

Harvard Towers Resident Council

1845 Harvard Street NW, Washington, DC 20009
Serving senior and disabled residents since 1961

October 2009

To whom it may concern:

I write on behalf of the seniors and disabled living at Harvard Towers in Ward One, Washington DC. This letter concerns the Mount Pleasant Library project being planned by DC Public Library and Chief Librarian Ginnie Cooper. The Mount Pleasant Library is the closest library serving our residents.

Harvard Towers residents were recently alerted to the fact that DC Public Library leadership (DCPL) plans to renovate and expand the Mount Pleasant library. We were contacted about this project, not by DCPL staff, but by concerned senior/disabled advocates who are interested in seeing a constructive dialog happen regarding the proposed access ramp.

Currently, the library has a ramp that allows seniors and the disabled to enter the front of the library into the library's terrace level where, once inside, library patrons can use an elevator to access all floors. The existing ramp is about forty feet long and has an incline of less than three feet.

With the proposed renovation and expansion, DCPL wants to remove the current ramp and replace it with a ramp, located to the side and rear of the library, which is two to three times the length and height of the current ramp.

This longer and steeper ramp will make it harder for our residents to use the library and also pushes them to enter the rear of the building, raising all sorts of ethical questions.

For these important reasons, Harvard Towers Resident Council, as an association of seniors and the disabled, opposes DCPL's unwelcoming expansion/ramp proposal. We have never been asked if this ramp would work for our residents and, if DCPL did engage us, we could have collaboratively worked with them to find a better solution.

We seek City leadership to work with us about this serious matter and look forward to finding a solution to an access ramp that welcomes all library users.

Please contact me for further information and the chance to discuss this matter. Feel free to email pastorascott@yahoo.com or call 202-483-1073.

Sincerely,

Angelia Scott, President
Harvard Towers Resident Council