

**GREAT BARRINGTON
COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE**

APPLICATION FOR CPA FUNDING – Step 1

Date Received (for office use only) _____

Applicant Name Great Barrington Bd of Library Trustees

Project Name Ramsdell Public Library Renovation Project

Project Address 1087 Main St, Housatonic, MA 01236

Contact Person Ruby Chang, MD Title: Treasurer, Bd of Trustees

Phone No. 413-530-8079 Email rubymbchang@gmail.com

Brief Project Description (attach up to 1 additional page if necessary)

We request a multi-year grant to support the renovation of the Ramsdell Library. This project updates the historic building, adds new space for meeting rooms and technology access, and creates universal accessibility in a structure whose last significant renovation was completed in 1930. GB Libraries has been awarded a generous state grant that will cover nearly 60% of costs; we now seek CPC funding, in the amount of \$1.5M, distributed over 3 to 5 years, to cover costs that align with your priorities for preservation and accessibility in historic structures.
(continues on pg 3)

Amount of CPA funding you are seeking: \$ 1,500,000 over 3 to 5 years

When do you request the CPA funding be received by your project? FY 2027-2031

Property Owner (if different from applicant)

Owner's Name Town of Great Barrington

Owner's Address 334 Main St, Great Barrington, MA 01230

Phone No. 413-528-1619 Email: crembold@townofgbma.gov

If Owner is different from applicant, you must include a letter signed by the Owner giving permission to apply for funds for the specified project on the Owner's property.

In the following chart, mark the box(es) that best apply to your project.

Boxes with an X through them are not CPA eligible activities. Contact the Town Planner if you need more information.

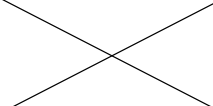
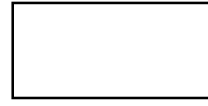
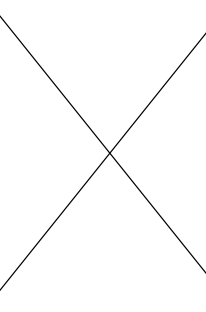
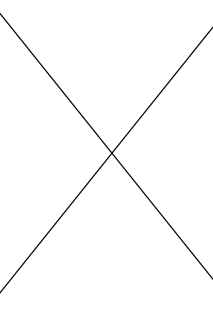
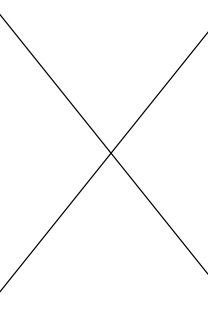
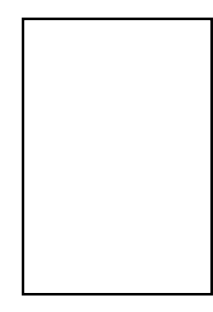
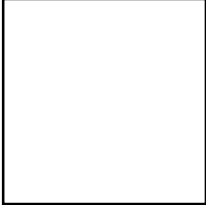
	OPEN SPACE	HISTORIC RESOURCES	RECREATIONAL LAND	COMMUNITY HOUSING
Activities (refer to Glossary for definitions)	Land to protect existing and future well fields, aquifers and recharge areas, watershed land, agricultural land, grasslands, fields, forest land, wetland, river, stream, lake and pond frontage, land to protect scenic vistas, land for wildlife or nature preserve, and land for recreation use.	Building, structure, vessel, real property, document or artifact listed on the state register of historic places or determined by the local historic preservation commission to be significant in the history, archeology, architecture or culture of the city or town.	Land for active or passive recreational use including, but not limited to, the use of land for community gardens, trails, and noncommercial youth and adult sports, and the use of land as a park, playground or athletic field. Does not include horse or dog racing or the use of land for a stadium, gymnasium or similar structure.	Housing for low and moderate income individuals and families, including low or moderate income seniors. Moderate income is less than 100%, and low income is less than 80%, of US HUD Area Wide Median Income.
ACQUISITION Obtain property interest by gift, purchase, devise, grant, rental, rental purchase, lease or otherwise. Only includes eminent domain taking as provided by G.L. c. 44B				
CREATION To bring into being or cause to exist. <i>Seidman v. City of Newton</i> , 452 Mass. 472 (2008)				
PRESERVATION Protect personal or real property from injury, harm or destruction				
SUPPORT Provide grants, loans, rental assistance, security deposits, interest-rate write downs or other forms of assistance directly to individuals and families who are eligible for community housing, or to entity that owns, operates or manages such housing, for the purpose of making housing affordable				
REHABILITATION AND/OR RESTORATION Make capital improvements, or extraordinary repairs to make assets functional for intended use, including improvements to comply with federal, state or local building or access codes or federal standards for rehabilitation of historic properties	Only applies if property was acquired or created with CPA funds 			Only applies if housing was acquired or created with CPA funds 

Chart adapted from "Recent Developments in Municipal Law", Massachusetts Department of Revenue, October 2012.

End of Step 1 application

Ramsdell Project Fact Sheet Page 3

Continues from Page 1:

We are working with an award-winning architect, Perry Dean Rogers, and a seasoned Project Manager, CHA Consultants, to develop a right-scaled project that will serve not only the Housatonic community but also Great Barrington at large for years to come. Some points to consider:

- Ramsdell Public Library is the only town-owned building on the National Register of Historic Places. Its last significant renovation occurred in 1930.
- Housatonic Visioning Session has identified Ramsdell as a civic anchor and envisions that it will be “a welcoming, active hub of programming and community space.”
- The Ramsdell project was accepted into the competitive grant program by MBLC (Mass Board of Library Commissioners) in January 2025. It was placed first on the waitlist for funding of the construction phase. Our project could be moved off the waitlist and into the immediate funding category as soon as Calendar Year 2026.
- The grant program will cover about 60% of the eligible costs when Green Incentives are added to the grant reimbursement funds.
- The town will need then to vote to accept and expend the grant as well as provide evidence of leveraged funding. A CPC grant would be strong evidence of that sort of funding.
- Because MBLC funding does not cover costs for deferred maintenance (the neglected windows, e.g.) or preservation/restoration, CPC funding is sought for this purpose, as well as for accessibility features, including an elevator that makes all floors of the library accessible.
- The Ramsdell Building Committee has worked with Perry Dean Rogers Architects and CHA Consulting on a schematic plan to restore Ramsdell’s second-floor community/performance space and to add an elevator, ADA-compliant restrooms, meeting rooms, including a sensory/comfort room, and an outdoor reading porch.
- A civic meeting/community space in Housatonic is a priority for the village, and – because MBLC requires that a library community space be available for after-hours use – the Ramsdell will easily meet this priority with restored, accessible, safe spaces for meeting, conversation, performance and other community celebrations.
- Resiliency Hubs remain a priority for Great Barrington, per Select Board discussion on November 3, 2025, and Ramsdell is being designed with resiliency as a core capacity.
- Why has the town not done piecemeal restoration? A previous town estimate in 2022 for improvements (which did not include an elevator) was \$1.8 million. Unfortunately, this amount would trigger the 521 CMR from the Architectural Access Board code, which states that if the work performed amounts to 30% or more of the full and fair cash value of the building (a recent assessment of Ramsdell valued it at \$1,858,700) the entire building is required to comply with 521 CMR, which would push the costs for piecemeal renovation far beyond the cost to Great Barrington we project from this grant.
- A grant round will not be open again for 7 years and the chances that Ramsdell would be again awarded a place in the construction program is not certain because the rounds are very competitive and a town that fails to fund its share of a project once may not be a candidate for a second award.
- CPA support for this project is a responsible way to raise a considerable amount of money with generous multi-year allocation. The community needs the Ramsdell revitalized and CPC is in a critical position to help.
- Our town has supported this effort for more than 10 years, including funding for various programs and surveys. Please continue to be part of this effort.

GREAT BARRINGTON COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE

APPLICATION FOR CPA FUNDING – Step 2

Date Received (for office use only) _____

All applicants submitting Step 2 must include a copy of their Step 1 application.

All applicants must answer questions 1-11, and question 19. For question 12-18, only answer questions that are applicable to your CPA area. For example, if your project has to do with Historical Preservation but does not include Housing, then you may skip questions 12, 13 and 14, but you must answer all questions under the subheading “Historical Preservation Projects.”

You may attach additional sheets as necessary to answer the numbered questions, up to a maximum of 8 additional pages of narrative. These additional pages must be formatted with a minimum 11 point font, 1 inch margins. If your project combines two or more CPA priorities, such as Community Housing AND Open Space, then you must answer ALL questions under both of those 2 subheadings and you may include up to 10 additional pages of narrative. (Please note Open Space and Recreation is considered one CPA priority.)

All pages must be numbered. Please number each attached Page 1 of 8, Page 2 of 8, etc. If your answers are on separate sheets, also number each answer so that it corresponds with the number of the question you are answering.

Applicant Name Great Barrington Board of Library Trustees

Project Name Ramsdell Library Renovation Project

Project Address 1087 Main St. N. Housatonic, MA 01236

Assessor's Map 2 Lot 3

Property Deed Book / Page 193 / 446

1.) Project Budget (list all sources and uses, including grants, fundraising, etc.)

