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**MA Cultural Facilities fund awards \$200,000 to the Jones Library Capital Campaign**

The Massachusetts Cultural Facilities Fund (CFF) has awarded \$200,000 in capital funds to the Jones Library. This grant, one of 115 awarded statewide, will help provide the Jones with the physical capacity to significantly expand exhibits, programs, and other resources not just for residents, but for tourists as well, placing the Library at the heart of, and as a key component of, the “Destination Amherst” plan of the Town.

According to the Mass Cultural Council website, the CFF is jointly administered by MassDevelopment and Mass Cultural Council, and provides capital and planning grants for facilities primarily focused on the arts, humanities, and interpretive sciences. Funds will be used to improve access and visitability measures for the Burnett Art Gallery and for upgraded mechanical systems.

“We are thrilled by this support, said Jones Library Director Sharon Sharry. “Not only will the funds awarded help significantly, this CFF grant rightfully acknowledges what Jones Library patrons have known for a long time, namely that the Jones Library plays a central role as a cultural institution in Amherst and in Western Massachusetts.”

The \$36.6 million expansion and renovation will make the Jones Library one of the most climate-friendly buildings in Amherst, restoring most of the original 1928 building, while improving the layout to be fully accessible for people with disabilities and more functional for everyone.

Renovations, which include repairs and updates to the elevator, wiring, carpets and the heating and cooling system, will eliminate the use of fossil fuels and create a net zero ready building. The expansion will create a space for teens, a bigger children’s room, a climate-controlled area for special collections, and improved space for the English as a Second Language program.

Last November, Amherst voters overwhelmingly affirmed the Amherst Town Council’s decisive 10-2 vote to allocate \$15.8 million for the project. The Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC) has awarded \$13.8 million for the Jones Library

Building Project; the remainder will be raised through grants from foundations, financial institutions, local, state, and federal grants and private donations.

“This is a huge shot in the arm for the Jones Library Capital Campaign,” said Capital Campaign Co-Chair Kent Faerber. “The Commonwealth’s investment in the Jones Library helps to attract gifts from other institutions as well as from individuals. We appreciate deeply the CFF’s support to renovate and expand our beloved cultural institution, the Jones Library.”

The Jones Library Capital Campaign, co-chaired by Kent Ferber and Trustee Lee Edwards, is a collaboration between the Jones Trustees and the Friends of the Jones Library nonprofit organization. Financial Development Agency helped to secure this grant on behalf of the Jones Library Capital Campaign.

The Jones Library Building Project is currently in the building design phase with the town-appointed building committee actively seeking public input for the architectural plans. The renovation and expansion groundbreaking is anticipated in October 2023.

More information on the project is available on the building project website at <https://www.amherstma.gov/3634/Jones-Library-Building-Committee>

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