

Final Environmental Impact Statement

East Hampton Library

**Proposed Wing to Accommodate Expansion of Children's
Library**

And Sixty-Seat Lecture Hall

East Hampton Library
159 Main Street
East Hampton, N.Y. 11937

Prepared by:
Village of East Hampton Zoning Board of Appeals

June 25, 2010

Joint Public Hearing on DEIS, Special Permit, Interpretation and Area Variances

Opened: September 11, 2009

Closed: March 26, 2010

Comments on DEIS Accepted Through April 5, 2010

FEIS Accepted by Lead Agency June 25, 2010

SEQRA Coordinator: Larry Cantwell

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposed addition is likely to increase the number of people who visit the Library, contrary to assertions by the applicant, resulting in an increase in the number of vehicles entering and exiting the site. • The proposed parking is inadequate. • The environmental impact of the proposed parking is too great. • The proposed project will add to traffic congestion and exacerbate dangerous conditions at a busy intersection..... • The proposed project is mischaracterized as a “children’s wing” and is unnecessary. • The project is contrary to the Comprehensive Plan..... • The proposed project does not meet Suffolk County Sanitary Code requirements..... • The project will have a negative impact on the “Osborne Green”..... • The impacts of the Library should be considered in conjunction with the impacts of Guild Hall events. • The alternative of providing additional facilities in outlying areas, especially a branch in Springs, should be explored. • The proposed addition is too large, and the Library should consider reconfiguring the existing space with, perhaps, a smaller addition. 	10 17 24 25 28 30 32 34 37 38 40

1.1. INTRODUCTION

This Final Environmental Impact Statement (“FEIS”) has been prepared in compliance with requirements of the New York State Environmental Quality Review Act (“SEQRA”) for the proposed “Children’s Wing” expansion to the East Hampton Library.

1.2. PROJECT LOCATION

The subject premises is 2.265 acres in size and is located at the northwest corner of the intersection of Main Street (Montauk Highway, State Route 27) and Buells Lane (East Hampton Sag Harbor Turnpike, State Route 112) in the Village of East Hampton. The parcel is a contributing property in the Main Street Historic District as listed on the National Register of Historic Properties and subject to the provisions of Chapter 176 of the Code of the Village of East Hampton (Preservation of Historic Areas). It is also listed in the Village of East Hampton Open Space Program, an element of the Comprehensive Plan.

1.3. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The East Hampton Library proposes to expand its existing building with a 6,802-square-foot two-level addition, roughly one-third the size of the existing Library. One level, which would include a handicapped-accessible 60-seat lecture hall, would be below-grade. The first floor above grade would include a children’s area with space for approximately 10,000 new books. The existing children’s section of the Library is 1,623 square feet, including the Hedges Room, which is 576 square feet. The proposal is to return the use of the Hedges Room to adult use and add 6,802 square feet of gross floor area, of which only about 2,000 square feet will be devoted to the Children’s Library (DEIS 15). If you subtract back out the area of the Hedges Room, the net increase in the area devoted to children and young adults is 1,424 square feet of floor area. The new wing would also include computer areas, tables for reading and writing, multiple seating

areas, office space, corridors, stairs, an elevator, staff rooms, rest rooms and storage. The return of the use of the Hedges Room to adult space would allow the Library to purchase approximately 5,000 new books for adult use. The existing building has approximately 20,412 square feet of gross floor area. The gross floor area of the proposed building, after construction, would be 27,214 square feet. The final proposal includes a plan, submitted in February 2010, to provide a total of 42 paved parking spaces on site and a wider driveway of about 22 feet across with a 24-foot wide entrance, increasing the paved area dedicated solely to automobile access and parking by 8,140 square feet, to a total of 20,560 square feet (D 12).

1.4 OVERVIEW OF PROCEDURAL BACKGROUND

The following is not a complete recitation of all the submissions by the applicant or the discussions and resolutions by the Zoning Board concerning this application but is intended to set forth the key dates and general procedural history of the application:

- In April 2003, the Library presented an application to the Zoning Board of Appeals for a larger addition.
- In the spring of 2004, the applicant submitted an amended application for a slightly smaller project, the same proposal in terms of the size and design of the building itself that is before the Board now. This application was the subject of a number of hearings before the Zoning Board of Appeals at which concern was expressed about the size and scale of the project.
- On September 10, 2004, the Zoning Board of Appeals, as lead agency, adopted a positive declaration pursuant to SEQRA.
- In January 2008, three and a half years later, the Library submitted its first Draft Environmental Impact Statement (“DEIS”) to the Zoning Board of Appeals, for which no Scoping Session had been conducted, and which was deemed inadequate.
- In June 2008 a revised DEIS was submitted by the Library. On July 11, 2008, the Zoning Board of Appeals adopted a resolution deeming the scope and content of the DEIS adequate for public review, on the condition that the

applicant submit a survey depicting lot coverage calculations incorporating the then-proposed parking areas into the overall lot coverage calculation.

- The applicant thereafter produced, on December 9, 2008, a revised survey incorporating the existing parking area into the lot coverage calculations, but eliminating any new proposed parking to accommodate the 6,802 square-foot proposed wing.
- The application was thereafter amended by the applicant on July 9, 2009, to request an interpretation that no variances are required, or in the alternative, for variance relief as necessary to permit the same-sized addition, but now with ten (10) additional grass-paver parking spaces included, pursuant to a new survey dated June 30, 2009.
- On July 24, 2009, the Board adopted a Notice of Completion of the DEIS.
- Joint public hearings on the DEIS and the applications for the special permit to allow the expansion of the Library and the applicant's request for an interpretation and, if denied, for the necessary variance relief, began on September 9, 2009.
- Toward the end of the hearings the applicant revised its proposal to include a reconfiguration and expansion of the existing on-site parking area to include 42 paved parking spaces, pursuant to a survey entitled Parking Alternate Plan "E" prepared by Nathan Taft Corwin III Land Surveyor, last revised February 13, 2010.

1.5 CONTENTS OF FEIS

Aside from this document, the FEIS specifically incorporates by reference the entire DEIS submitted by the applicant dated May 16, 2009 and the "Additional Information" as accumulated by the applicant and as it appears on the East Hampton Library's web site. It also has "annexed to" this document and made a part hereof, four separate appendices: one which includes certain documents that are not part of the record of the hearing but are relevant to this statement (Appendix A); one which contains the minutes of the hearing held on the DEIS (Appendix B); one which includes the written

comments, letters, reports and memoranda submitted to the Board during the hearing on the DEIS (Appendix C); and one which includes other information contained in the files of the Zoning Board of Appeals, some of which was submitted after the submission of the DEIS but before the commencement of the hearing on the DEIS, and one which includes oversized exhibits, now reduced in size, that were submitted in the course of the hearing (Appendix D). References to the appendices within this statement are contained in parentheses with the letter number of the relevant appendix followed with the page number in that appendix. References to the DEIS are similarly followed by the page number in the DEIS to which reference is being made.

