

JONES LIBRARY

NORTH AMHERST LIBRARY • MUNSON MEMORIAL LIBRARY

Garden Statement from the Trustees of the Jones Library

March 28, 2016

I am writing on behalf of the Library Trustees to offer a brief update on the opening phase of a renovation and construction project designed to improve the Library's usability for all town residents.

Our design team includes one of the leading historic preservation oriented architectural firms in the Commonwealth (Finegold Alexander Architects), which has partnered with local architects Kuhn, Riddle. From the outset, the design team has been told that the Library's external spaces – the gardens and other open areas – are important components of the project.

The Library will not seek to expand more than is necessary to meet patron needs over the next twenty to fifty years. The standards for the *Building Program* that we are following derive from national guidelines as applied by the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners to facilities in Massachusetts.

In our design process we are working cooperatively with the Historical Society in order to arrive at a mutually beneficial plan. That plan may involve the sale and purchase of a small piece of land from the Historical Society to the Jones Library. In addition, we are collaborating on the notion of shared processing, programming and storage spaces for our institutions' valuable artifacts.

As our planning goes forward, we want to be clear in stating how much we value the Kinsey Memorial Garden. It is a wonderful part of the Library grounds and of the town. Yet to endorse a request to "preserve in its entirety the Kinsey Memorial Garden" as proposed to Town Meeting, just as our planning and design effort gets underway, seems premature as it would unduly constrain the effort to provide the best possible Library to the people of Amherst. Putting a restriction on any portion of our property would deny our design team the ability to use our building and grounds in the best way possible.

Whatever is ultimately decided about the Kinsey Garden, we look to work with the Historical Society, Friends of the Library, Garden Club, Amherst residents, etc. to create a garden vista which will inspire pride and be visible and accessible to the community.

As the process of thinking about the future of the Library and the Historical Society unfolds, we will provide many and varied opportunities for community involvement.

We are grateful to the residents of Amherst for their support of the Library and interest in our planning and design process.

Sincerely,
Austin Sarat, President
Jones Board of Trustees

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