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RESOLUTION OF ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION 4D SUPPORTING A NEW FULL-SERVICE LIBRARY ON KENNEDY STREET NW

Whereas, in November 2020, the DC Public Library (DCPL) published *Next Libris*¹, its Facilities Master Plan. The Plan, covering calendar years 2021—2030, “articulates the Library’s commitment to not only maintain the city’s public libraries, but to adapt them for new uses and continue to pursue strategic opportunities to grow and give even more residents access to this increasingly vital engine of community life.”

Whereas, DCPL identified in *Next Libris* six geographic areas where District residents “do not have the same level of service as in other areas.” One of these identified areas is Brightwood Park, which is located within the boundaries of ANC 4D.

Whereas, *Next Libris* states that while Brightwood Park “is located between four libraries—Shepherd Park, Takoma Park, Lamond Riggs and Petworth—the closest one is approximately 1 mile away.” Furthermore, “The area is made up primarily of single-family row houses and other low-to-medium density housing. [...] This area has a high concentration of individuals with low educational attainment, children ages birth to 9 and single parent households. Additionally, there are a lot of individuals living in the area who do not currently use the Library and have the potential to become customers. Expanding library services to this area may relieve pressure on the services of the Petworth Library nearby (a full-size library with low square feet per capita due to population density).”

Whereas, DCPL included \$25,001,820 in its Fiscal Year (FY) 2023 capital budget for a “New 4A Library” (Project No. SPL37)², with \$4.310 million allocated in FY 2027 for project design and \$20.691 million in FY 2028 for construction. DCPL description stated that this funding would be used to “Build a new library in Ward 4 to address service gaps for Brightwood Park/Manor Park communities and serve more Ward 4

¹ See here: https://www.dclibrary.org/sites/default/files/files/2023-04/DCPL_NextLibris_111020-Web_IMLS.pdf.

² See here: https://cfo.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/ocfo/publication/attachments/ce_dcpl_capital_2023j.pdf.

residents. This service gap has been highlighted within the Next Libris, DC Public Library’s 2021-2030 Facilities Master Plan, that articulates the Library’s commitment to not only maintain the city’s public libraries, but to adapt them for new uses and continue to pursue strategic opportunities to grow and give even more residents access to this increasingly vital engine of community life.” DCPL goes on to say, in its justification for the funds, that “Replacing the existing Shepherd Park Library with a new full-service library at a location south of the existing library would address the service gaps for Brightwood Park/Manor Park communities and serve more Ward 4 residents. Further site exploration and community engagement will be required to identify the ideal location for a Shepherd Park Library replacement.”

Whereas, the enacted Fiscal Year 2024 Budget Support Act of 2023 (L25-0050; effective from September 6, 2023) includes \$5 million³ to DCPL as part of the “Ward 4 Libraries Act of 2023”⁴ for “capital project SPL37 to acquire real property that is suitable for development of a new full-service branch library to address a library service gap in Brightwood Park and Manor Park, as identified in the District of Columbia Public Library’s facilities master plan for 2021-2030; provided, that the real property be located within one-half mile of the portion of Kennedy Street, NW, situated between 13th Street, NW, and Kansas Avenue, NW.” The enacted law also states that “Beginning June 1, 2024, and by June 1 of each year thereafter until acquisition of the real property described in this subsection is complete, the Mayor or the Mayor’s designee shall deliver a written report on the status of the acquisition to the Council and Ward 4 Advisory Neighborhood Commissions.”

Whereas, DCPL included \$25,251,000 in its FY 2024 capital budget for Project No. SPL37⁵ (with \$4.310 million allocated in FY 2027 for project design and \$20.941 million in FY 2028 for construction), renaming it “*Ward 4 Libraries*,” and adding an additional \$5 million in FY24 “for purchase of real property suitable for development of a new full-service branch library within one-half mile of Kennedy Street, NW, between 13th Street, NW, and Kansas Avenue, NW [...] consistent with the Ward 4 Libraries Act of 2023.”

Whereas, DCPL Executive Director Richard Reyes-Gavilan indicated in his testimony⁶ on February 7, 2024 at DCPL’s FYs 2023-24 performance oversight hearing before the DC Council’s Committee on Recreation, Libraries and Youth Affairs that “everyone is in agreement that this is something that, working together, could be an interesting win-win for everyone. [...] I completely agree with you [Ward 4 Councilmember Janeese Lewis George] that this has to be collaborative. [...] We are working both with the Deputy Mayor’s office [for Planning and Economic Development] or DGS [Department of General Services], if DGS has to be involved. I’m happy to participate in any RFP selection, have any conversation that I need to have in order to, basically, abide by the legislation that was passed. I don’t have much of an update beyond that. It’s on our radar, along with a bunch of other things.”