2.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

At its core the environmental review process was enacted to force approving agencies to consider—to recognize and deal with—the tension between the need to construct something, including something proposed to benefit the needs of a community as a whole, and the broader environmental impacts of the project. This application serves as an example of how divisive a thorough examination of that tension can become. Yet, it is the obligation of the lead agency to do so, even when a proposal comes from respected community leaders for a project as “apple pie” as enlarging a children’s library and providing a handicapped-accessible gathering room for educational lectures. In the abstract, no civilized person could be “against” a library enhancing its services to the community. However, this Board must, before granting a special permit for the expansion of the East Hampton Library, examine the impacts of that expansion in a dispassionate manner and weigh those impacts and the benefits alike. The DEIS, in a sense, presents the applicant’s view of the proposed project and its possible impacts; the public comment period and the hearings are intended to elicit comments from the community. The FEIS is the Board’s opportunity to discuss the comments. There are no “findings” here. A Findings Statement will be issued later, as well as a final determination by the Board on the application before it.

The most important environmental “tension” identified throughout this process was the balancing of the “life/safety” issue of providing safe and orderly access to the facility for pedestrians and vehicles against the specter of destroying the character of the Library’s setting and the Osborne Green with excess paving. Just as no one is “against” the Library, no one, including the Library Board, wants to “pave paradise and put up a parking lot”. The need to balance “the need for parking with the desire to preserve as much of the property as practicable and to avoid unnecessary pavement” (C 456) was specifically acknowledged by the applicant when it submitted alternatives to its first inadequate parking plan.

This FEIS makes no findings and it is not a determination on the merits of the application. Pursuant to the regulations governing the State Environmental Quality Review Act, a “Findings Statement” will be issued by the Village of East Hampton Zoning Board of Appeals not less than ten days following the filing of this Final Impact Statement. The purpose of this FEIS is to examine the DEIS submitted by the applicant and analyze it in the context of the substantive comments received from the public, many of whom were also respected community leaders, following its issuance. Those comments centered on whether there were growth-inducing aspects to the proposed Library expansion, whether there is adequate parking proposed to accommodate the proposed expansion, whether the expanded building and necessary pavement for accommodating reasonable and necessary on-site parking will have a deleterious impact on the Osborne Green, and whether there will be an increase in traffic or traffic circulation difficulties as a result of the proposal that would have a negative impact on the busy intersection at which the Library is located. The following is a discussion, not a resolution, of those issues.

3.0 SUBSTANTIVE COMMENTS AND LEAD AGENCY RESPONSE

The public hearing was a joint hearing on the DEIS and on the applications for a special permit and an interpretation that no variances are required, or in the alternative, for the required variance relief. To the extent that submissions were made to the Board prior to the Notice of Completion of the DEIS, they are outside the scope of this document. The FEIS is intended to address only those comments received in connection with the DEIS and in connection with submissions filed by the applicant after the DEIS was deemed complete.

The applicant made several legal arguments with respect to the necessity for the preparation of an EIS based on the proposition, which was rejected by the Board, that the action should have been reclassified as a Type II action because a library may be fitted into the definition of an “educational institution”. Legal arguments were also made with respect to the necessity for variance relief. To the extent that written and oral statements and arguments were submitted by the applicant on purely legal matters, including issues as to how the Zoning Code of the Village of East Hampton ought to be interpreted, and how the SEQRA regulations ought to be interpreted, they are not addressed in this document. For example, the discussion as to whether paved parking areas ought to be included or excluded from the permitted lot coverage calculations required by the Zoning Code will be addressed by the Board’s to-be-rendered determination on the request for an interpretation of the Code.

The purpose of this document is to finalize the environmental review pursuant to SEQRA by reviewing the DEIS, which is incorporated by reference herein, together with the additional information submitted by the applicant following the publication of the Notice of Completion of the DEIS, and to review the comments received on the DEIS, whether oral or written, and to provide a lead agency response to the comments.

This document similarly does not examine or consider the criteria for issuance of a special permit or the granting of variance relief. Those determinations, based on

written findings of fact, will be made by the Zoning Board of Appeals following its filing, as lead agency, of the FEIS and the issuance of a Findings Statement, as required by the SEQRA regulations. To the extent that comments or materials were submitted in the course of the joint hearing that relate solely to the applications, and not to the material required to be addressed as part of the environmental review, they are not included.

Finally, SEQRA requires a response to only those comments which are substantive, and it allows duplicative comments to be grouped together and addressed in a single response, to avoid unnecessary repetition. This section endeavors to do so by paraphrasing comments and by providing the different sources from which each general comment was derived, and then by providing a response by the Board, as lead agency.

COMMENT: The proposed addition is likely to increase the number of people who visit the Library, contrary to assertions by the applicant, resulting in an increase in the number of vehicles entering and exiting the site.

Sources of Comment:

Jeffrey Bragman letter 3/10/08 (C 425).

Bragman, 9/11/09 (B 12855).

Schneider report 10/30/09 (C 434 *et seq.*)

Dunn letter 2/18/10 (C 522)

LEAD AGENCY RESPONSE: The DEIS asserts that the number of people occupying the Library at various times is not expected to increase as a result of the proposed expansion (DEIS 24; DEIS 82). It provides a chart with a calculation that an average of 28 persons occupy the Library at any given time, including only 5 children (DEIS 83).

“The point being that the proposed project is not designed to bring to the library more cardholders than have in the past been users of the library. The project will provide some elbow room and shelf space for the existing patrons.” (DEIS 24).

On the other hand, the DEIS also states that the expansion will allow for not only 123% more space for the children’s collection to shelve an additional 10,000 children’s books and a return of the existing Hedges Room to adult use to allow the adult collection to grow by about 5,000 books (DEIS 16), but also for increased seating areas, nine computer stations (an increase of five) in the children’s section alone (DEIS 38), a 60-seat lecture hall (in lieu of the existing 45-seat lecture hall (DEIS 17), over 4,000 square feet of corridors, stairs, elevator, storage areas and rest rooms [980 square feet in the basement (DEIS 16), 3,147 square feet on the first floor (DEIS 17)], and so on. The proposed furniture in the children’s wing will be increased from three tables and chairs for small children, two regular-sized tables seating eight people, two other chairs and a small bench (DEIS 38) to four 49-inch round tables, three 36-inch round tables, all presumably with chairs, a rectangular table, and six separate reading chairs, not including

the computer stations. The additional computer stations are needed to eliminate long waiting times for the existing four computers (DEIS 38). The data in the DEIS on the number of people who use the existing facility, and whether or not the proposed addition will increase the number of people using the facility at any given time in the future seems disconnected from and inconsistent with the applicant's fervent plea that the addition is desperately needed. The very purpose of providing more computer stations, more study areas, more comfortable reading areas for adults to read to children and a more attractive and accessible lecture hall is obviously to encourage patrons, including but not limited to children, to spend longer periods of time at the Library and to come more frequently, if not to increase the number of patrons, which might also be a goal.

The existing facility has a gross floor area of 20,412 square feet (DEIS 19). The DEIS reports that only 11,800 square feet are available as "patron space" (DEIS 17), the remainder being allocated to storage space, corridors, stairs, staff rooms, rest rooms and walls (DEIS 17). This existing space, however it is measured, is described as being deficient not only in shelf space for children's books and adult books, but also in work space and quiet space to accommodate patrons who want a quiet place to read at the same time that others want to use computers, read aloud to children, and do tutoring or other activities that require talking or other sorts of noise (DEIS 42-43). The 11,800 square feet of "patron space" is spread out over the 20,412 square feet of floor area, which is broken up with a substantial open courtyard garden and an outdoor terrace, but if one divides the amount of space available to each of the 28 people, including staff, reportedly occupying the Library on average (DEIS 59) by the "patron space" only, there is still more than 420 square feet of floor area for each person (and book stacks, computer stations, furniture), the equivalent of four 9 x 12 rooms.

