

WARD ONE LIBRARY SIGN ON LETTER
Winter 2009 - 2010

Dear Councilmembers Graham and Thomas:

We are writing to ask you to review the concerns of the community regarding the Mount Pleasant Library "transformation" project.

Council approval of a construction contract for the current design would be a mistake that will affect Ward One library users for decades and expose taxpayers to potential litigation.

The following two concerns must be addressed before signing off on any contracts and we have suggested solutions to help with the discussion:

1) Fire Safety Access -- DCPL's proposed expansion plans, extending all the way to the library property-line, will block emergency service access to the shared corridor behind the library from the Lamont Street side of the library. Given the recent history of fire along this shared corridor between 16th Street and Mount Pleasant Streets, if DCPL completely blocks this major emergency services entry point, they will only further stifle already limited fire safety and emergency access which increases the possibility of disaster to residents, businesses, their property, and perhaps their lives.

- **Suggested solution:** Ward One residents ask that DCPL move the proposed addition laterally, or shrink it back a few feet, far enough away from the northwest corridor entry point to eliminate the blockage. This would require a minimal reduction in the size of the expansion.

2) Welcoming, Dignified, & Safe Access -- DCPL is proposing to build an accessibility ramp which is nearly three times the height and length of the current ramp. Plus, the proposed ramp will force library users to enter the rear of the building. This is not dignified, safe, or welcoming, especially in comparison to the current ramp.

- **Suggested solution:** Ward One residents ask DCPL to eliminate the problematic proposed ramp and keep the current one -- this won't interfere with the project plans in any significant way, will provide for easier access at the front of the building, and will be an overall project cost savings.

Of course, DCPL can avoid both of these concerns all together if they follow through with a renovation-only plan, which they promised years ago. With more than three thousand square feet under-utilized or perhaps not used at all in the current building, DCPL can incorporate this unused space into a renovation plan thus giving the library even more room to expand services as they wish.

Until DCPL addresses these serious community concerns through meaningful and appropriate design changes and public comment, we ask you to disapprove the construction contract and to encourage your colleagues to do so as well. Going forward without edification of the plans is a mistake that will affect many generations.

Regards,

Name:

Phone:

Title:

Email:

Organization: