.
March 2024 (anticipated)	Pending approval from all appropriate Town bodies, The Library expects to submit a capital request for construction funds at the March 2024 Annual Town Meeting.

Updated Project Scope for Lower Level Renovation Project:

The Library is planning for the following renovations as part of this Lower Level project:

- Renovation of the Children's Room
- Renovation of the Large Meeting Room
- HVAC replacement for the Lower Level (step one in replacing the current fossil fuel HVAC system with a clean energy system)
- Renovation of the Lower Level restrooms

Anticipated Project Cost (preliminary estimate):

Due to the updated scope and largely driven by the costs associated with the HVAC replacement and restroom renovations, the total project estimate is now \$6 - 6.5 million dollars

- Cary Library: \$1.5 million dollars from private funding sources (approximate)
 - \$500,000 in FY23-FY24 to continue design development
 - \$1,000,000 in support during construction
- Town of Lexington: 5 million dollars (approximate)
 - Town Capital funds
 - CPA funds

Please direct questions to:

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For more information about the project, visit the Library's website at:

<https://caryllibrary.org/children/chirp>