The proposed addition of 6,802 square feet will include, according to the DEIS, only 2,285 square feet of *additional* "patron space" (assuming that the 707 square feet of the existing lecture room is re-allocated as non-patron space) (DEIS 18). We note that whereas roughly half of the existing building is characterized as patron space, only a third of the proposed addition is "counted" as patron space, which includes open shelving for

books. If the size of the new addition were dictated by the number of additional books that needed to be accommodated (DEIS 20), as the applicant asserts, and no additional users are anticipated, the remaining 4,552 square feet of gross floor area in the new wing would seem profligate. On the other hand, it seems more rational to conclude that the larger lecture hall and the expanded seating areas and computer stations are likely to draw more patrons to the facility as a whole, require more staff, and, as a result, more restrooms, corridors, storage and the like are necessary.

An affidavit submitted by the applicant's architect states that the very reason for providing a separate calculation for "patron space" as opposed to gross floor area is because "none of the excluded space would attract patrons to the library generating traffic and parking." (C 4). Conversely, it should follow that the calculation of patron space is, in fact, the area that the architects believed would attract more people and generate more demand for parking and more traffic.

According to the DEIS the current 45-seat lecture room known as the Agnes Day Room, has existed since 1973 (DEIS 61). However, it also appears that the room was not identified as a lecture room in 1993, when the Library made its last application for an expansion. The Zoning Board's determination of October 8, 1993 (A 1) references plans prepared by Robert A.M. Stern Architects dated received July 2, 1993. These plans, consisting of four sheets (D 2), do not depict the Agnes Day Room (although a different area of the basement is shown on the third of the four sheets) and do not include the Agnes Day Room in the gross floor area calculations. The 1963 plans submitted for the basement improvements, when what is now the children's wing was constructed, similarly do not show the Agnes Day Room; the area where the Agnes Day Room is now located is labeled as stack space on the 1963 plans (D 1). Thus, there is no indication that the use of the Agnes Day Room as a 45-seat lecture room was ever specifically considered in the Board's prior deliberations about the amount of parking that should be required. There is no indication that when the use of the space was converted from a less intensive use ("stack space") to a lecture/program room it was ever reviewed by the Zoning Board of Appeals or the Design Review Board in terms of the impact that the use

of the room would have on the number of people visiting the Library, because the reallocation involved interior space only (C 478). Indeed, there is, with so much non-patron square footage available, the possibility that future Library Boards will decide to dedicate more space to meeting rooms or activity areas, and it is reasonable to anticipate that such renovations may occur (C 512). While the applicant has agreed that any approval could “be conditioned upon there being no further expansion of the meeting rooms in the future without further review of the Board” (C 518), the Village Engineer’s conclusion that the number of proposed spaces was “sufficient” (B13084) was based on the expansion *only*, without taking into consideration the size of the existing building and the fact that the existing parking is inadequate. It was also based on the theory that the two existing meeting rooms would not be used to capacity at the same time (difficult, if not impossible to enforce) and the applicant’s agreement that interior spaces would not evolve into group gathering rooms (B 13084).

In addition to being handicapped-accessible, the proposed, expanded lecture hall adds 15 seats to the 45 seats that are already provided in the existing Agnes Day room, which is proposed to be repurposed for storage only. In addition to the Agnes Day room, the existing facility has another meeting room that can accommodate 25 seats (C 477), that was never separately addressed in the DEIS and does not seem to have been separately addressed in terms of its impacts in any prior zoning or planning review. Although the applicant states that it is existing policy that both meeting rooms are not scheduled to be used to capacity at the same time (C 518), it is certainly possible in the future to do so. The two rooms, as proposed after the expansion, accommodate $25 + 60 = 85$ *seated* patrons, not including employees of the Library and additional patrons scattered throughout the premises, if the rooms are used during regular hours. As the Village Engineer observed, “While it is unlikely that both rooms would be used to capacity at the same time, the use of these meeting rooms is key to parking demand” (C 477).

The DEIS asserts that the new lecture room was made larger “so that the children’s librarian can conduct about 3 literacy programs a week with about 11 children

per session” (DEIS 30). (Clearly, a smaller lecture room could accommodate this laudable endeavor.) It also states that regular programs or activities are held in the existing lecture room for small groups of 10-25 people, with “a few times a year”, a popular lecturer who “attracts 45 or so” (DEIS 43). An attorney who testified in opposition to the project said that the Library’s web site showed 55 events in the Agnes Day room over the summer of 2009 (B 12855).

However, the DEIS also concedes that the larger lecture room will accommodate 15 more people and may, as a result, attract more people, while waiving away any concern that impacts may flow from that intensification of the use by concluding that ten additional on-site parking spaces is adequate to allow for the maximum of 15 more persons who might be attracted to the Library during the occasional popular lecture (DEIS 61). Elsewhere, the DEIS states that the additional seating in the lecture room will be used twice a month or so after the Library is otherwise closed (DEIS 72). Within the four corners of the DEIS, the use of the existing lecture room is described as accommodating a maximum of 45 people a few times a year and the proposed lecture hall as accommodating 60 people twice a month (albeit only after the Library is otherwise closed), while repeatedly assuring the reader that the proposed expansion will not attract any more people to the building than the existing facility does.

The applicant’s traffic expert, Michael Salatti, in an affidavit and a report dated December 15, 2005, estimated that the addition would generate four additional vehicles on the site during peak activity hours, but concluded that because an average of only thirty minutes (the “dwell time”) was spent on site by each person accessing the Library, that meant that only an average of two additional people would be on site at any given time and only during peak hours (C 27). In a later affidavit, Mr. Salatti utilized more recent traffic counts [most notably April 21, 2008 (C 231)] estimating that about 32 cars arrived at the Library at a peak hour and created a “model trip ratio” “to project how many additional trips might result from an expansion”, without conceding that the addition would, in fact, lead to a corresponding increase in the number of patrons (C 233). Using this model, he concluded that the new addition “would add 7 new cars

during the peak hour” (C 233). In the same “Reply Affidavit” dated September 25, 2009, Mr. Salatti also revised his estimated “dwell time”, without explanation, from thirty minutes to “less than fifteen minutes” (C 234). (Some of the ramifications of the change in the estimated “dwell time” are discussed in response to a following comment.) The Village Engineer’s analysis was that the expansion is anticipated to generate an *increase* of 48 vehicles entering and leaving the site in the weekday peak hour and 45 vehicles during the Saturday peak hour (C 523). Mr. Salatti thereafter revised his trip generation estimates to predict an increase of 11 cars entering (which does not include the same number of cars exiting) on peak weekday hours and 10 cars entering on peak Saturday hours (C 525).

The Zoning Board questions, in the first instance, whether the number of people using the existing facility may be understated by the DEIS. The Village Engineer has pronounced the existing on-site parking for 26 cars clearly insufficient, noting that cars are often parked on the grass and in the driveway (C 478). In any event, he made it clear that given the existing insufficiency of on-site parking, “any expansion should provide adequate parking for the proposed expansion” (C 478), on the assumption that the expansion will draw more people to the site.

It is pretty apparent that the Library’s early insistence that the proposed addition will not draw more people to the site was made in an attempt to shoe-horn this proposal into the same category as the prior Zoning Board approvals of expansions to St. Luke’s Church and the First Presbyterian Church (C 37). In those determinations, there was a specific finding by the Board that those proposed additions would not increase the number of patrons attracted to those sites, and, therefore, no additional parking was required. In this case, conversely, we find that there will be an increase in the number of people drawn to the site as a result of the proposed addition.