Total CPA funds requested: \$ 1.5M/3-5 yrs

Fill in the chart below showing all project sources and uses, including requested CPA funds:

Source Name	Amount	% of total	Used for	Committed?
Refer to pages 1 of 8, 2 of 8, and 3 of 8.				
Total budget:				

1.) Project Budget: Total CPA Funds requested: \$1,500,000

Chart of Ramsdell Renovation Total Project Cost

Source Name	Amount	% of total	Used for	Committed?
Massachusetts Public Library Construction Project Grant	Formulated 60% of the first \$5M, 45% next \$5M, 35% next \$5M. Also add 6.26% for needs ratio. Green incentive add 3.5%	50% to 60%	MBLC Level of Design Construction Cost	Yes, see chart below
FY 27 CPA Grant	\$1.5M	Submitted 11/5/25	Reduce Town's Share of renovation expenses	Pending CPC vote & town confirmation May 2026
Great Barrington Library Fund (501c3)	\$1M	Project total cost pending; target is 10%	MBLC Level of Design Construction	Capital Campaign to commence as town supports
Mass Save	\$2.75/Sq foot of total project.	Project total cost pending	Zero Carbon & Low EUI Buildings	In the planning
Various State/Federal and Private Funds Grants	Congressionally Directed Spending, State ADA \$250,000; State Historical \$100,000, etc.	Estimates are listed on left column	Community use, access to full facility via elevator& new stairs, Historical preservation	Will meet application cycle requirements
Library Trustees Funds	\$50,000	Project total cost pending	Any additional funding needed.	Available
Town	TBD	TBD	Project	Town vote needed

***MBLC is Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners.

Project Cost: MBLC does not endorse comprehensive cost estimation until completion of the Design and Planning Phase, which will be completed in early 2026. An independent cost estimate will be performed once the conceptual design has been approved by the MBLC's Independent Review and the MBLC has issued a provision award. This is to ensure that cost estimates accurately reflect the timing and scope of the project.

1.) Project Budget: (continued)

Estimated Historic Preservation and Accessibility Scope of the Project:

The numbers below do not include hidden costs such as deterioration of existing structure.

- PM&C, LLC Cost Estimator — November 20, 2025: Concept Estimate produced by drawings, outline specifications and other documents prepared by Perry, Dean, Rogers Partners Architects and their design team dated October 10, 2025. Total of all Construction as of — Jan 2027 is \$1,944,362
- Municipal Building Conditions Assessment Report — December 2023 (Tighe & Bond Ramsdell cost is estimated at \$1,855,000 without addition just the existing building.

Great Barrington ADA Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan (MA Department of Justice) — June 2025 Quote regarding Ramsdell Library:

“Bringing the building into ADA compliance would require a significant renovation that exceeds the 30% threshold, which then triggers the requirement that the entire building is brought to code. The library is currently pursuing full renovation, which includes addressing the accessibility challenges.”

They listed 6 items that needed improvement immediately with others mentioned such as elevator service.

The renovation cannot be done piecemeal:

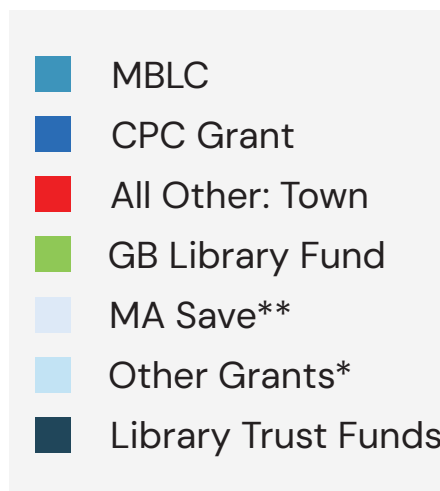
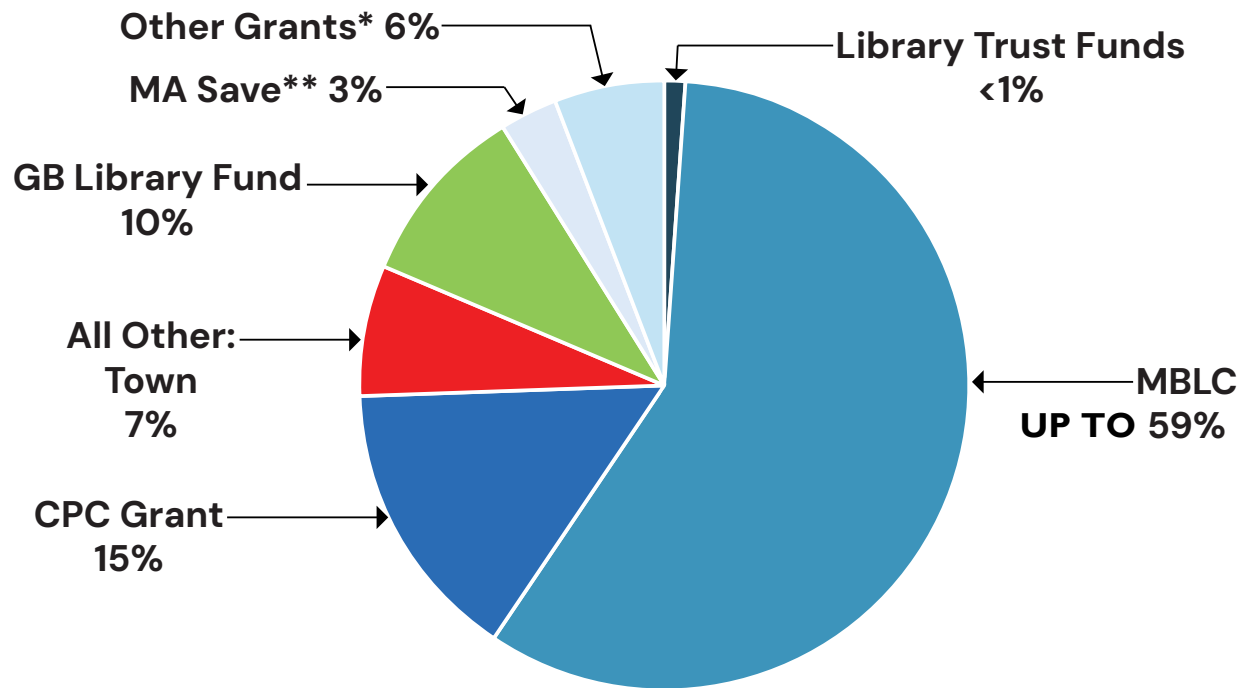
Massachusetts Architectural Access Board Section 3.3: Under the 2006 revision of the MAAB (section 3 – Jurisdiction, specifically Section 3.3), three tiers would trigger additional work.

1. Any work performed must comply – regardless of cost.
2. Any work performed over within three years:
 - a. If the cost is \$100,000 or more but under 30% of the assessed value (or replacement value if no assessment) –
 - i. The work performed must comply.
 - ii. An accessible entrance is required, along with, if provided for the public, an accessible restroom and an accessible drinking fountain.
3. If the cost, regardless of value, exceeds 30% of the assessed/replacement value –The entire building would need to be brought up to the 2006 revision of the MAAB.

(The 2025 assessed value of the Ramsdell Property is \$1,858,700.)

1.) Project Budget: (continued)

PROJECTED RAMSDELL FUNDING SOURCES



**Percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number.*

2.) Timing of Funds: Ramsdell Renovation Project is first on the waitlist of the MPLCP Grant for Small Tier. There is a good chance we will move to immediately funded status after submission of our plan documents end of December, 2025. If this does not happen, we will be waiting at least one year before our status will change. It is to Great Barrington's benefit financially to continue moving forward in development of the design plan from conceptual to schematic and then construction ready during this waiting period. This would save the town escalation of cost in labor and materials while waiting. If we are not off the waitlist, we would experience a delay of at least one year. By using CPA funds, we can continue this progress with our present architectural team. The work paid by CPA funds will be reimbursed by MPLCP funds when it becomes available. CPA Grant then can be used for historical restoration and other non-MPLCP eligible needs in the Construction Phase. (Please see Appendix.)

3.) Existing use or deed restrictions, permanent easements, historic designations, special permits, etc. June 27, 1908 deed to town of Great Barrington as a free Public Library. "This conveyance is made on the express condition that the grantees and their successors and assigned shall forever hold, support and maintain the property hereby conveyed as a free Public Library for the use of the inhabitants of said Great Barrington.... if...fail to keep and perform said condition then....deed will null and void..."

- National Register of Historic Places 7/25/2024.
- Registered on the MACRIS of Massachusetts Historical Commission GBR267.

4.) Proposed Use or Deed Restrictions after Project Completion (in accordance with CPA rules): The Deed requires the Ramsdell to remain a free library for the town of Great Barrington. We will be able provide accessibility to people of all needs to use the two top floors. The elevator and integrated accessibility changes would include updated bathrooms, door openings, drinking fountains and stacks. Other features will include:

- A second accessible entrance.
- A performance/community space with catering area on the second floor.
- Additional meeting rooms.
- Option for Telehealth facility with better internet connection and visual imaging.
- Restored reading rooms and central rotunda.
- A tech hub/work space.
- Defined areas for teen and children for collections and programming.
- An outdoor reading porch.
- A sensory/comfort room.
- Gallery space for local historical displays.
- Building completely brought up to present state of the art green initiatives.

Requirements for receiving the MBLC Construction Grant will have to be met. This would include the following:

- The building remain a public library and community gathering space with sustainability of at least 30 years.
- The library will continue to participate in qualifying programs such as State Aid
- The restoration of the library must comply with various historical society requirements.
- The design must comply with Americans with Disabilities (ADA) federal standards and 521 CMR: Architectural Access Board.

