

West End Branch Library Project

July 28, 2022



City of Boston
Mayor Michelle Wu



Housing

Zoom Interpretation Services



English: For interpretation in [____],

1. Go to the horizontal control bar at the bottom of your screen. Click on “Interpretation.”
2. Then click on the language that you would like to hear.
3. You are now accessing this meeting in [____]

Cantonese: 若需粵語口譯服務：

1. 與屏幕下方之長方形控制欄中，煩請點擊“Intepretation.”
2. 煩請點擊您所需收聽的語言。
3. 您即可聽到粵語的會議口譯。

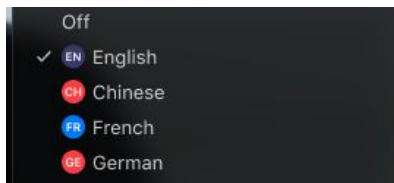
Mandarin: 若需普通话口译服务：

1. 在屏幕下方的长方形控制栏中，请点击“Intepretation.”
2. 请点击您所需收听的语言。
3. 您即可收听普通话的会议口译。

1.



2.



3.



Agenda

- Welcome!
- Tonight's meeting objectives
- Quick recap of the June 14th meeting
- Development priorities for the site
- Questions, comments, and discussion
- Next steps



Tonight's meeting objectives

- ❖ Reiterate the design and programming needs of the library branch.
- ❖ Kick off discussion about the housing goals for development at this site.
What will ensure the successful balance of a library branch and housing?
- ❖ Hear your comments and answer any questions you may have.
- ❖ Discuss the timeline for the summer and fall.

Recapping the June 14th meeting



Attendees: 40+

- ❖ We reviewed the work that has brought us to this point:
We are ready to move forward with a project that combines a new branch library with affordable housing!
- ❖ We talked about what comes next (including tonight's meeting).

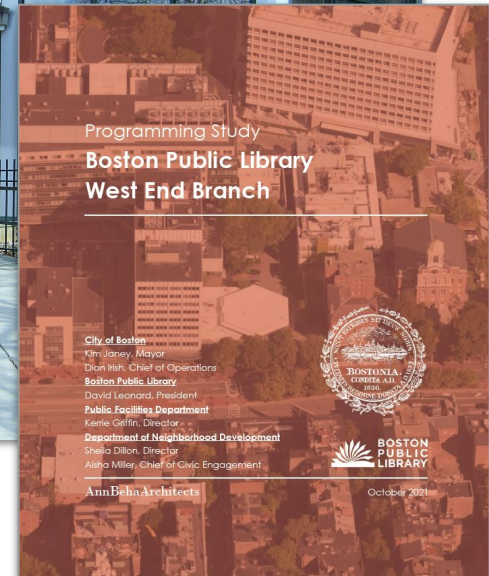
For slides and the recording from June 14th, visit:

<https://www.boston.gov/buildinghousing/west-end-library-housing-public-assets>

The final programming study included two key findings.

The programming study confirmed that a **new branch library should be built** at the West End site, with updated programming and amenities to best serve the community.

The programming study also confirmed the strong potential for a **mixed-use building with affordable housing above the library**. There was consistent support expressed for this idea at community meetings.



The City's #1 goal is to deliver a library branch that offers world-class services and is a beautiful landmark in the neighborhood.

How will the library's needs be carried over to the building design?

- ❖ **More space.** The new library will increase in size by about 70%, with ample space to meet the needs of diverse library users, including seniors and youth.
- ❖ **Programmable space.** The new community room will hold up to 100 people and be configurable for multiple types of events, from lectures to group learning.



How will the library's needs be carried over to the building design?

- ❖ **A strong street presence.** The new branch should stand out as a **landmark on Cambridge Street** and allow people to gather.
 - The design of the branch exterior should **draw attention to the library and hold its own** amidst the other large buildings on the street.
 - The library's street frontage should include an outdoor area that combines landscaped open space and seating to be **welcoming and accessible.**



How will the library's needs be carried over to the building design?

- ❖ **Thoughtful layout and design** to enhance the presence and experience of the branch exterior and interior:
 - Glazing at the streetfront and rear of the building to bring **light and views to all sections** of the library.
 - Setbacks in the upper stories to limit shadows on the Otis House and avoid blocking windows on neighboring buildings.
 - **Distinct, secure, and separate entrances** for the housing and library.





The City's goal for housing is to meet exceptionally high demand by bringing quality, safe, and affordable homes to the neighborhood.

What do we think are the building blocks of housing on this site?

- ❖ **Rental housing is the right fit here.**
- ❖ **Apartments should cover a range of affordability levels and unit sizes to meet the needs of different residents.**
- ❖ **The land will remain under City ownership.**
- ❖ **We envision density and height to match the context of Cambridge Street.**
- ❖ **Some programmable open space for residents is desired.**
- ❖ **The Request for Proposals will include language to ensure key City goals.**

Discussion



What are some of the open questions for development at this site?

- ❖ **Are there specific populations we could target?** Family housing, senior housing, supportive housing, etc.
- ❖ **What are the biggest housing needs in this neighborhood?**

What are some of the open questions for development at this site?

- ❖ **Could the Request for Proposals be open to a small number of market-rate units?** (There is no question that the majority of units will be income-restricted.)
- ❖ **Are there other amenities, community uses, or public benefits that could be called out or prioritized in the RFP?**
- ❖ **What are the trade-offs to keep in mind for this site?**

Please share your thoughts and questions about development goals.

Looking ahead



Proposed next steps

- Compile feedback from tonight's and prior meetings into a draft of development goals;
- Share draft goals with the community via the project page and civic associations;
- Allow for civic associations to put discussion of the draft goals on their meeting agendas;
- Meet again in late September to hear any additional feedback on the draft goals;
- Draft and finalize the Request for Proposals and release it in the fall.





THANK YOU

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www.boston.gov/buildinghousing/west-end-library-housing-public-assets