We also note that there was testimony and evidence to the effect that the future of libraries is evolving. Modern libraries are generally becoming more like gathering places and information centers than mere repositories of books (B 12861). Movies and music

discs are increasingly available; computer centers within libraries have become common, as have meeting rooms and large comfortable armchairs for leisurely reading. These are growth-inducing expansions of service.

The Zoning Board absolutely agrees that the Library plays an important and very valuable role in the community (DEIS 108), and agrees that expanded literacy programs, more extensive book collections, more publicly available computer stations, quiet reading areas, teen study areas, and even gathering spaces to hear educational lectures or to hold children's activities are meritorious goals. One could hardly fault a Library Board for trying to bring more patrons to the Library. However, expanded facilities may bring consonant impacts, and the singular purpose of the environmental review process is to assess the possible impacts and address them in a direct manner. The DEIS is peppered with assertions that the expansion will not increase the number of people visiting the site as employees or patrons or occasional guests, a premise which seems inherently flawed. This premise may have arisen from a desire to minimize the amount of variance relief sought: More people leads to a conclusion that more parking is required, resulting in a larger variance request. More people spending more time in a library is a good thing, but the applicant's unwillingness to concede that which seems apparent to the Board—that the number of people going to and from the site will increase as the building expands—makes it difficult to properly assess the impacts of the expansion in a forthright manner.

COMMENT: The proposed parking is inadequate.

Sources:

Hickey letter 9/10/09 (C 370).

Randolph letter 9/11/09 (C 170).

Bragman, 9/11/09 (B 12847 *et seq.*)

Randolph, 9/11/09 (B 12863).

Cunningham letter 9/10/09 (C 186 *et seq.*)

Schneider report 9/10/09 (C 434 *et seq.*)

Bragman letter 10/30/09 (C 407).

Schneider report 10/30/09 (C 434 *et seq.*)

LEAD AGENCY RESPONSE: The existing Library, located on the very busy intersection of two through traffic corridors, has patently inadequate on-site parking (C 477, 478). There are 26 on-site spaces, two of which are designated for handicapped use and one of which is the Director's space, leaving 23 spaces (C 170), many of which are in the form of grass pavers that are in extremely poor condition. Cars are frequently parked on the grass and along the narrow driveway (C 370; C 477; B 12919). The grass pavers that form some of the existing parking area are clearly failing from over-use. The Village Engineer, in reviewing the last expansion in 1995, reported that grass pavers are only suitable for areas that would see infrequent use (B 12850). Patrons are continually forced to park along the street, which has too few parking spaces. The applicant has offered to tell employees to park elsewhere on the weekends. Any visitor to the Library can draw the conclusion that there is inadequate on-site parking, not because the number of spaces fails to add up to some number required by a formula, but because one cannot often or easily find a place to park (C 137).

The applicant's first site plan dated August 4, 2003, for a 10,312-square-foot addition, proposed the addition of five on-site parking spaces to the existing 26 spaces, of which 13 of the total spaces would be turf. The site plan for the modified smaller addition of 6802 square feet was thereafter revised April 22, 2008, July 18, 2008,

September 22, 2008, and June 30, 2009, to propose differing scenarios of a proposal to add ten additional on-site spaces for a total of 36, between five and 18 of which were to be on turf or grass pavers, probably to reduce the area that might be includable in lot coverage. Many of the comments on the adequacy of the parking were made or submitted prior to amended parking plans submitted by the applicant beginning in November 2009 and culminating in a plan—Parking Alternate Plan “E”, last revised February 13, 2010 (D 12). This plan proposed 42 paved spaces in an effort to strike a reasonable balance between the reasonably necessary parking for a 6,802-square-foot addition and maintaining the open space and historic character of the green.

The original DEIS failed to acknowledge the existing parking problem or to acknowledge that any additional parking would be necessary if the new wing were to be approved. The DEIS contains a parking count from 2005 and an updated survey conducted in 2008 by the applicant’s engineering consultant, which expanded its study area to include off-site parking spaces that are not even in front of the site (C 29). The latter survey demonstrated that fewer people parked in the parking lot than those who parked elsewhere (C 31). Four percent of the patrons interviewed in the 2008 survey had parked across the street at Guild Hall (C 31). [An affidavit submitted from the applicant’s engineer surmises that “[a]pparently patrons did not find crossing Main Street a difficulty as many seem to perceive” (C 31). We would ask, “What choice did they have?”] The analysis rests heavily on the research showing that the average stay at the Library (“dwell time”) was less than 15 minutes. However, the proposed addition is specifically designed to increase the dwell time. The purposes of the expansion include the provision of comfortable seating areas for adults to read to children, expanded tutoring areas, homework areas for young adults, more computer stations, and an expanded and more accessible lecture hall. While it is probably true that the number of people who run in to the Library for 15 minutes or less to drop off books is not likely to increase, the number of people who are drawn to the facility to spend longer amounts of time is—in fact it is a key (if unstated) goal.

The DEIS refers often to the recommendations of the Village Planner in reviewing prior Library expansions and the approvals of the Village Boards of Zoning Appeals and Design Review on prior applications. The Village Planner in 1993 suggested that a total of 50 spaces was appropriate (including five to account for the conversion of what had been storage space to publicly accessible space), allowed for a deduction of 15 spaces on site because 15 spaces were identified along the streets fronting the Library premises, and ended up with a recommendation that no fewer than 25 on-site spaces be provided (C 15). The Board in 1993 used a gross floor area of 16,667 square feet (exclusive of unfinished basement space) for the existing Library and proposed expansion at that time, the same area that is now calculated at 20,412 square feet by the DEIS. The discrepancy of 3,745 square feet is a result of the exclusion of some of the basement areas from the 1993 calculation of gross floor area, which was previously unfinished space, but much of which is now finished. In 1993 the Board employed a “formula” of one space for every 417 square feet of publicly accessible space. Conditions have changed. There are four fewer spaces along the street than there were in 1993. Some have suggested that what is now a 45-seat lecture hall was used less intensively then than it is now. This space is not included on the plans (D 2) approved by the Zoning Board in 1994 (A 1). As lead agency on this application, the Zoning Board of Appeals must acknowledge that the parking, whether it meets the requirements of prior approvals or not, is inadequate. Moreover, the Board, as lead agency on this application is not compelled to make a bad situation worse by rigidly following an old calculation that turned out to be, frankly, a mistake.

In response to the Board’s feedback that ten additional grass spaces were wholly inadequate (B 12971), the applicant submitted on November 10, 2009, some alternative parking plans (C 455). The alternatives included plans for a total of between 36 and 49 spaces, with circulation aisles of between 18 feet and 24 feet, and some with land-banked parking proposed (C 456). The applicant’s preferred alternative was Alternative D, which proposed a total of 44 spaces (8 of which were to be land-banked) with 18-foot aisles (C 456). The Village Engineer reviewed the alternatives, and in a memo dated December 29, 2009, commented that the existing parking was clearly inadequate, both in

size and condition (C 477), that gross floor area was a more appropriate base from which to measure how much parking is likely to be necessary (C 478), that Alternative C was clearly inadequate, and suggested some revisions to the other plans as well as revisions to the access driveway (C 480). An engineer for the opponents also reviewed the alternatives and recommended that no fewer than 44 on-site spaces be provided (C 500), that all spaces be paved, rather than land-banked, that 24-foot aisles be required (C 501). Rather than significantly increase paving, threatening a valuable mulberry tree, and destroying open space, the engineer recommended reducing the size of the building, so that less parking area would be necessary (C 501). The Board discussed the alternative plans at the hearing, and in response to all the comments, requested a hybrid plan, which was thereafter prepared and labeled “Alternative E” (C 504; D 12). It calls for a total of 42 paved parking spaces and an increase in the amount of pavement dedicated to vehicular use (not including pedestrian walkways, patios or the paved portion of Edwards Lane that traverses the northerly end of the property), of 8,140 square feet, for a total of 20,560 square feet of driveway and parking lot.