5.) Describe the project team: (Key personnel resumes in appendix)

- **Andrea Bunker** Library Building Consultant, MBLC
- **Thomas Gatzunis PE, CBO, MCPPO, & Deepa Venkat Assoc. AIA, IIDA, LEED AP, WELL AP. CHA Consulting, Inc. (OPM):** An innovative, full-service engineering, design, consulting, and program/construction management firm founded in 1952 in Boston.
- **Mark Freeman, AIA, RIBA, LEED AP BD+C, Michael Bellefeuille AIA, MCPPO, Anne Brockelman AIA, LEED AP BD+C, Perry Dean Rogers Partners Architects** with many library and historic building awards and experienced in working with MBLC on library projects.
- **Subcontractors** include: Foresight Land Services, Inc. (Civil Engineer/Surveyor), Lim Consultants (Structural Engineering), Engineering Design Management (EDM) P.C. (MEP/FP Engineer), G2 Collaborative, LLC (Landscape Architects), O'Reilly, Talbot & Okun Associates (Geotech/Hazmat), PM&C (cost estimator), Green Engineering, Inc. (Sustainability Consultant) and Hastings Consulting Inc. (Code Consultant.)
- **Ramsdell Building Committee:** Ruby Chang MD (library trustee/chair), Dawn Jardine (GB Library Director), Pam Sandler AIA (architect), Patrick Hollenbeck (Library Trustee), Steve Larson (Town DPW), John Nelson (community member), Frederica Sigel (community member, Great Barrington Library Fund, member.)
- **Great Barrington Board of Library Trustees:** Sharon Shaloo (chair), Laura Mars (secretary), Ruby Chang (treasurer), Lauren Clark, Patrick Hollenbeck, Sandra Pantorno.

6.) Consistency: Describe how the proposed project is consistent with the Community Preservation Plan and with the Great Barrington Master Plan.

- The Ramsdell Library renovation fully aligns with CPC priorities and the Great Barrington Master plan. Ramsdell is a town-owned, National Registered Historic building whose restoration will provide Universal ADA access, preserve an important cultural asset, maintains community character, and supports Housatonic's revitalization.
- The project advances broad community goals: **public gathering, lifelong-learning and literacy.** A modern, energy efficient healthy building with improved HVAC reduces long-term municipal costs and supports climate-resilient infrastructure.
- The project brings substantial financial leverage: the **MBLC Construction Grant** is expected to cover **50-60% of project cost**, supported by the Great Barrington Library Fund's private fundraising and additional state and federal grants. The plan is based on extensive community input through public sessions, the 2024 Building Program and 2024 Library Strategic Plan, with strong community support reflected in the letters in the appendix.
- The renovation addresses major needs identified in the **2013 Master Plan**, including aging infrastructure, an aging population, economic shifts toward service and technology and climate preparedness. It advances key strategies (LU H.6, OSR 5.2, SF 3.2, SF 3.3) by modernizing Ramsdell as a civic hub, improving accessibility, supporting walkability, and providing community program space. The 2024 Building Program fulfills the Master Plan requirements for a strategic renovation framework.

7.) Town Projects: Is the proposed project for a town-owned asset? ☒ Yes

If yes, please describe funding options. For example, what portion of the project budget is CPA funding? If CPA funds are not received, what are the alternative funding options, if any? Yes, Ramsdell is a town-owned asset. (See funding chart on Step 2, page 1)

8.) Public Benefits: Describe the public benefits of the project.

Preserving a philanthropic historic gift given to the people of Great Barrington to support their pursuit of knowledge is the most noble use of the CPA Grant possible. The original intent was transcendent to modern times by providing space for books and entertainment, for fellowship and advancement of the individual. Honoring the gift is the most decent thing the town can do. More importantly, a renovated historic building becomes a social anchor to the community for all people of different ages and needs. A third place that brings people together for fun and support.

9.) Leverage: Will the CPA funds be used to leverage or supplement other funding for this project? Please explain other sources and whether they have been committed.

See Funding information presented earlier. CPA Funding will activate outside investments including private donations. Refer to questions 1 and 2.

10.) Community Input and Support: (Letters of support are attached in Appendix)

- Community Input sessions were held multiple times during the creation of the Ramsdell Building Program. From the tabulated information, the program was a requirement as a blueprint to the spaces dictating our MBLC Level of Design. The architects were instructed by MBLC to adhere to the building program in determination of the spaces required for the needs of the community.

11.) Permits: Describe permits that may be required, the status of those permits or applications, and/or when the applications will be submitted and permits received.

No permit is required at this point. The grant application will need to fulfill all the regulatory standards and level of design (LOD) of the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners. This is an extremely rigorous exercise and we have received much guidance from our Library Building Specialist, Andrea Bunker, who is the recent winner of the prestigious Manuel Carballo Governor's Award for Excellence in Public Service.

Questions 12–14.) N/A

15.) Historic Preservation Projects:

The project fulfills the following goals for the Community Preservation Plan:

- Ramsdell Library is a historical legacy of the Theodore G. Ramsdell and a cultural resource for the town of Great Barrington
- The renovation of Ramsdell Library helps Great Barrington to be a more sustainable community by reusing existing building and directs growth pressures to locations where the infrastructure already exists, especially, new fiber one connection made possible recently by the town.
- The new meeting spaces in the library will promote job training and language learning.
- Revitalization of the northern portion of the town would increase property value, tax revenue and tourism.
- Another site for historical tourism for the town would place more destinations for travel to our area, thereby, increase revenue for the town and surrounding area commerce.
- The renovation of town-owned building would decrease the cost of heating and cooling, a burden to the town and leap forward our climate resiliency efforts.
- The funding priorities for CPA Plan are met including, town owned historic building on the National Register of Historic Places, that is a threatened historic resource, that allows for public access with universal accessibility.

16.) Other Information: History of Town funding for the Ramsdell Library

	Funding Source/Action taken	Amount	Purpose
2008	Community Development Block Grant to Leach Consultant	\$75,000	Renovation design set. At \$1,338,000 or \$270 sq/ft
2010	Bid Documents submitted by Drummey Rosane Anderson, Inc		
2011	Town Manager refused MBLC grant application defer to 2016		
2014	Ramsdell is accepted on the National Register of Historic Places Library Trustees request CPA funding and was denied.	\$345,000	Housatonic Architectural: price per sq/ft \$350
2016	Town Manager has capital funding but MBLC does not fund phased project so no grant applied		
2018	Kimberly Bolan Assoc.	\$30,000	Ramsdell Program and Facility Vision Report
2021	The Public Archaeology Laboratory, Inc.	\$9,800	Archaeology study
2022	Lerner Ladds Bartels Architects	\$?	Construction Drawings for Accessible Main Entry
2023	CPC Grant to DesignLab Architects	\$50,000	New Ramsdell Building Program
2024	Town DPW	\$?	Accessible Ramp constructed
2024	Town meeting vote May 2024	\$150,000	Design and Planning Phase of MBLC Grant Match of \$100,000

***Present day cost for renovation/addition is anywhere from \$650 to \$800 per square foot libraries per MBLC data 2023.

Questions 17–18.) N/A

Certification

19.) This application was prepared, reviewed, and submitted by:

Name: Ruby Chang MD

Ph: 413 530 8079 Email rubyrbchang@gmail.com

I hereby certify that all of the above and included information is true and correct to the best of my knowledge. [For non-municipal applicants only: I further declare my willingness to enter into a Contract with the Town of Great Barrington to govern the use and expenditure of CPA funds.]

Signature: 

Date: 12/2/2025

All hard copies of the entire application package, and one PDF of the entire application package, are due prior to the 4:00 PM deadline.

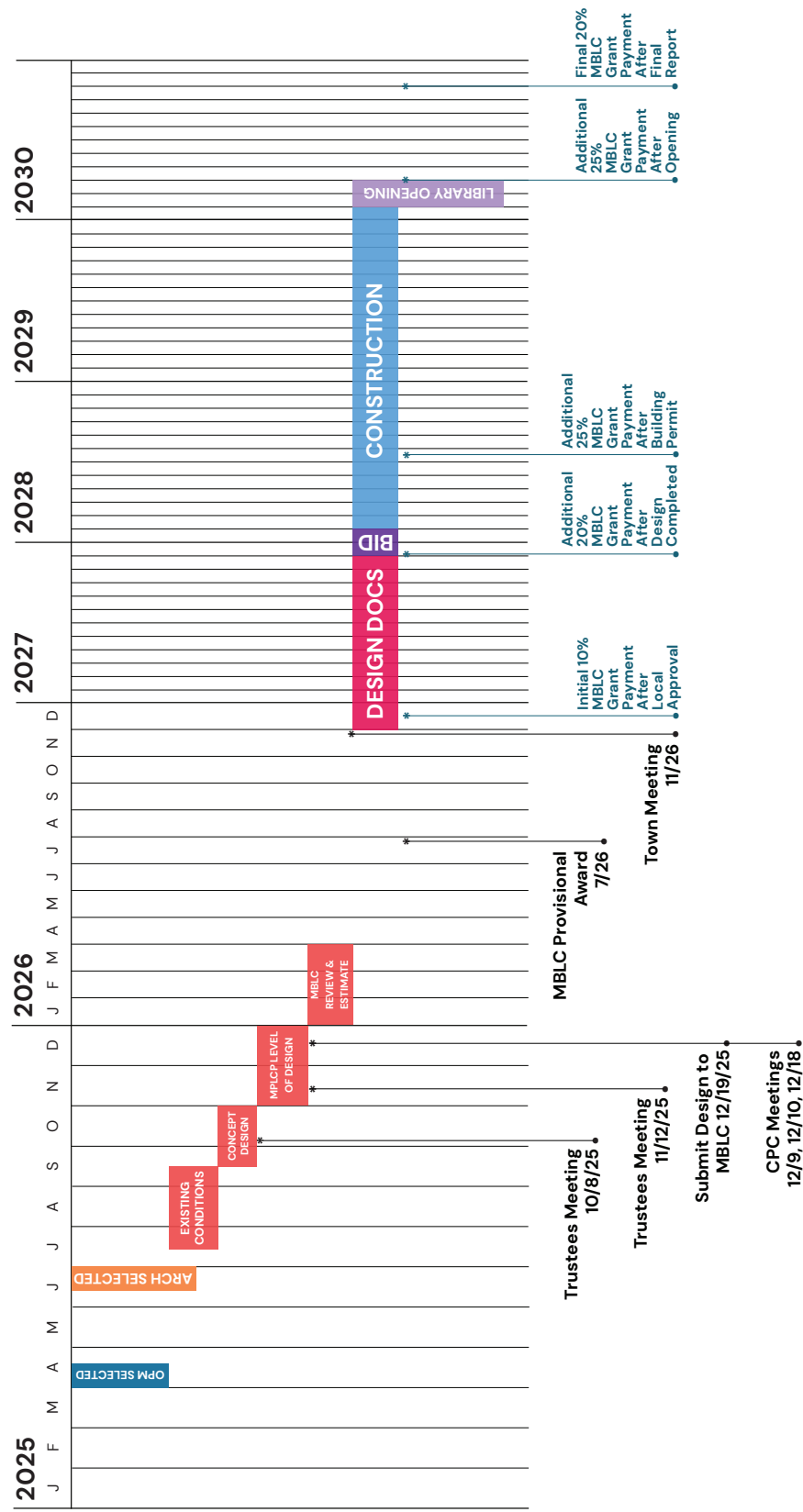
Number all pages.