³ See here:

https://cfo.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/ocfo/publication/attachments/ce_dcpl_capital_2024j.pdf.

⁴ See Subtitle H of Title IV of L25-0050: https://lirms.dccouncil.gov/downloads/LIMS/52613/Signed_Act/B25-0202-Signed_Act.pdf.

⁵ See here:

https://cfo.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/ocfo/publication/attachments/ce_dcpl_capital_2024j.pdf.

⁶ See here at the 3:07:18 mark: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gqq4ysH0qWE>.

Whereas, Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development (DMPED) Nina Albert indicated in her testimony⁷ on February 28, 2024 at DMPED’s FYs 2023-24 performance oversight hearing before the DC Council’s Committee on Business and Economic Development that DMPED envisions the \$5 million in FY24 for site acquisition for a new public library on Kennedy Street NW as more of a “community hub” with multiple services, including a library. Albert indicated that DCPL is taking the lead reaching out to different District government agencies and the private sector on this project and that community engagement would occur once plans are more concrete. She also stated that DMPED did not “have a current timeline” yet because they are still in “an exploratory phase”; DMPED would be happy to attend a community meeting and give an update themselves; and that a Request for Proposals (RFP) hadn’t yet gone out because “we don’t really have a plan at this moment.” Albert concluded by stating that DMPED sees their role “as being community-serving and delivering amenities and solutions”—the financial feasibility for this project “has not come together yet.” If DCPL were to come to DMPED today with a plan for a new library on Kennedy Street NW, then DMPED would be able to move forward on an RFP—“When there’s a plan that’s ready to go, we’d be ready to execute.”

Whereas, DCPL included \$25,251,000 in its FY 2025 capital budget for Project No. SPL37⁸ (with \$4.310 million allocated in FY 2028 for project design and \$20.941 million in FY 2030 for construction), renaming it “*Shepherd Park Library*,” and stating that all of the funding would now be utilized to “Rebuild the Shepherd Park (Juanita E. Thornton) Library on its current site to better serve the Shepherd Park community, increase and improve publicly available space for children, teens, and adults, and to address aging infrastructure and mechanical systems.” The new justification of this funding by DCPL is that it is “needed based on the current conditions of the building and layout of the space.” DCPL also notes that “An amount of unspent prior-year funding in this project [i.e., the \$5 million in FY24 funding to DCPL reserved for site acquisition for a new library on Kennedy Street NW] was shifted to one or more future fiscal years to align with anticipated project implementation and spending timelines. The Proposed Funding table therefore includes funding that was allotted to this project in a prior fiscal year. This should be noted when making comparisons with funding amounts in published budget documents from prior fiscal years.”

Whereas, the “Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Support Act of 2024” (B25-784),⁹ introduced on April 3, 2024 by DC Council Chairman Phil Mendelson at the request of Mayor Muriel Bowser, includes the “Library Location Authority Amendment Act of 2024” (Subtitle (IV)(E)), which repeals the enacted “Ward 4 Libraries Act of 2023” in its entirety. This includes repealing the authority of the Mayor or a subordinate agency to acquire land for a new Ward 4 library and the utilization of \$5 million in FY24 funds provided for a Ward 4 library for that purpose.

Whereas, Mayor Bowser stated¹⁰, in response to a question at ANC 4C’s April 10, 2024 public meeting regarding her commitment to bringing a new public library to Kennedy Street NW and why her Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Support Act of 2024 legislation includes the rescission of \$5 million in FY24 site acquisition funds, that: “I don’t support a library there. DC Public Libraries does not support a library

⁷ See here: <https://x.com/ZachBlIsrael/status/1762887602376491103>.

⁸ See here:

https://cfo.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/ocfo/publication/attachments/ce_dcpl_capital_2025m.pdf.

⁹ See here: <https://lims.dccouncil.gov/Legislation/B25-0784>.

¹⁰ See here: <https://x.com/ZachBlIsrael/status/1778494097952510144>.

there. It appears that the Councilmember [Janeese Lewis George] and the developers support a library there. [...] What my exchange with the Councilmember during the [April 3, 2024] budget hearing¹¹ [was about] was to figure out if there was another way we could have the government presence on Kennedy Street. I don't think that the way to go is to force the library system, which has vetted through its Master Plan where new libraries should be sited, in this way by the Council. [...] I support the direction of Director Reyes-Gavilan."