It should also be pointed out that the inadequacy of the existing parking area is also attributable to the fact that many of the spaces do not conform to either East Hampton Village Code requirements or generally-accepted standards for the dimensions for adequate parking spaces or for the circulation aisles (C 134; C 439). While the proposed Alternate Parking Schedule E submitted by the applicant at the end of the hearing process moves toward rectifying this problem by proposing better circulation aisles and spaces that comply with the minimum dimensional regulations for parking spaces, it does so at a cost in terms of increasing the area of the paved parking lot.

The debates at the hearing on whether the floor area of the proposed wing should be calculated as gross floor area or as “patron space”, the surveys on everything from how many people were on site at any given time, how long people stayed at the Library, how they arrived at the Library and if they drove, where they parked, and the Board’s interest in determining how many more people might be arriving at the site for programs or lectures or events all stem from the concern that there is simply not enough on-site

parking now and that the proposed expansion, with its new larger, more accessible lecture hall and other features will exacerbate what is already a bad problem. The Village Engineer, in the end, determined that gross floor area was the appropriate basis for a reasonable calculation of what the required parking ought to be (C 478).

The Code of the Village of East Hampton, unlike many zoning codes, does not require special permit uses such as schools, libraries or churches to meet specific parking requirements. It is left to the Zoning Board of Appeals, for better or worse, to determine on each application the amount of parking that is reasonable and necessary for the particular use proposed on an individual site. It is precisely because there is no set formula to impose that so much of the discussion in these hearings revolved around how much parking is reasonable and necessary to accommodate the proposed expansion. On the other hand, one can certainly look at the Code as a reference in terms of what is generally required for non-special permit uses. Section 278-6 of the Code specifically provides that any intensification of a use—not merely a change of use or additional square footage—triggers a re-examination of the on-site parking.

The generally applicable parking requirement in Section 278-6 of the Zoning Code for public assembly spaces is one space for every three seats, or 20 spaces for a 60-seat lecture hall alone. There is, in addition, another smaller lecture room, and much of the “patron” space might be also fairly classified as “public assembly” space. The ITE parking generation rate for libraries is 2.61 spaces per 1,000 square feet of gross floor area (not patron space). Applying current ITE rates, the entire building, including the proposed addition, would require 62 on-site parking spaces (C 136).

In addition to providing space for patrons who want to simply spend 15 minutes to pick up or drop off books or other material, those who come to use the computers, the young adults who will do research and homework or receive tutoring, and those attending educational programs or lectures, the parking has to also accommodate employees. The applicant submits that there are currently 20 part-time and 12 full-time employees, a number which they will not concede may be increased as a result of the construction of a

new wing that will increase the gross floor area of the building by about forty percent. Monday through Friday, there are 10 employees who arrive by auto. On Saturdays there are seven (C 36). Although the Library may have an arrangement with the neighboring newspaper office that the newspaper parking lot can be used by Library employees on Saturdays and Sundays, this is not a permanent or formal arrangement. Therefore, at least 10 spaces (the number of employees who now drive to work and park their vehicles for much of the day on Mondays through Fridays) should be allocated for employees.

We agree that the existing on-site parking area has some unsafe conditions (C 134-135) and that safety is of the highest importance, so that the existing parking area must be reconfigured. Also, having determined that the number of on-site spaces is currently inadequate and most certainly inadequate for the proposed expansion, the Alternate Parking Schedule E (D 12) is far preferable to the previously proposed plans by the applicant to supply an additional ten or so spaces on site. However, it may still not be adequate to address the growth-inducing aspects of the new space, which are likely to increase in more people spending a longer time at the facility. Reasonable calculations based purely on the number of employees and the proposed uses and seating capacity have suggested that the on-site parking lot would have to include as many as 61 spaces to be adequate (C 170; B 12864). An engineer representing a community group in opposition to the project recommended a total of at least 44 (18 additional) paved spaces if the addition is to be approved (C 436; C 500). The Zoning Board, as lead agency, has consistently suggested that the number of spaces should be roughly equivalent to one space for each 300 square feet of the proposed addition, yielding a total of about 49 spaces if the addition is to reach the full size proposed by the applicants. However, when weighed against the Village Engineer's very strong recommendation that all spaces be paved (and not land-banked) (C 510) and the fact that 49 appropriately sized spaces with adequate aisles would necessitate the destruction of mature trees and even more loss of the Osborne Green, we are left with a situation where adequate parking may not be palatable for aesthetic and environmental reasons. While the Board of Appeals asked the applicant to prepare the revisions that resulted in Alternative "E" (D 12), the request was made in the face of the applicant's firm resistance to the suggestion that the size and scale

of the addition be reduced so that the demand for parking and pavement could be reduced commensurately. Moreover, although the proposed 20,560 square feet of pavement dedicated solely to automobile parking and access is probably too much pavement for the site, as is more fully discussed in the following section, it, sadly, may not be adequate—44 to 49 spaces might be more adequate if the analysis is done on pure engineering concerns, without regard for the impact that the engineering will have on the historic setting and the visual and aesthetic values of the open space on the site.

COMMENT: The environmental impact of the proposed parking is too great.

Sources:

Ratsep letter, 9/11/09 (C 167).

Ratsep letter, 3/12/10 (C 527).

LEAD AGENCY RESPONSE: In order to develop a safer and more orderly parking plan, not only were more spaces required, but also the entire parking area had to be reconfigured to eliminate the too-narrow circulation aisles and to provide spaces that are correctly dimensioned and accessible (*see*, C 439). The best compromise that the Board was able to reach with the applicant in terms of weighing the goals of achieving a safe parking area and the preservation of the park-like feel of the Green, was “Alternative Parking Schedule E” (D 12).

Alternative Parking Schedule E clearly depicts how much space the new wing will consume as well as how large the parking lot will have to become, as opposed to that which is existing. Required setbacks are also depicted on the Alternative Parking Schedule E. Much of the pre-existing building is set much closer to the street than it could be now. If the existing and proposed improvements (including the pavement) were pushed back into the permitted building envelope it would more than swallow up the entire permitted building envelope. As it is, the proposed addition and the proposed parking seriously erode the expansiveness of the existing Green.

We acknowledge that the applicant only proposed Alternate Parking Schedule E because the Board insisted that safety concerns required a different configuration than the one that was still being proposed by the applicant as of October 30, 2009 (B 12971 through 12978). Now that the applicant has reluctantly supplied a parking site plan that the Village Engineer is able to agree is adequate from a traffic-engineering point of view, the Board is left to balance the consequences to the area known as the Osborne Green, which although not legally required to remain as park land, has become an important feature of one of the most prominent corners of the historic district.

