



## The Falls Church Village Preservation and Improvement Society

October 14, 2022

Ms. Jennifer Carroll  
Director  
Mary Riley Styles Public Library  
City of Falls Church  
120 North Virginia Avenue  
Falls Church, VA 22046

### **Subject: VPIS Board Comments on Library Strategic Planning**

Dear Ms. Carroll:

The Board of the Village Preservation and Improvement Society (VPIS) is writing to provide initial input to the strategic plan being developed by the Mary Riley Styles Public Library.

The VPIS Board strongly supported the recent renovation and expansion of the Library and applauds the decision to revise the Library strategic plan now that the work on Library infrastructure is complete. In response to the Library's request for input to the strategic planning process, the VPIS Board offers the following comments.

- 1. Expand Library Hours:** Access to the Library is now limited by a recent reduction in the number of hours the facility is open each week. Additional hours would allow patrons more options to enjoy the facility. In addition, a key goal of the renovation and expansion project was to provide expanded and upgraded meeting venues. The current hours make it difficult for community groups to hold meetings at the Library because the facility closes at 3:00 on Sunday afternoon and 8:00 each evening. In addition, the opportunity for the Library to schedule public events, ranging from book clubs, to author readings, and musical events, is limited by the current hours.

**The Library should consider expanding hours to include an additional two hours on Sunday afternoon (e.g., 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.) and an additional hour several nights per week (e.g.; from 8:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m) in as economical a way possible.**

- 2. Present Local History:** The VPIS Board recognizes the significant improvement in capacity to manage a range of local history documents and other materials accomplished as a result of the recent renovation and expansion project. The Library is the key institutional memory for the City and its residents. The strategic plan is an opportunity to review the range of materials collected on local history, evaluate how to expand these materials, and consider new ways to present local history to the public (e.g., presentations by local historians, showcasing materials related to key historical events in the City, and collaborations with local organizations). VPIS is interested in working with the Library to support expanded management and presentation of local history materials.

**The Library should consider include in the strategic plan new commitments to evaluating the local history collection, expanding the collections as needed, and developing opportunities to present historical materials to the public in an engaging and informative manner.**

- 3. Expand Parking Options:** The Library has long suffered from limited parking and the lack of convenient parking limits access to the facility, especially for elderly or disabled people. The proposed redevelopment of Park Avenue as a “great street” might involve a reduction in parking near the Library making access even more difficult. The strategic plan is an important opportunity to focus on options for expanded parking that is convenient to the building.

**The Library should work with the City to preserve existing street parking, identify potential expansion of street parking, and develop agreements with neighboring land owners for limited use of existing surface parking (e.g., agreements to allow for parking nights and weekends in exchange for a payment from the City or tax reduction).**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment at this early stage of strategic plan development. The VPIS Board looks forward to working with you in the development of the strategic plan.

Sincerely,

/s/

Mary Chaves  
VPIS Vice President  
On behalf of the Board

cc: Library Board of Trustees  
City Manager  
Planning Commission