Whereas, on April 20, 2022, ANC 4D unanimously passed a resolution¹² urging DCPL, in part, "to begin its community engagement with Advisory Neighborhood Commission 4D and Brightwood Park residents regarding the new public library in Brightwood Park as expeditiously as possible, ideally beginning in the Fall of 2022. This will allow ample time for DCPL to begin design and construction three years ahead of its proposed schedule."

Whereas, ANC 4D passed two additional resolutions in March¹³ and November¹⁴ of 2023 requesting that the District government: (1) Fund an eminent domain purchase of the southeast corner of 5th and Kennedy Streets NW to construct a new public library to fill the service gap in Brightwood/Manor Park & set aside at least \$25 million in the Capital Improvement Plan to acquire property at this intersection and; (2) urges the DMPED acquisition team to publish an RFP no later than January 2024 to initiate the process of acquiring the land and to start the search for developers.

Whereas, the DC Council's Committee on Recreation, Libraries and Youth Affairs will hold DCPL's FY 2025 budget oversight hearing on April 24, 2024.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that Advisory Neighborhood Commission 4D:

1. Advises DCPL, in FY 2024, which ends on September 30, 2024, to fully utilize the \$5 million currently available to DCPL, in partnership with DMPED and/or DGS, to acquire real property that is suitable for development of a new full-service branch library on Kennedy Street NW, situated between 13th Street NW and Kansas Avenue NW, in accordance with the enacted "Ward 4 Libraries Act of 2023". This would include the publication of an RFP by DMPED.
2. Advises DCPL and the DC Council to modify Project No. SPL37 in DCPL's proposed FY 2025 capital budget so as to allocate the \$30,250,582 in available funding toward site acquisition, design, and capital construction of a new public library located on Kennedy Street NW situated between 13th Street NW and Kansas Avenue NW.
3. Advises the DC Council, including its Committee on Recreation, Libraries and Youth Affairs and Committee of the Whole, to amend the "Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Support Act of 2024" (B25-

¹¹ See here at the 3:24:35 mark: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ns9Q9exhm-0&t=12305s>.

¹² See here:

https://resolutions.anc.dc.gov/AttachmentsFiles/20/RESOLUTION%20OF%20ADVISORY%20NEIGHBORHOOD%20COMMISSION%204D%20URGING%20DCPL%20TO%20ALLOCATE%20FUNDS%20TO%20ESTABLISH%20A%20LIBRARY%20IN%20BRIGHTWOOD%20PARK_TM_20220421112850AM.pdf.

¹³ See here:

https://resolutions.anc.dc.gov/AttachmentsFiles/20/2023.03.15_ANC_4D_Resolution_Concerning_Library_at_5th_and_Kennedy_TM_20230410082921PM.pdf.

¹⁴ See here:

https://resolutions.anc.dc.gov/AttachmentsFiles/20/4D_2023_16_Kennedy_St_Library_RFP_TM_20231129091003PM.pdf.

784) in May and/or June 2024 by rescinding the entirety of the “Library Location Authority Amendment Act of 2024” (Subtitle (IV)(E)), which proposes the repeal of the enacted “Ward 4 Libraries Act of 2023” in its entirety.

4. Advises both DCPL and DMPED to proactively and regularly communicate with ANC 4D and Ward 4 Councilmember Janeese Lewis George in the near-term and long-term regarding a new public library on Kennedy Street NW, above and beyond the legally required annual written report due to ANC 4D and the DC Council by June 1, 2024 on the status of the acquisition of property for a new public library on Kennedy Street NW.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that 4D01 Commissioner Joy Pinkney is hereby authorized to represent the Commission in all matters relating to this resolution. Co-authored by Library Task Force Member, Zach Israel.

The Resolution of Advisory Neighborhood Commission 4D Supporting a New Full-Service Library on Kennedy Street NW was considered on April 17, 2024 before Advisory Neighborhood Commission 4D at a duly noticed meeting of the Commission in the presence of a quorum. The vote of the Commission was 6 in favor, 0 against, and 0 abstaining. The resolution is hereby adopted as 4D-2024-06.

Signed by:

Dated: 29 April 2024



Anthony Pirrotti, ANC 4D Chair