COMMENT: The proposed project will add to traffic congestion and exacerbate dangerous conditions at a busy intersection.

Sources:

Osborne letter, 9/11/09 (C 165).

Ratsep letter, 9/11/09 (C 167).

Busch letter, 9/11/09 (C 178).

Ham letter, 9/11/09 (C 179).

Ratsep, 9/11/09 (C 12874).

Cunningham letter, 9/10/09 (C 186).

Bragman letter, 10/30/09 (C 415).

LEAD AGENCY RESPONSE: Most of the children and young adults the Library seeks to benefit live beyond walking distance. To use the Library, these children and young adults will have to be picked up and dropped off. The volume of southbound traffic passing the Library during after school hours increases substantially as tradesmen leave East Hampton, a concern identified in the EAF, Part II, but not addressed in the DEIS. Access to the site is complicated by the existence of Edwards Lane, an adjoining private road having a separate curb cut that serves a newspaper office and several residential properties.

The DEIS insists that the addition will have no discernible impact on traffic because (1) it is not intended to draw any additional people, only to give existing users a more comfortable experience, and (2) even if the new space draws patrons at the same rate as the existing library, only four additional cars will be drawn to the site at the peak hours (DEIS 13; C 25). This analysis rests occasionally on the theory that there will be no expansion of the number or the size of the programs held at the Library (C 25), and sometimes on the theory that the new traffic generated by new events and uses made possible by the proposed addition will be “minimal” (C 35).

There is ample evidence on the record in the form of police accident reports (C 72 – 91) that many accidents occur at the intersection. There were also a number of anecdotal reports of accidents that were not included in the police accident reports submitted (C 167; B 12819; B 12874).

The Village Engineer repeatedly observed that the circulation problems at the site are exacerbated by the fact that the existing driveway to the parking area is too narrow and too close to the adjacent driveway affording access to the parking lot for a newspaper office and some residential properties (C 480; C 511). He recommended that the two driveways be combined to provide a single, wider access, or, in the alternative, that an access from Buell Lane to the library be explored (C 480). The reasons for these recommendations were traffic *safety*. Neither of these recommendations can be implemented—the combined driveway because it involves property owners who are not applicants, and the Buell Lane access because no one is willing to destroy the Osborne Green.

The DEIS and the hearing on it were replete with tables and charts and trip generation calculations that were based on interviews with patrons inside the Library on a given week, parking lot counts, estimates of numbers of employees and patrons attending lectures, “dwell time”, etc.; some of the data provided by the applicant changed over time. Using the final proposal to provide 42 paved parking spaces on site and the estimated dwell time by the applicant’s engineer of less than 15 minutes per patron (C 234), this proposed parking lot could result in 168 (4 x 42) vehicles entering and 168 vehicles exiting the site during a peak hour. Even assuming that the estimated dwell time is skewed and that some vehicles will stay longer, especially for events such as a lecture, the circulation issues are obvious. The events are liable to give rise to up to 40 cars (attendees and employees) leaving the site at once. The prospect of 40 cars trying to exit from that narrow driveway and meld into the on-going stream of traffic so close to the intersection is unacceptable.

The Village Engineer used the ITE Trip Generation Manual to estimate an *increase* of 48 vehicles per weekday peak hour (23 vehicles entering and 25 exiting) and 45 vehicles during the Saturday peak hour (24 entering and 21 exiting)(C 523). While he stated that he “believes” the ITE data may overestimate the amount of traffic the Library currently generates and will generate after the expansion and that the “adjacent road system and the proposed modified driveway” can accommodate the additional traffic that it will generate (C 523), he recommended that the applicant summarize its data in a similar fashion. The data thereafter presented by the applicant showed 11 additional cars entering on peak afternoon hours during the week and 10 on Saturday peak hours. This does not include cars exiting the site, which would presumably double those numbers.

While it is true that there are already great numbers of cars passing through this intersection—22,000 daily, according to the DEIS (DEIS 13), which was based on a 2005 assessment prepared by the applicant’s consultant following a 2004 traffic count (C93)¹--and notwithstanding the Village Engineer’s final supposition that the expanded parking lot and widened driveway, together with the adjacent roadways could absorb the increase in traffic (C 523), it also remains a fact that the driveway to the parking area is not in a good location—too close to the intersection and too close to the adjacent driveway—and that the parking calculations continue to assume that people will have to parallel park along the streets. As more people swing in and out of the driveway and more people slow to look for parking spaces or to drop off children who want to use the Library, there is an increased opportunity for accidents.

¹ The volume of traffic, in this Board’s experience as long-standing residents of the Village, has increased since 2004-2005.

COMMENT: The proposed project is mischaracterized as a “children’s wing” and is unnecessary.

Sources:

MJFreedman report, 9/9/09 (C 150 *et seq.*)

Smith letter, 9/10/09 (C 182).

De Havenon letter, 9/11/09 (C 181).

Graham letter, 10/2/09 (C 379).

Osborne letter, 9/11/09 (C 165).

Bragman, 9/11/09 (B 12841).

LEAD AGENCY RESPONSE: The DEIS states that the addition is necessary because the number of volumes it has on hand is less than an average institution of its kind ought to have in order to serve its population. This Board finds the arguments of Mr. Freedman persuasive, to the extent that he argues that a Library’s effectiveness is more important than the sheer number of volumes per capita of population (C 152).

The DEIS is entitled the “Children’s Wing Proposal”. However, the DEIS identifies other purposes for the wing, including an increase in the shelving space available for adult books by approximately 5,000 books, providing more space for existing adult services and providing handicapped access to the lecture room.

The existing children’s library is 1,623 square feet, including the Hedges Room, which is 576 square feet. The proposal is to return the use of the Hedges Room to adult use and add 6,802 square feet of gross floor area, of which only about 2,000 square feet will be devoted to the Children’s Library (DEIS 15). If you subtract back out the area of the Hedges Room, the net increase in the area devoted to children and young adults is 1,424 square feet). In other words, the net increase in floor area of the Children’s Library would be approximately 21% of the total gross floor area proposed to be constructed.

The DEIS acknowledges that the lecture room in the basement is proposed to be 992 square feet (DEIS 17), but it repeatedly “counts” only 250 or 285 square feet as “new patron space” (DEIS 18) because the existing Agnes Day room in the older part of the building is 707 square feet, so it “counts” only the increase in the size of the lecture room, even though the proposed lecture room will be entirely new and entirely located in the new wing. Clearly, the new wing will be used as a children’s library and as a lecture hall. Indeed, the primary purpose of the basement level in the new addition appears to be the construction of the lecture hall and the elevator, rest rooms, hallways, stairwell, and maintenance areas related to the “relocated” Agnes Day Room. Although relatively small areas in the new portion of the basement plan are designated “book storage” and “supplies storage”, the vast majority of it seems to be intended to service the lecture hall (D 6). It may well be that the size of the basement is providing the basis for the size of the first floor, and not the other way around.

Aside from asserting that the wing was mischaracterized as a “children’s wing”, some of those commenting on the application questioned the need for any new construction. It was pointed out that each of the schools has an excellent library (B 12861). It was also pointed out that the shelving of the books might be made more efficient and the quality of those books improved with editing of the existing collection (B 12871).

COMMENT: The project is contrary to the Comprehensive Plan.

Sources:

Brock letter, 9/11/09 (C 174).

Busch letter, 9/11/09 (C 178).