01	PROJECT TIMELINE
02	RAMSDELL DEED
03	NATIONAL REGISTER
04	RESUMES
09	LETTERS OF SUPPORT
17	UNDERSTANDING THE MBLC GRANT
18	RAMSDELL LIBRARY BUILDING CONDITIONS SUMMARY
19	FLOOR PLANS
22	RAMSDELL LIBRARY AREAS OF IMPROVEMENT
27	COST ESTIMATE
31	SITE MAP
32	AGE DISTRIBUTION GRAPH

CONTENTS

APPENDIX PROJECT TIMELINE

MBLC GRANT DISBURSEMENT FOR FY27 (JULY 2026) (IF RAMSDELL MOVES OFF WAITLIST)



APPENDIX RAMSDELL DEED 1908

446

T. Ellis Ramsdell

to
Inhabitants of Great Barrington,

WARRANTY, VOL. 102.

Know all Men by these Presents,

THAT I, T. Ellis Ramsdell of Great Barrington in the County of Berkshire and Commonwealth of Massachusetts,
in consideration of ONE dollar and other good and valuable considerations, ~~xx Dollars~~ paid by
the Inhabitants of said Great Barrington in their corporate capacity as a town,

the receipt whereof is hereby acknowledge, do hereby give, grant, bargain, sell and convey unto the said
Inhabitants of Great Barrington a certain tract or parcel of land situated on the
northerly side of Main Street in the village of Housatonic in said town of Great Barrington bounded and described as being all and the same premises which were conveyed to me the said Ramsdell by two deeds viz: One from Harvey H. BaTuner dated April 5th, 1905 and recorded in the Southern Berkshire Registry of Deeds in said Great Barrington in Book No. 194, page 76; and one from Mary A. Van Deusen dated April 15th, 1905, and recorded in said Registry of deeds in book No. 193, page 39. Excepting and not herein including a certain small parcel of land conveyed by me the said Ramsdell to the Roman Catholic Bishop of Springfield by deed dated December 30th, 1907, and recorded in said Registry in Book No. 193, page 373. This conveyance of real estate is subject, however, to the provisions of a certain agreement entered into by the said T. Ellis Ramsdell and the Roman Catholic Bishop of Springfield dated December 30th, 1907, and recorded in the said Registry in Book No. 201, page 146, to which deed and all the deeds above mentioned reference may be had for a more particular description of the premises hereby conveyed and agreements relating thereto. I also hereby convey all the books, fixtures and equipments now contained in the Library Building on said premises. This conveyance is made on the express condition that the grantees and their successors and assigns shall forever hold, support and maintain the property hereby conveyed as a free Public Library, and if the grantees shall fail to keep and perform said condition then and in such event this deed shall be null and void and the premises hereby conveyed together with the personal property above mentioned shall revert and revest in me the grantor and my heirs and assigns.

To Have and to Hold the granted premises, with all the privileges and appurtenances thereto belonging to the said Inhabitants of Great Barrington and their successors

~~Not~~ and assigns, to their own use and behoof forever. And I ~~do~~ hereby
for myself and my heirs, executors, and
administrators, covenant with the ~~xxx~~ grantee and its successors
~~Not~~ and assigns, that I am lawfully seized in fee simple of the granted premises, that they are free from all incumbrances;

that I have good right to sell and convey the same to ~~xxx~~
as aforesaid; and that I will, and my heirs, executors, and
administrators shall WARRANT AND DEFEND the same to the ~~xxx~~ grantees and its successors
~~Not~~ and assigns forever, against the lawful claims and demands of all persons.

And for the consideration aforesaid

do hereby release unto the said grantee and heirs and assigns all right
of or to both dower and homestead in the granted premises.

In Witness Whereof, I the said T. Ellis Ramsdell, single

~~Not~~ hereunto set my hand and seal this twentieth day of June
in the year ~~xxxxxx~~ one thousand nine hundred and eight.

Signed, sealed and delivered in presence of
Charles Giddings

T. Ellis Ramsdell & seal

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS.

Berkshire, ss.

June 26 1908

Then personally appeared the above named T. Ellis Ramsdell

and acknowledged the foregoing instrument to be his free Act and Deed—before me,

Charles Giddings

Justice of the Peace.

June 27, 1908

at

9

o'clock,

minutes,

A

M.,

and Recorded from the original.

By

Malcolm Douglas

Register.

Received,

for the Great Barrington Public Library
interior & exterior with seal.

APPENDIX NATIONAL REGISTER

NPS Form 10-900

OMB No. 1024-0018

(Expires 5/31/2012)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).



1. Name of Property

historic name Ramsdell Public Library

other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number 1087 Main Street

city or town Great Barrington (Village of Housatonic)

state Massachusetts

code MA

county Berkshire

code 003

zip code 01236

☐ not for publication

☐ vicinity

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this ☒ nomination ☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property ☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

☐ national ☐ statewide ☒ local

Brona Simon
Signature of certifying official/Title Brona Simon, SHPO, MHC

June 2, 2014
Date

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official

Date

Title

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

☒ entered in the National Register

☐ determined eligible for the National Register

☐ determined not eligible for the National Register

☐ removed from the National Register

☐ other (explain):

Joe Edison H. Beall
Signature of the Keeper

7-25-14
Date of Action

RESUMES PDR (ARCHITECT)



**ANNE
BROCKELMAN** AIA,
LEED AP BD+C

PRINCIPAL, DIRECTOR OF
SUSTAINABILITY

ROLE PRINCIPAL-IN-CHARGE

EDUCATION

Harvard University, Graduate School of
Design, Master of Architecture, 2002

Wesleyan University,
B.A. in Studio Art & Art History, 1996

REGISTRATION

Registered Architect: MA, NY, ME, NH,
VT, RI, CT, NJ

NCARB Certified

LEED Accredited Professional BD+C

PUBLIC APPOINTMENTS

Board Member, Massachusetts School
Building Authority (MSBA)

With 25 years of experience in the design profession, Anne brings to PDR her enthusiasm for creating dynamic learning environments, where her interests in the practice of teaching and design converge. Her diverse experience has included all project phases from planning and design through construction of academic and civic buildings. They all share a focus on facilitating consensus-building to arrive at a project that expresses the shared vision of all stakeholders and community members.

RELEVANT EXPERIENCE (PARTIAL LIST)

CAMPUS CENTERS

Welcome Center, Bridgewater State University,
Bridgewater, MA

Worcester Dining Commons, University of Massachusetts,
Amherst, MA

VISUAL & PERFORMING ARTS

Edward and Joyce Linde Music Building, MIT, Cambridge, MA

Williams College Museum of Art, Williamstown, MA

Chace Center Museum & Auditorium, RISD, Providence, MA

LIBRARIES

Cohen Center for Holocaust & Genocide Studies,
Keene State College, Keene, NH

Research & Information Commons, Daemen College,
Amherst, NY

Libraries Master Plan, Florida State University,
Tallahassee, FL

ABS Information Commons, Massachusetts Maritime
Academy, Buzzards Bay, MA

Wolak Library Learning Commons, Southern New
Hampshire University, Manchester, NH

Hill Library, St. George's School, Middletown, RI

Lowell, O'Leary Library Study, University of Massachusetts,
Lowell, MA

CIVIC & HISTORIC BUILDINGS

Salem Probate & Family Courthouse, Salem, MA

Massachusetts State House Lobby Renovations, Boston, MA

RESUMES PDR (ARCHITECT)



MARK FREEMAN
AIA, RIBA, LEED AP BD+C

PRESIDENT, DIRECTOR OF
LIBRARY PROGRAMMING,
PLANNING, & DESIGN

ROLE COLLABORATING
PRINCIPAL

EDUCATION

University of Westminster, UK,
Diploma in Architecture, 1983

University of Westminster, UK,
Bachelor of Architecture, 1980

REGISTRATION

Registered Architect: MA

Registered Architect: Architects
Registration Board, United Kingdom

NCARB Certified

LEED Accredited Professional BD+C

Mark Freeman is a British-trained architect with 40 years of professional practice, with more than 27 years at PDR. His experience covers a wide range of building types with a concentrated focus on the contemporary academic library. As PDR's Director of Library Programming, Planning, and Design, he has developed a deep understanding of the evolving trends in readers and learning as well as the shifts in library operations and service.

