



TO: Jones Library Board of Trustees, Library Director Sharry, and the Amherst Town Council

FROM: Burnett Gallery Committee

DATE: September 14, 2021

The Burnett Gallery provides a community space to display the work of artists and craftspeople from Amherst and nearby towns. Exhibits show abstract and representational art, as well as work with strong topical interests. Individual and group shows include works of high quality by individuals who may not have the reputation or resources that would enable them to exhibit at museums or commercial galleries.

The Burnett Gallery Committee supports the Trustees and staff in their efforts to renovate and expand the Jones Library to meet the needs of future library patrons. Adding program space and renovation of existing areas will enable the Jones Library to offer exciting programs and opportunities to the residents of Amherst. Replacing building infrastructure, including the elevator and HVAC, will improve access for all patrons and assure the preservation of the collection and the comfort and safety of the patrons. We are also glad that the new Jones Library will actually use less fossil fuel energy than the current building does.

It is exciting to support a renovation/expansion that is both respectful of the history of the Jones Library building and carefully planned to meet the needs of future patrons. We agree with the following statement by Vartan Gregorian, former president of the New York City Public Library system:

" In our democratic society, the library stands for hope, for learning, for progress, for literacy, for self-improvement and for civic engagement. The library is a symbol of opportunity, citizenship, equality, freedom of thought, and hence, is a symbol of democracy itself."