Cunningham letter, 9/10/09 (C 186).

Ecker letter, 9/11/09 (C 373).

Ecker, 9/11/09 (B 12872).

Bragman, 9/11/09 (B 12858).

Fiondella, 9/11/09 (B 12868).

LEAD AGENCY RESPONSE: In acknowledging that many patrons of the Library park along the streets (while still trying to maintain that the existing and proposed parking on-site is and will be adequate), the applicant's engineer remarks: "Typical to any use within the business district, patrons and employees will walk a short distance to the library should they need to park in areas not immediately adjacent to the library property" (C 35). In fact, the Library lies within a residential zoning district, not a commercial or business district. There are some non-residential uses in the immediate vicinity, including a newspaper office, churches, a museum with a theater (Guild Hall), and a scattering of small inns, but the area has no retail establishments and could hardly be considered a business district.

The Village recently completed an entirely new Comprehensive Plan. A motivating force in that effort was a realization that although the Village was already essentially fully developed, the surrounding Town, much larger in area and population, still had development potential and a growing population (B 12872). The primary outcome of the Comprehensive Plan was a stated goal, based on community consensus, that the Village was primarily a residential community and that all necessary steps had to be taken to preserve the beauty and the quality of life for Village residents. Another stated goal was to limit the expansion of any non-residential uses within the residential districts (C 374). It also recommends that special events be limited, as well as on-street

parking (B 12858). The Town Comprehensive Plan encouraged a decentralization of services away from the Village, as well, and this proposal to enlarge the only Library building in the center of the Village is inconsistent with the goals of having each neighborhood or hamlet servicing its own residents' needs (C 12869).

COMMENT: The proposed project does not meet Suffolk County Sanitary Code requirements.

Sources:

Schneider report, 9/10/09 (C 140)

Bragman letter, 10/30/09 (C 406-407).

Schneider report, 10/30/09 (C 434 *et seq.*)

Schneider letter, 11/30/09 (C 495).

LEAD AGENCY RESPONSE: The allowable population density equivalent for this project is 300 gallons a day per acre (C 140). The applicable Health Department sanitary flow rates for libraries are .03 gallons/day/square foot of gross floor area and 5 gallons/day/seat for meeting rooms. The total gross floor area of the project as proposed is 27,214 square feet with two meeting rooms with a total of 85 seats. As it presently exists the Library is near the permitted density per the Suffolk County Department of Health Services. With the addition of 6,802 square feet of gross floor area and the creation of a larger lecture hall, it appears that the Library expansion will result in a density load of 1,079.1 gallons per day per square foot, or 399.6 gallons per day more than is allowed by the Suffolk County Sanitary Code, more than twice the permitted density (C 441), requiring variance relief from the Suffolk County Department of Health Services Board of Review (C 447). As a result the applicant may have to provide Pine Barrens credits to allow for the otherwise unpermitted increase in the sewage flow or install a sewage treatment center.² This is an indication that the proposed addition is too big for the site (C 442).

On the other hand, an engineer for the applicant testified that they had been gathering data on actual sewage flow at the site, and that the actual flow rate is 40%

² The Mayor of the Village of East Hampton recently sent a letter to the Suffolk County Department of Health Services, Department of Wastewater Management, in connection with an unrelated application, stating “as a matter of principal and policy and consistent with the Village’s Comprehensive Plan”, the

below the flow multiplier that the Department of Health Services applies. It was his testimony that the Department of Health Services, especially in reviewing an institutional use such as a library, will apply empirical data specifically related to the existing use when evaluating the permitted flow rate for an addition to the same use (C 13021). As lead agency, the Board should have had the opportunity to review this empirical data and the projections for future use to see whether the Library's projections for sewage flow for the new addition anticipate some of the growth-inducing aspects of the new wing that have been discussed, particularly in the first point, but which remain unacknowledged by the Library.

Village Board of Trustees' general opposition to the transfer of development rights from other communities into the Village (A 3).

COMMENT: The project will have a negative impact on the “Osborne Green”.

Sources:

Osborne letter, 9/11/09 (C 166).

Ratsep letter, 9/11/09 (C 167).

Conner letter, 9/11/09 (C 169).

Ham letter, 9/11/09 (C 179).

Bragman, (9/11/09 (C 12850 *et seq.*)

LEAD AGENCY RESPONSE: In 1943, a vacant parcel on the corner of Buell’s Lane and Main Street, adjacent to what was at the time the Library premises, was donated to the Library by Nelson C. Osborne and other family members (C 110). While this donation may not have contained legal restrictions on the use of the land, and although portions of it may have been utilized in Library expansions after 1943 (C 110), the green space along Buell’s Lane has become an important characteristic of the neighborhood. It is an expansive, park-like setting (B 12850). Indeed, it is known as the “Charles W. Osborne Memorial Green” (C 167). The property is identified in the 2004 Village of East Hampton Open Space Plan. Moreover, it has historical significance (B 12856).

The applicant’s first site plan (August 4, 2003) proposed the addition of five on-site parking spaces to the existing 26 spaces, of which 13 of the total spaces would be turf. The site plan was thereafter revised April 22, 2008, July 18, 2008, September 22, 2008, and June 30, 2009, to propose various iterations of a proposal to add ten additional on-site spaces for a total of 36, between five and 18 of which were to be on turf or grass pavers. The DEIS and the applicant repeatedly acknowledged the importance of preserving the open space. The DEIS pointed out that the architecture and landscaping and setting of the Library is “consistent with and a contributing factor to the unique setting of Main Street (DEIS 53). Their reluctance to produce a parking plan, while at the same time offering to “give” the Board “whatever parking” the Board “wants” should be

seen as an acknowledgement of the tension between addressing the “life/safety” issue of providing orderly circulation for vehicles and pedestrians and preserving the historic “Village green” character of the open space along Route 114 (Buell’s Lane). Indeed, the applicant’s attorney, Mr. Esseks, in proposing alternative plans to the Board in order to address the Board’s life/safety issues with the original parking plan, reminded the Board of the importance of the preservation of the open space: “The ZBA should also bear in mind that the location of the property in a historic residential district requires a balancing of the need for parking with the desire to preserve as much of the property as practicable and to avoid unnecessary pavement” (C 456).

The review by the Village’s Historic Consultant dated September 3, 2003 (*C 21 et seq.*), which is frequently cited by the Library as supportive of the plan (see, e.g., DEIS 68), includes the following:

“As noted by Robert A.M. Stern Architects at the May 7th DRB meeting, the preservation of a large greensward to the west and south is an important component of this proposal.... The preservation of this open space was a major consideration in judging the effect the proposed addition and parking area will have on the setting and the Main Street Historic District. During the review process the proposed expanded parking area was reconfigured to provide the same number of spaces in a reduced area of paving. This revised parking scheme preserves more of the green.... A detailed landscape plan will be an important part of the review process when this application returns.” (C 22, 23).

At the time the above review and assessment were written, the Village’s Historic Consultant was looking at a plan that provided only five additional parking spaces, with a total of 13 spaces on turf, and few if any of the spaces and circulation aisles conformed with generally applicable engineering standards or with the dimensional requirements of the Village Code for the size of spaces and aisles. Now, because the initial parking plan was so clearly deficient, the proposal is to usurp a much larger area of the green for parking, both to the west and the south. Parking Alternate Plan E (D 12), which proposes

the minimum amount of paving that the Village Engineer found acceptable, includes 42 paved parking spaces, a widening of the driveway entrance and wider circulation aisles in the on-site parking area. The Dorothy E. King Memorial sitting area, while it will remain intact, would now be totally surrounded by asphalt.