RELEVANT EXPERIENCE (PARTIAL LIST)

LIBRARIES

Reed Library, SUNY Fredonia, Fredonia, NY

Butcher Library Student Success Center, SUNY Morrisville,
Morrisville, NY

Butler Library Renovation, SUNY Buffalo State University,
Buffalo, NY

Goddard Library, Clark University, Worcester, MA

Research & Information Commons, Daemen College,
Amherst, NY

Libraries Master Plan, Florida State University,
Tallahassee, FL

Libraries Master Plan & Conceptual Design, Georgia
Institute of Technology, Atlanta, GA

Lutnick Library, Renovation & Addition, Haverford College,
Haverford, PA

ABS Information Commons, Massachusetts Maritime
Academy, Buzzards Bay, MA

Wolak Library Learning Commons, Southern New
Hampshire University, Manchester, NH

Silverman Library, SUNY University at Buffalo, Buffalo, NY

Library Space Assessment, Texas Tech University,
Lubbock, TX

Library Annex, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, AR

Mullins Library Renovation, University of Arkansas,
Fayetteville, AR

RESUMES PDR (ARCHITECT)



**MICHAEL
BELLEFEUILLE** AIA,
MCPPO

ASSOCIATE

ROLE PROJECT ARCHITECT

EDUCATION

Wentworth Institute of Technology,
Boston, MA, Master of Architecture,
2008

REGISTRATION

Registered Architect: MA #951454

Registered Architect: NH

NCARB Certified

LEED Green Associate

MCPPO

Michael Bellefeuille, with 17 years of professional experience, has worked in all phases of planning, design, and construction, with an emphasis on meeting the needs of clients, communities, and the environment. His career has seen a focus on public libraries, for which he has a particular passion. He is adept at balancing the needs of library staff and patrons, and is knowledgeable about the evolving function of libraries as the heart of a community.

RELEVANT EXPERIENCE (PARTIAL LIST)

LIBRARIES

Concord Free Public Library*, Concord, MA

Abbot Public Library*, Marblehead, MA

Hadley Public Library*, Hadley, MA

Hopkinton Public Library*, Hopkinton, MA

Effingham Public Library*, Effingham, IL

Tufts Library Study*, Weymouth, MA

Tilton Library Study*, Deerfield, MA

Belmont Public Library Study*, Belmont, MA

Northern Essex Community College Bentley Library*,
Haverhill, MA

Townsend Public Library Performance Pavilion,
Townsend, MA*

CIVIC BUILDINGS

Essex Public Safety Building*, Essex, MA

Berkley Town Hall*, Berkley, MA

Spectacle Pond Abattoir Historic Restoration*,
Sandisfield, MA

Blue Hills Stables Historic Rehabilitation*, Milton, MA

Powder Magazine Historic Rehabilitation*, Cambridge, MA

ACADEMIC BUILDINGS

Academic Building, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA

Football Locker Room, University of Massachusetts,
Amherst, MA

**Indicates work with a previous firm*

RESUMES CHA (OPM)

Deepa Venkat, AIA, IIDA, NCIDQ, LEED AP, WELL AP, MCPPO

Project Manager

Deepa is a highly experienced project manager with over 20 years of expertise in the commercial and institutional sectors. She has a proven track record of bringing design excellence and clarity to large, complex projects involving multiple stakeholder groups. Deepa has successfully managed and led projects across various sectors including science and technology, higher education, residential halls, workplace, multifamily residential, and K-12 education. Representative project experience includes:

Town of Great Barrington, Ramsdell Public Library. Project manager providing OPM services for the renovation of the historic Ramsdell Library, a Beaux-Arts style building opened in 1908 and listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The Town of Great Barrington has received a planning and design grant from the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC) and is currently waitlisted for the construction phase. The project aims to revitalize the library's role in the Housatonic community by improving accessibility, modernizing infrastructure, and enhancing public programming.

Town of Belmont, Belmont Public Library. Project manager providing OPM services for the design and construction of a new town library building. Current plans show a new two-story, 41,000 SF building whose sustainable design features will include energy-efficient building systems, natural daylighting throughout the building, south-facing solar panels, high performance building envelope, and connections to an active surrounding landscape including native plant species. The project requires demolition of the existing library, with CHA providing move management services to the town during the library's temporary relocation to alternate sites.

Town of Haverhill, Haverhill Public Library. Project manager providing OPM services for the design and construction of needed upgrades and improvements to the busy library. Town priorities include making the building more accessible, welcoming, and open to the city around it, expanding patron-focused services with greater access to advanced technology, enriching support for families, children, tweens, teens, and underserved populations, and improving spaces for community cultural activities. The town's feasibility study revealed that significant investment must be made in building systems, the building envelope, accessibility standards, and other code upgrades.

City of Newton, Franklin Elementary School. Project manager providing OPM services beginning with the feasibility study and schematic design phases for the redevelopment of the K-8 Franklin School. As a result of the feasibility study, the city selected new construction of a new elementary school on the athletic fields of the existing school. The school's design will incorporate numerous sustainability elements, including a geothermal heating and cooling system.



Education

BMS College of Engineering, India,
B. Arch., Architecture

Registration and Certifications

Licensed Architect: MA

IIDA - Professional Interior
Designer

LEED Accredited Professional

Massachusetts Certified Public
Purchasing Official for School
Project Designers and Owner's
Project Managers

WELL Accredited Professional

NCIDQ Certified Member

CSI Construction Documents
Technologist (CDT) Certification

Memberships and Affiliations

IIDA New England



RESUMES CHA (OPM)

Thomas Gatzunis, PE, CBO, MCPPO

Senior Project Manager

Tom has more than 35 years of experience as an engineer, building commissioner, and project manager. He joined the CHA team after serving as the Commissioner of Public Safety for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts from 2004 to 2015, where he oversaw the update and release of three editions of the state building code. Previously, Tom served for 11 years as the town engineer and building commissioner for the Town of Belmont. In his tenure with the Town of Belmont, Tom was a part of the owner's team on the building committee for the renovations to the town hall, town hall annex building, and several school buildings. Tom has been responsible for public projects across the commonwealth, of all building types and in all phases of design and construction. Representative project experience includes:

Town of Great Barrington, Ramsdell Library. Project director providing OPM services for the renovation of the historic Beaux-Arts style building opened in 1908 and listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The town has received a Planning and Design Grant from the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC) and is currently waitlisted for the construction phase.

Town of Belmont, Belmont Public Library. Project director overseeing OPM services for a new town library building. The existing library is well-supported in the town, but needs additional space for gathering, quiet study, and meeting spaces that are not available in the current building.

Town of Haverhill, Haverhill Public Library. Project director providing OPM services for needed upgrades and improvements to the busy town library. The town's priorities include making the building more accessible, welcoming, and open to the city around it.

City of Marlborough, Marlborough Public Library. Project director providing OPM services for a \$24 million renovation and expansion project. A phased design and construction plan has expanded the existing facility from 22,300 SF to 38,306 SF.

Town of Marblehead, Abbot Public Library. Project director providing OPM services for significant renovations and improvements to the existing library building. CHA was engaged during the design, temporary relocation, bidding, construction, monitoring, and move-in phases.

Town of Stoughton, Stoughton Public Library. Senior project manager providing OPM services for a challenging expansion and renovations project at an existing public library with a very limited site. The project required an extremely complex approach, later recognized by the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC). The Commonwealth's Inspector General's office used the project as a 'Story of a Building' training session.

Town of Webster, Gladys E. Kelly Public Library. Senior project manager providing OPM services for the design and construction of a new 20,385 SF public library. The project required extensive plan review and construction coordination, including assisting the town in securing space to serve as a temporary library.



Education

University of Massachusetts
Lowell, MA, B.S. in Civil
Engineering

Registrations & Certifications

Professional Engineer: MA

Certified Building Commissioner:
MA

Licensed Construction Supervisor:
MA

OSHA 10- and 30-Hour
Construction Health and Safety
Training

Massachusetts Certified Public
Purchasing Official for School
Project Designers and Owner's
Project Managers

Memberships & Affiliations

American Society of Civil
Engineers

Massachusetts Building
Commissioners & Inspectors
Association





Massachusetts Office on Disability

Maura Healey, Governor | Kim Driscoll, Lieutenant Governor
Allan B. Motenko, Executive Director

Great Barrington Community Preservation Committee
334 Main Street
Great Barrington, MA 01230
Attn: Karen Smith, Chair
Sent via Email: conservation@townofgb.org

Dear Chairwoman Smith & Members of the Great Barrington Community Preservation Committee:

This letter is being sent to you to support the Ramsdell Library Building Committee in their activities to improve accessibility for individuals with disabilities at the Ramsdell Library.

The mission of the Massachusetts Office on Disability (MOD) is to *“work to ensure the full and equal participation of all people with disabilities in all aspects of life by working to advance legal rights, maximize opportunities, supportive services, accommodations, and accessibility in a manner that fosters dignity and self-determination.”*

MOD has been contacted by community proponents for enhancing accessibility at the Ramsdell Library for more than twenty years. The funding sought now will be dedicated toward accessible restrooms, accessible routes to and around the stacks, accessible counter heights, compliant handrails on existing stairs, door clearance and door width improvements, access to the stage from inside the auditorium, access to the green rooms off the stage, and main entrance walkway accessibility improvements.

These accessibility modifications will allow independent access to the library for individuals with disabilities for the first time since its original construction. Therefore, this project meets the mission of MOD and will have a direct benefit to people with disabilities living or visiting Great Barrington.

As we do with all communities, MOD is most willing to work with Great Barrington to ensure this project creates the level of access that is needed and intended.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Jeffrey L. Dougan".

Jeffrey L. Dougan
Assistant Director for Community Services

Massachusetts Office on Disability
One Ashburton Place, Room 1305
Boston, MA 02108
mass.gov/mod

Phone: 617-727-7440
D/HH: VRS or dial 711 to (617) 727-7440
mod-info@mass.gov

November 26, 2025

To Great Barrington's Community Preservation Committee:

On behalf of the Housatonic Improvement Committee (HiC), we are writing to express our full and enthusiastic support for the Great Barrington Board of Library Trustees' request for a three-year, \$1.5 million grant to renovate and restore the Ramsdell Library—a historic, irreplaceable cornerstone of our village.

