

Jones Library

43 Amity Street, Amherst, MA

[Building Project Website](#)



Project Update

On August 9, the Owners Project Manager (OPM) presented the JLBC with an updated [cost estimate](#) that was based on the [schematic design package](#). Two cost estimates were completed, one by a firm (Fennessy Consulting Services) contracted by the designer and one by a firm (RLB) contracted by Town. The two cost estimates include only "hard costs", which are the building and site construction costs. A reconciliation was performed between the two cost estimates to create a "hard cost" number. The OPM estimated the "soft cost" which include furnishings, professional fees, expenses, and contingencies and added that to the 'hard costs' to create the total projected cost of \$49.9M (previously \$36.3M). This represents a \$10.6M increase in hard costs and a \$2M increase in soft costs.

The substantial increase in costs is based on several factors including the delay in the start of construction (The current projected construction start date is October 2023. March 2022 was the construction start date based on the project proceeding after the Town Council vote in April 2021.) and an unfavorable market. Due to the continued uncertainty of market conditions one estimator used an 11% escalation assumption rather than a more typical 4% and continued to escalate costs through the midpoint of construction, rather than through the start of construction.

The OPM and designer discussed possible alternatives with the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC) to reduce the project costs. The grant process is guided under state regulations and the library was informed that the MBLC cannot provide additional funding and the library cannot reduce the square footage of the building to reduce costs.



Upcoming JLBC Meetings

Jones Library Building Committee

August 23, 4:00 p.m.

[meeting link](#)

Design Subcommittee

TBD

Outreach Subcommittee

TBD

Share a Comment in any of these formats

info@joneslibrary.org

[Library Images - add your comments](#)

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While not desirable or in keeping with the library's mission to fully serve the community, the necessity of finding cost savings required the OPM and designer to explore the potential of removing certain elements of the library and the square footage associated with those areas. (such as the Burnett Art Gallery, Special Collections Exhibit space, and ESL spaces that are not funded by the MBLC grant). The MBLC informed the library that these elements could be removed from the library, but the square footage associated with those spaces could not be removed. The size of the building cannot be reduced.

The OPM presented the JLBC with 4 possible paths forward for the project:

- Reduction of hard costs - \$4M in potential cuts was proposed
- Increase funding for the project – additional \$8M of fundraising was suggested
- Combination of reducing costs and increasing funding
- Back out of MBLC grant

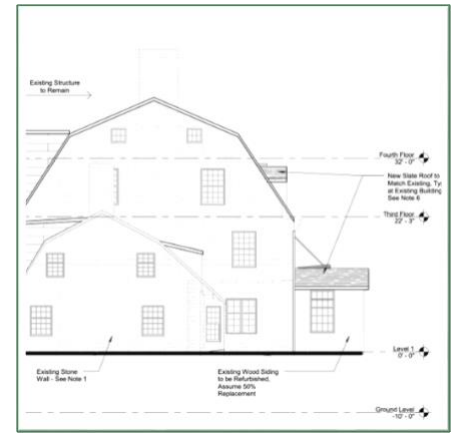
The JLBC requested additional information on the potential cuts and their impact on the project. Any additional fundraising is to be discussed between the Board of the Jones Library and the Town. The JLBC will meet again on August 23rd.

Jones Library Board of Trustees

The Jones Library Board of Trustees met on August 11 to review the updated cost estimate and discuss the possibility of increasing its current fundraising commitment of \$6.6M for the project. The Friends of the Jones Development Committee presented the results of their fundraising to date (\$3.08M pledged, \$3.2M in process from government grants, and \$1.6M in planned Historic Tax Credits) and a revised campaign plan to raise additional funds for the project.

The Library Director presented potential budget cuts that would be required if the Trustees agreed to the additional fundraising and the campaign was unsuccessful in its efforts to raise the funds. (Removing between \$2.7M and up to \$9M from the Endowment)

A motion to enter into a new agreement with the town pledging the value of the Endowment to help fund the library building project was proposed and tabled for a vote until August 22 when additional information will be available for consideration.



Document Links

[Schematic Design Cost Estimate 8/9/22](#)

[schematic design package 7/1/22](#)

[schematic designs 6/24/22](#)

[schematic designs 6/21/22](#)

[schematic designs 5/27/22](#)

[schematic designs 10/08/20](#)

[building program](#)

[projected timeline](#)

[exterior material options renderings](#)