The lawn and open space on the site will be diminished from approximately 70% of the site to approximately 60% of the site if the proposal with Parking Alternative Schedule E (D 12) is approved (C 509). More parking spaces, wider circulation aisles, and the Buell Lane access that the Village Engineer encouraged everyone to investigate would further decimate the Green. A Buell Lane exit would effectively destroy it. In short, it is not apparent that the desired balance between preserving the open park-like setting of the Library and the Osborne Green and providing safe and orderly access and parking on the site has been struck.

COMMENT: The impacts of the Library should be considered in conjunction with the impacts of Guild Hall events.

Sources:

Osborne letter, 9/11/09 (C 165).

Osborne letter, 3/31/10 (C 528).

LEAD AGENCY RESPONSE: In addition to art shows and other events, the Guild Hall, across the street from the Library will be showing simulcasts of Metropolitan Opera productions on Saturday afternoons at 2:00 p.m., which will draw traffic and increase the parking demand in the area (B 12860; C 528). The applicant's surveys showed that current Library patrons sometimes park across the street at Guild Hall (C 31). Some visitors of Guild Hall may conversely find it necessary at times to park at the Library. Some of the Guild Hall events that will draw large numbers of people at one time, such as the opera simulcasts, are held during peak or near-peak Library hours. It may be difficult for the Board to impose or enforce a condition on an approval that scheduling of future events be coordinated so that events that are likely to draw large numbers of people at either institution are not scheduled at both institutions at the same time. In the absence of such coordination, the impacts of events at the neighboring facilities are certainly relevant.

COMMENT: The alternative of providing additional facilities in outlying areas, especially a branch in Springs, should be explored.

Sources:

Osborne letter, 9/11/09 (C 165).
Ratsep letter, 9/11/09 (C 167).
Conner letter, 9/11/09 (C 169).
Randolph letter, 9/11/09 (C 172).
Brock letter, 9/11/09 (C 174).
Busch letter, 9/11/09 (C 178).
Ham letter, 9/11/09 (C 179).
Cunningham letter, 9/10/09 (C 186).
Freedman report, 9/9/09 (C 160).
Bragman, 9/11/09 (B 12842 *et seq.*)
Randolph, 9/11/09 (B 12864).
Conner, 9/11/09 (B 12871).
Agudelo letter, 9/29/09 (C 371).
Verdugo letter, 9/28/09 (C 372).
Bragman letter, 10/30/09 (C 404).
Conner letter, 4/2/10 (C 535).

LEAD AGENCY RESPONSE: Charts submitted at the hearings show that 37% of the population served by the Library are residents of Springs (C 127), while only 31% of its Library cards are issued to the children of Springs (C 128), and only 29% of the items borrowed are borrowed from residents of Springs (C 128; B 12855). If the primary goal of the expansion is to increase services to the existing children's population, it seemed to many who submitted comments that the children of Springs, who appear to be particularly under-served at the moment, would benefit greatly from a branch in Springs. The DEIS examines the feasibility (or, rather, the unfeasibility) of establishing a separate library district in Springs, as well as moving the entire children's collection to Springs or dividing it or duplicating it, but it does not really address the possibility of supplementing

the main collection with a branch in Springs that is specifically tailored to serving the needs of the Springs population. A Springs branch would allow the main Library to reduce the size of its proposed addition and to alleviate some of the environmental impacts of the larger facility, and it may well be both feasible and realistic (C 160). Springs is between three and six miles from the Library (B 12872). A branch in Springs would bring the services closer to the people who need them, making it more convenient for patrons, including children who are too young to drive, and would also reduce some of the traffic congestion (C 188).

Moreover, known demographics show that there is a larger Hispanic population in Springs than in the center of the Village. A branch in Springs might be a better place to increase the volume of books and literature available to Spanish-speaking residents and to those for whom English is a second language. According to the testimony of one commenter, the East Hampton Library now has only “12 feet of books in Spanish for children and 32 linear feet of adult books in Spanish in the basement where 30 to 40 percent of the student population (B 12864) are from Spanish-speaking homes. More attention could have been paid to targeting and benefiting the particular needs of the Hispanic and other children in Springs because it appears that they are not able to access the existing Library as frequently as children from the other districts that the Library serves, probably due to distance and transportation factors. If a larger children’s collection and more space to house a children’s collection are important to the Library’s effort to bring its services up to par, then, especially in light of the emphasis in the Comprehensive Plan with decentralizing services from the congested Village center, the alternative of a smaller addition to the existing building and a branch in Springs should have been explored in more depth.

COMMENT: The proposed addition is too large, and the Library should consider reconfiguring the existing space with, perhaps, a smaller addition.

Sources:

Cunningham letter, 9/10/09 (C 186).

Osborne letter, 9/11/09 (C 165).

Ratsep letter, 9/11/09 (C 167).

Brock letter, 9/11/09 (C 174).

Ham letter, 9/11/09 (C 179).

Bragman, 9/11/09 (B 12851 *et seq.*)

Clarke, 9/11/09 (B 12867).

Bragman, 1/8/10 (B 13058)

De Havenon letter, 3/31/10 (C 181).

LEAD AGENCY RESPONSE: The DEIS states:

“The size of the new addition is determined by the number of additional children’s books needed to bring the library up to the average for the East End. The architects, who are experts in the field of library design, have determined the gross square feet needed to house the new book collections” (DEIS 13).

With respect to the size of the wing being dictated by the number of books that the Library needs to add, there are discrepancies within the DEIS on the number of books they are able to shelve per square foot of gross floor area (B 12851). The Library says it plans to be able to accommodate 5,000 new adult books by taking back the Hedges Room (which is 576 square feet), but that it needs 2,000 square feet for 10,000 children’s books. Perhaps there are opportunities for more efficient shelving.

The applicant has been very clear that it does not think this environmental review is warranted and very clear that it does not think the Zoning Board has any authority to opine on the size of the wing, the need for the wing or the impacts that the wing will have

on the community and the environment (C 200; B 12883). Apparently as a result, there has been no willingness to consider a smaller wing, as the Board has suggested at several points and times (C 188), just as there was no willingness to submit to a scoping session, which might have helped to focus the applicant more on some of the concerns discussed here. After a full year of hearings, the applicant reluctantly offered more parking when it became clear that the Board could not allow a clearly deficient arrangement to continue, but the result, Alternative Parking Schedule E, comes at a cost to the open space and achieves fewer parking spaces than the Board would have liked if a 6,802-square-foot addition with a 60-seat lecture hall is to be built.

The Zoning Board continues to think that many of the environmental impacts identified in the EAF, Part II, and in the comments on the DEIS could be mitigated by reducing the size of the wing (B 13058) and most particularly the lecture room (B 12859). Perhaps the new addition could be tucked in more inside the courtyard garden (B 12867). In any event, the Board has not received an explanation, because the applicant seems to believe it an inappropriate question, as to why a small addition could not be constructed. As succinctly stated by one expert:

“Balancing reasonably adequate and appropriate parking and the preservation of open space, is not an ‘either/or’ proposition. Protecting one should not mean sacrificing the other. Instead, both can be accommodated by reducing the size of the expansion, thereby reducing the required parking area (C 501)”.