The Ramsdell Library is not simply an old building; it is one of Housatonic's most enduring expressions of care, legacy, and public good. Built by T. Ellis Ramsdell, fulfilling the bequest of his father, Theodore Ramsdell, owner of Monument Mills—the Library is a reminder that even amid the industrial power of the mills, the Ramsdell family believed deeply in literacy, education, and public access for all. The library's original design by Boston architects McLean & Wright, along with the beautifully integrated 1928-1930 rear addition by Harding & Seaver of Pittsfield, anchors it as one of the most architecturally significant public buildings in our region. The building's listing on the National Register of Historic Places in 2014 affirms its importance as a well-executed local testament to Classical Revival architecture.

Despite this significance—cultural, architectural, and historical—the Ramsdell Library has not undergone a full renovation in a century. For a building that has served generations of Housatonic residents, this is both a testament to its remarkable craftsmanship and a clear signal that now is the time for thoughtful, future-oriented investment.

As documented in the Town of Great Barrington's Community Preservation Plan, the preservation and rehabilitation of Town-owned historic resources like the Ramsdell Library is a top priority, offering broad public benefit and anchoring long-term community resilience. The Ramsdell Library meets—and exceeds—every criterion the Town uses to evaluate the value and urgency of historic preservation:

Exceptional Historic & Architectural Significance

The Ramsdell Library is a nationally-recognized historic resource and an architectural anchor of Housatonic. Renovation protects a threatened historic asset whose preservation is explicitly prioritized in Town planning documents.

Deep Public Benefit & Community Access

For more than 115 years, the Ramsdell Library has served as an intergenerational gathering space, educational resource, and cultural center. Renovation will ensure ADA-compliant access, modern systems, and expanded programming for all ages.

Alignment With Town Preservation Standards & Plans

This renovation aligns with the Community Preservation Committee's directive to rehabilitate Town-owned historic buildings according to the US Secretary of the Interior's Standards.

Demonstrated Town Precedent for Multi-Year Investment

The Town has already demonstrated strong precedent for multi-year CPA-supported capital improvements, including the phased restoration of Memorial Field, where sustained funding across several years enabled a successful, community-serving project. In the case of the Ramsdell Library, a piecemeal approach simply will not work: the building's interconnected structural, mechanical, and accessibility needs require a coordinated, multi-year investment that addresses the whole system and complies with state guidelines for historic building renovation, rather than isolated problems.

Long-Term Economic Impact & Civic Impact

Historic preservation strengthens village centers, stimulates local economic activity, and fosters long-term community cohesion. A restored Ramsdell Library will anchor downtown Housatonic's revitalization and continue to serve as a civic, cultural, and educational hub for decades to come.

A Capable, Transparent, Community-Focused Project Team

The Ramsdell Building Committee has demonstrated the planning rigor, expertise, and collaborative leadership required to steward a complex, historically sensitive renovation with accountability and care.

For all of these reasons, the Housatonic Improvement Committee wholeheartedly supports the Great Barrington Board of Library Trustees' request for full funding of this three-year, \$1.5 million grant. Renovating the Ramsdell Library now honors the legacy of the Ramsdell family, protects a beloved historic resource, and invests directly in the social, educational, and cultural fabric of Housatonic.

We urge your strongest consideration and stand ready to support this project through its duration.

Sincerely,

Sara Parker, Chair
Eric Gabriel, Vice Chair
Ben Elliott
Louise Goldsmith
Amanda Giracca
Beverly Nourse

November 18, 2025

Dear Community Preservation Committee Members:

Friends of Great Barrington Libraries endorses the application by the Great Barrington Libraries for a grant of \$1.5M over 3-5 years for the capital expenditure to preserve, make accessible and enlarge the historic Housatonic Ramsdell Library.

The 1908 structure has served the community for over a century as a public library open to all with free access to information and educational programming for all ages.

The building has long been a symbol of pride and identity for the community, especially for those who reside in the village of Housatonic,

Over time, attempts have been made to modernize the interior for accessibility so that everyone can participate. Now the time has come for a top to bottom overhaul and expansion to fully support the programming planned.

Friends of Great Barrington Libraries' mission is to support and increase programming at both libraries. But our efforts at Ramsdell have been thwarted by the limitations of the unmodernized building. Both the basement and second floor are inaccessible. The requested renovation will double the usable space.

Please consider this grant to support Ramsdell Library as acknowledgement of the importance of this building for the community throughout the last and towards the next century.

Sincerely,

Ed Abrahams, President
Holly Hamer, Treasurer
Friends of GB Libraries

Carol McGlinchey
10 Beacon Hill, Housatonic, MA
carolmcglinchey97@gmail.com

November 20, 2025

Community Preservation Committee
Town of Great Barrington Town Hall
334 Main Street
Great Barrington, MA 01230

To the Committee:

This letter is to support Ramsdell Library's application for a Community Preservation Act grant for \$1.5 million over the next 3-5 years.

My daughter and I moved to Housatonic in 1993. I was a single parent and this was the only affordable area in Great Barrington where I could buy a home to raise my daughter. One of the greatest assets for her and for me was and still is the Ramsdell Library. With a limited single parent income, it was essential that I had access to free reading materials for my daughter and me. Prior to internet technology I was still able to request books from other libraries through the Ramsdell branch. This always seemed rather miraculous to me as buying books was not feasible.

Over the years our quiet, stately, and comfortable library has been a place of refuge for me and others. I also value reading the newspapers there for free! Now we have the Library of Things and so much more. Housatonic is thriving with new families with young children. It's such a joy to see parents reading to their young children in our delightful children's room.

Recently I created an "End of Life" bookclub with a friend that meets the 3rd Sunday monthly at Ramsdell. We have had great interest in this topic and it is a well attended meeting. It provides support to people in their time of grief, illness, and end of life issues for themselves and loved ones. We are so grateful to have this inviting and comforting meeting space for the community. What a great use of the library on a Sunday afternoon!

It is essential that we begin to restore this magnificent building, make it ADA compliant, and remediate issues that prevent the library from being used to its fullest extent. We owe it to the young families moving in as well as our aging seniors to restore and renovate the library to the quality facility that Mr. Ramsdell intended for our village community.

I am in agreement with all that is stated in the Great Barrington Historical Commission Letter of Endorsement. Therefore I won't review what is stated in that letter. My purpose is to impress upon your committee how essential it is to address the needs of this lower income community by providing a library for the future. I want other children to have the pleasure of walking to this village library and participating in all it has to offer as my daughter and I did many years ago and still do so today.

We are indebted to Mr. Ramsdell for valuing humble mill workers and immigrants of his day. Now our village continues to have newly arrived immigrants and essential workers, as well as residents who have lived here their entire lives, who deserve to have a community library we can be proud of.

Thank you for considering the Ramsdell Library's application for a Community Preservation Act grant.

With gratitude,


Carol McGlinchey

November 26, 2025

To Great Barrington's Community Preservation Committee:

My name is Sara Parker, and I'm writing as a neighbor who has chosen to make a life in Housatonic—someone who cares deeply about the places that hold this village together.

The Ramsdell Library has been one of those places for as long as I've lived there. You feel it the moment you step inside: that quiet mix of beauty, usefulness, and history that tells you this building was created with intention. The Ramsdell Library has always been a public gift—originally built in 1908 by T. Ellis Ramsdell to honor his father, Theodore, and their shared belief that learning should be available to everyone in this mill village. More than a century later, that belief is still visible for every person who walks through its doors.

I've seen the Ramsdell Library serve so many roles at once: a warm place for kids to read after school, a steady resource for people who need computer access or local history materials, a gathering spot for neighbors, and sometimes simply a place to sit quietly when you need a moment away from everything else. For a village with very few public indoor spaces, this matters more than many people realize.

But as much as the Ramsdell Library continues to give, the building itself is asking for real care. Anyone who uses the library regularly can see that its needs are far beyond what a patchwork of small projects could solve. The structure, the systems, the accessibility—everything depends on everything else. This is the kind of work that needs to be done comprehensively, with a clear plan, the right expertise, and long-term funding that allows the Great Barrington Board of Library Trustees to do the job responsibly.

That's why I support the Great Barrington Board of Library Trustees' request for a three-year, \$1.5 million CPA grant. We have already seen the success of multi-year approach in Great Barrington with Memorial Field—a reminder that when we commit fully to a project, we end up with something that truly serves the community. The Ramsdell Library deserves that same level of commitment, and so do the people of Housatonic.

The library has stood for more than 115 years without a full renovation. It has witnessed the rise and fall of the mills, economic shifts, countless generations of families, and the changing shape of the village itself. If we want the Ramsdell Library to remain a living part of Housatonic's future—not just a relic of its past—this is our moment to act.

I'm proud to live in a community that recognizes the importance of its shared spaces, and I'm hopeful that the Ramsdell Library will receive the investment it needs to continue serving all of us with dignity, accessibility, and beauty.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sara Parker".

Sara Parker



PO Box 866, Great Barrington, MA 01230
info@gblibraryfund.org
gblibraryfund.org

November 29, 2025

Great Barrington Community Preservation Committee
c/o Great Barrington Select Board; Town Manager and/or Town Clerk
334 Main Street
Great Barrington, MA 01230

Cc: Select Board, Finance Committee, Library Trustees

Dear GB Community Preservation Committee,

On behalf of the Great Barrington Library Fund's Board of Directors, I am writing to express wholehearted support of the Library Board of Trustees' approved design for the renovation of Ramsdell Library. We also support their Community Preservation Committee (CPC) application for a \$1.5 million grant spread over 3-5 years. We consider the \$1.5 million request a "reserve" that will reduce the Town's share of the renovation.

Because the MBLC award is staged through a series of phases, and because Great Barrington is currently #1 on the MBLC waiting list, it is difficult to predict the exact date that the project will move forward. However, our funds need to be sequestered in advance, to avoid construction delays and cost increases.

Other state grants—such as the MA Cultural grant, the MA ADA grant, and the MA Historical grant—can further reduce the Town's share of the renovation, once applied for by the Town and/or the Library Board of Trustees.

With approximately 55% of the renovation costs covered by the MBLC grant, and with the combination of CPC, Great Barrington Library Fund efforts, state grants, and trustee/Friends' funds, the Town's financial obligation could be reduced from 45% to as little as 10-15%.

GBLF will announce a capital campaign once the Town has shown sufficient support for the project to reassure donors of its commitment. We will use capital campaign consultants to maximize our efforts. There is a precedent for a multi-year CPA grant of \$500,000 financed by a 15-year CPA bond for Memorial Park baseball field, given in FY 2023. We envision a similar structure for CPC's grant to Ramsdell, and if the project does not go forward, the money will be returned to the CPC, as is done routinely with its grants to other projects.

The attached map was produced by GB Library Fund and distributed around Housatonic during the month of November. The hands represent 75+ responders, and their comments are included below.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Sharon Gregory", with a long, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Great Barrington Library Fund on behalf of
Sharon Gregory, President; Todd Smith, Treasurer; Donna Jacobs, Secretary; and
Board Directors: Bob Braddick; Trevor Forbes; Frederica Sigel



Ramsdell's time has come! Let's get it done!...We need it and are proud of our historic propertiesThere is no question that libraries are "schools" for educating the public, including children, who will have greatly expanded access to learning with the upgrading of Ramsdell!....**The library means everything to me and my family**....Libraries are community hubs, provide free access to information, and offer welcoming spaces for everyone. **Ramsdell is a particular gem in our little town**!....It's a beautiful space and we need more places to gather in Housy!...An important civic institution in any community....Libraries are always special to kids, seniors, those with limited access to digital media, those on strict budgets. Preserving them as a place for convening and as a means of accessing important resources is essential....**It's a beautiful building that could become a cultural center of the community**....It's a lovely building and Housatonic is so under-appreciated. It should be a glorious central place for the town. It also should be funded to have enough hours open that it is a functional and reliable operation.... Housatonic deserves a useable space to gather and learn together....Because it is our neighborhood gem!....**My favorite place in town**....Libraries are awesome & are a great service to the community!!!....**Because our community matters**...A renovated library would attract more kids to go to the library and offer a safe place to hang out!...**All communities deserve a library**!...I love Ramsdell!!!!...The library is a community hub! We use it all the time and hope it thrives for many years....**The Ramsdell library is a treasure**....An important site for community and connection. We have fewer and fewer public spaces in the world to connect to each other....**Libraries are the center of communities** and serve as a hub for people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities. **Libraries matter now more than ever**!...Housatonic needs a library. This is a classic building!...Preserve the past and inspire the future....**Ramsdell's time is now or never**....Libraries protect democracy and are essential community resources!.... I love that Ramsdell provides Housatonic a library within walking distance of many village homes...We love the kids' room!...Ramsdell has been a beautiful option when I need quiet space....**Libraries are so important**. Preserving and updating this community hub (and historic gem) is an investment well worth making!...We want to see it continue to thrive and serve our community....The library is beautiful and an asset to the town....**Ramsdell is a critical part of Great Barrington life!** ...We need this resource in our community....I like being able to walk to the library....**We love taking our kids to the library!**

APPENDIX DEMONSTRATION FOR UNDERSTANDING THE MBLC GRANT

Eligible Cost

Eligible Cost	Incremental State Share
First \$5,000,000	60% of estimated eligible cost up to \$5,000,000
\$5,000,000-\$10,000,000	45% of estimated eligible cost between \$5,000,000 and \$10,000,000
\$10,000,000-\$20,000,000	35% of estimated eligible cost between \$10,000,000 and \$20,000,000
\$20,000,000-\$50,000,000	30% of estimated eligible cost between \$20,000,000 and \$50,000,000

APPENDIX SUMMARY OF RAMSDELL LIBRARY BUILDING CONDITIONS ASSESSMENT PERFORMED BY DESIGNLAB, DATED MAY 2024

Ramsdell Library is a key historic and civic mainstay within the village of Housatonic, the town of Great Barrington and the broader region. It was entered onto the Historic Register in 2014 and is a venerable example of Neo-Classical and Beaux Arts architecture in the region. The building has seen little attention over the past several decades and is in dire need of significant investment to both modernize the existing building infrastructure and to support 21st century library services and programs. With the appropriate investment and attention, the building will be well positioned to continue to offer these vital library services to the community for generations.

OVERALL FINDINGS

The Ramsdell Library is in need of a major renovation and modernization. While there are no documented structural deficiencies and the building envelope is generally in serviceable condition, the building lacks major components of a 21st century library, including centralized air conditioning, ventilation, sprinkler system, adequate restrooms, an elevator and accessible parking. The following issues should be further analyzed and addressed during future renovation planning.

Accessibility:

- Provide accessible parking with direct path to building entry
- Provide accessible path to all program areas within the building, including upper level
- Address all non compliant door openings, hardware and thresholds
- Address all non compliant stair and railing conditions
- Provide fully compliant, accessible restrooms

Building Systems:

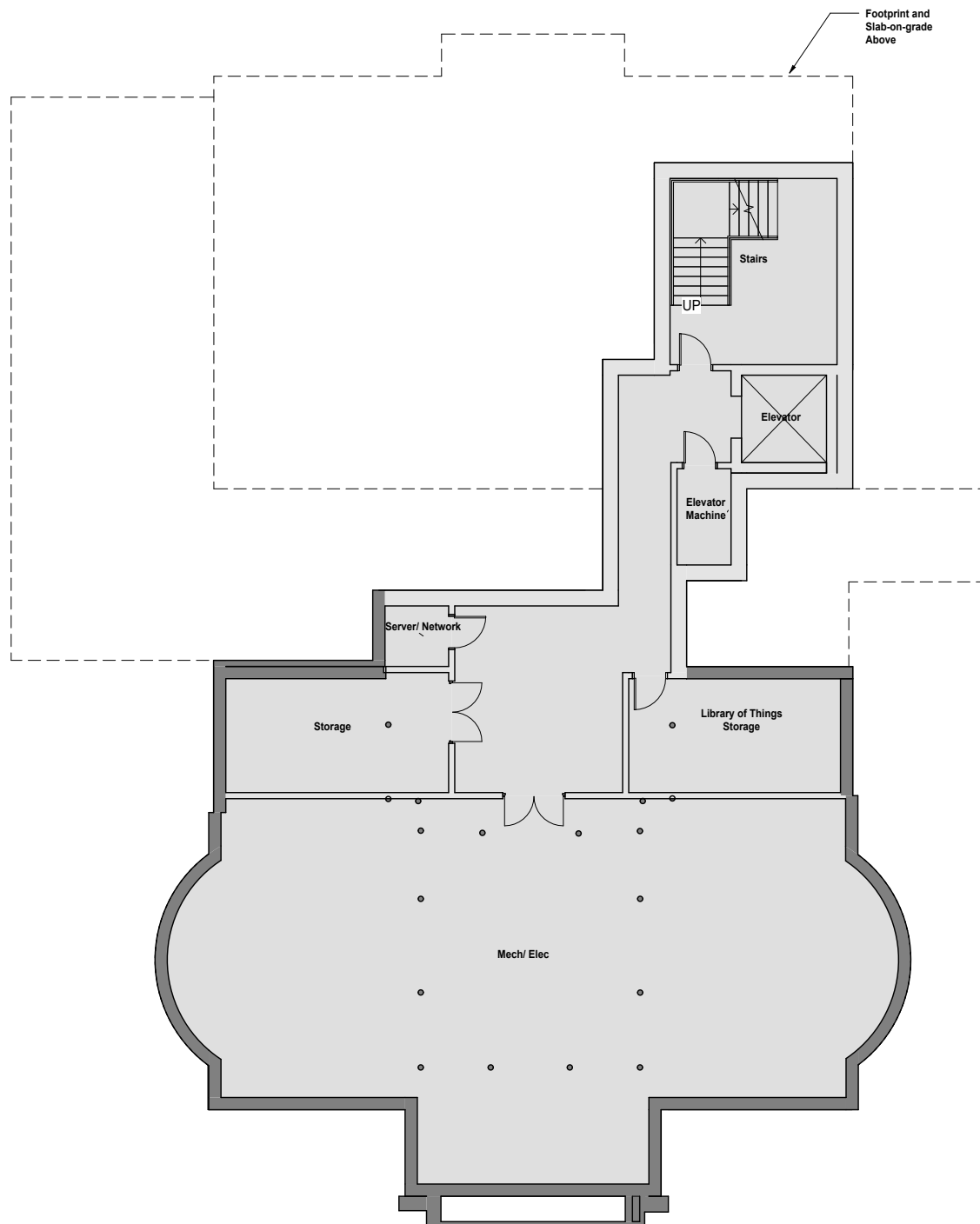
- Provide compliant heating, cooling and ventilation system
- Provide compliant fire alarm and sprinkler system
- Evaluate non fossil-fuel-based and/or renewable energy source

Building Envelope:

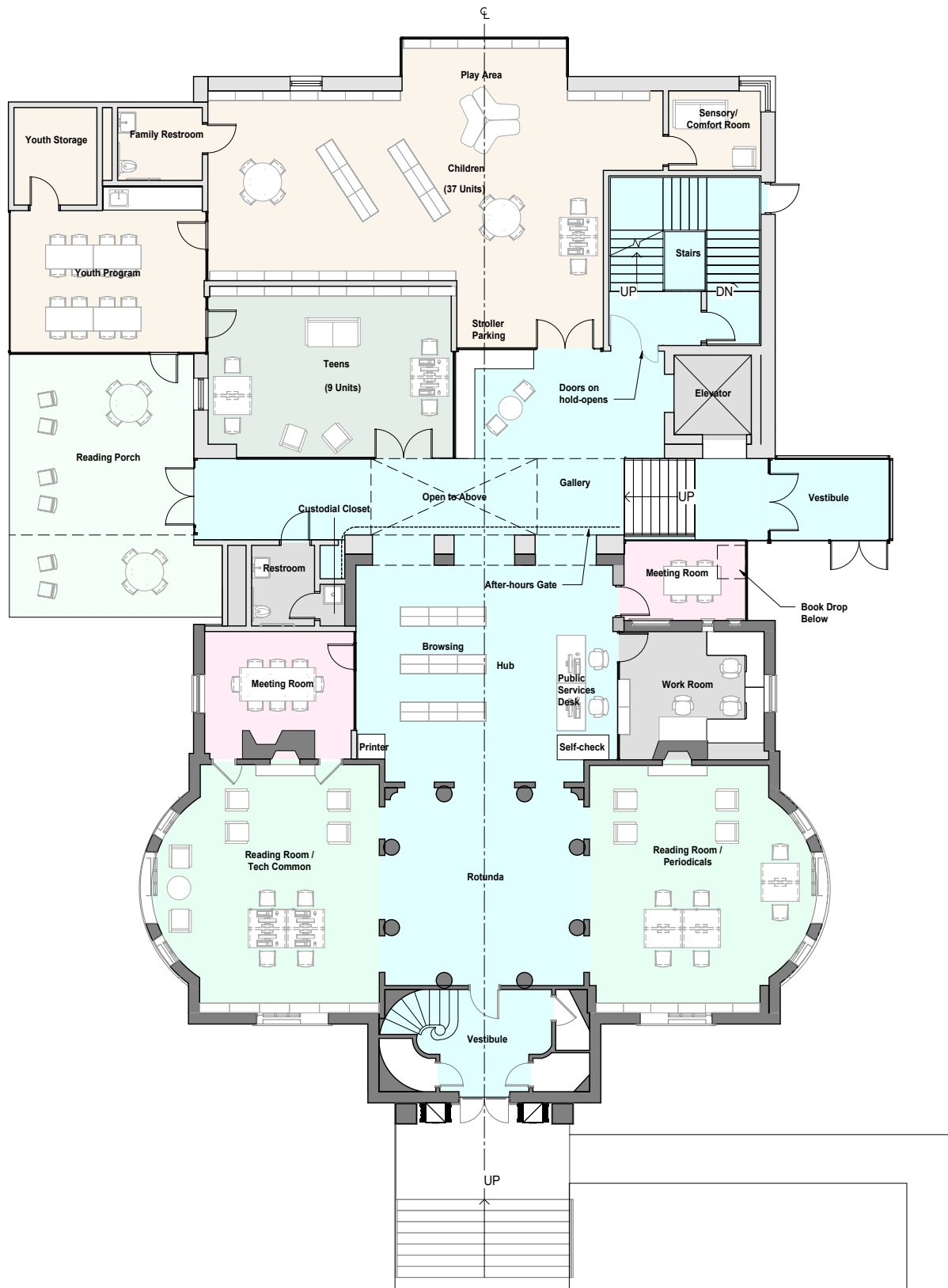
- Clean and selectively repoint all exterior masonry
- Evaluate strategies to insulate the existing walls and roof
- Replace deteriorated pediment roof
- Replace failed flashings/sealants
- Develop window restoration program and install new storm windows

Full Building Program, including Building Conditions Assessment, and Feasibility Study are available here: <https://townofgbma.gov/391/Library>

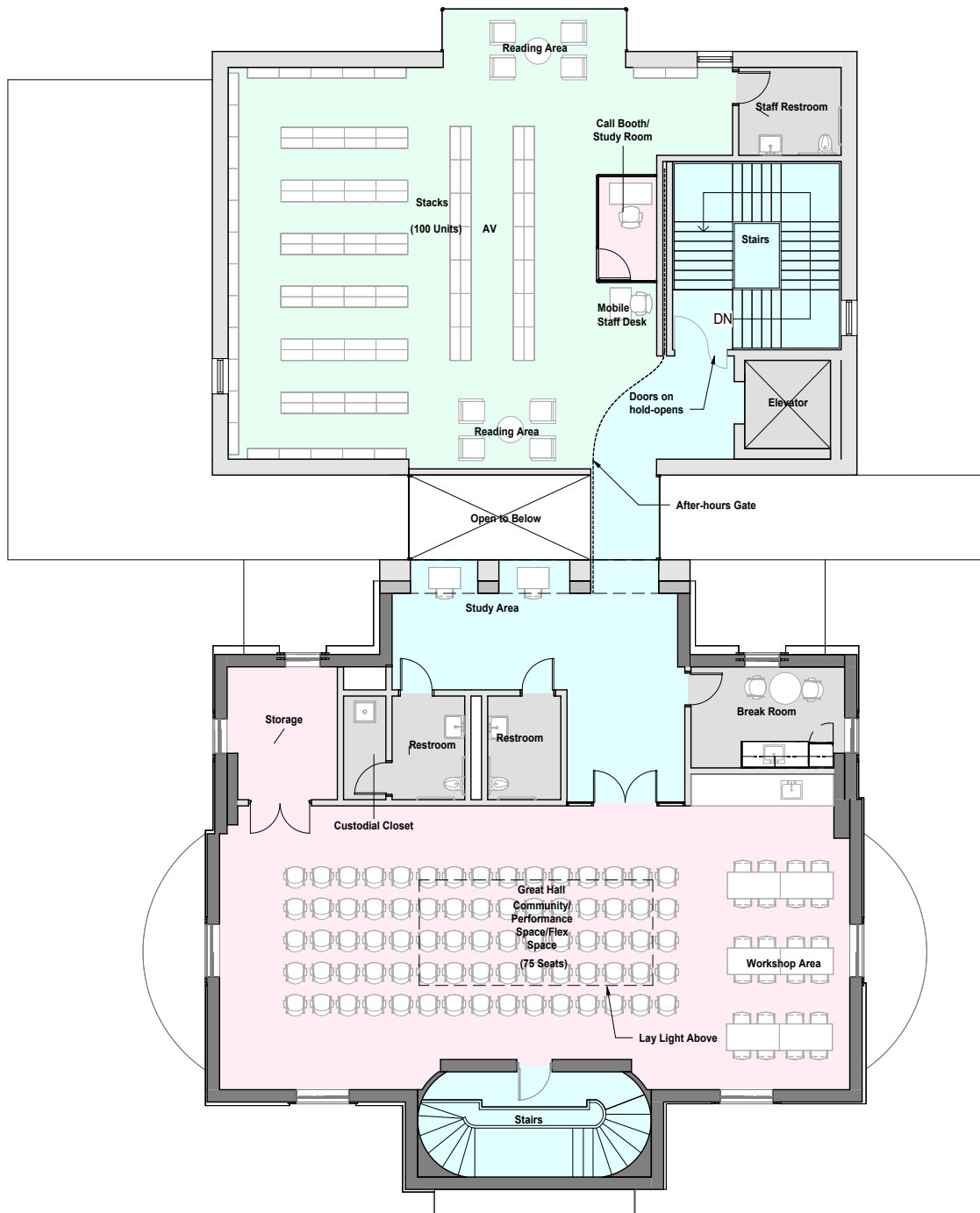
APPENDIX BASEMENT PLAN



APPENDIX FIRST FLOOR PLAN



APPENDIX SECOND FLOOR PLAN



APPENDIX EXTERIOR CONDITIONS



Masonry cracks and staining



Peeling paint and deteriorated woodwork



Drafty, peeling windows

APPENDIX ROOF & BASEMENT



Failing roofing at pediment and cornice



Basement crawlspace

APPENDIX LACK OF ACCESSIBILITY



Non-accessible stacks



Non-accessible restroom



Lack of accessibility and inadequate egress to Second Floor precludes use of Great Hall

APPENDIX STAIRS



Narrow egress staircase



Non-accessible staircase

APPENDIX INTERIOR CONDITIONS



Water damage and cracked plaster at Second Floor



Water damage at Children's Room

APPENDIX COST ESTIMATE

PERRY DEAN ROGERS PARTNERS ARCHITECTS

25 November 2025

Ruby Chang
Chair, Ramsdell Building Committee
Town of Great Barrington
334 Main Street
Great Barrington, MA 01230

**Re: Ramsdell Library Concept Cost Estimate:
Historical Preservation and Accessibility Scope**

Dear Ruby and Members of the Building Committee,

We are pleased to share the Concept Estimate for the Historic Preservation and Accessibility Scope of the Ramsdell Library MPLCP Project, which is summarized below.

The **Concept Estimate is intended only to project a rough order of magnitude (ROM) for the Historic Preservation and Accessibility Scope**, not as a replacement for or predictor of the Cost Estimate to be performed based on the final MPLCP Level of Design. That subsequent estimate will form the basis of the MBLC's Grant Award. It will follow the MBLC's Independent Review and occur only once the project moves off the MPLCP waitlist.

The total ROM estimate for the Historic Preservation Scope is \$777,745 (the direct trade costs of \$469,865 plus insurance, bonds, general conditions and requirements, and overhead and profit). Because that is more than 30% of the full and fair cash value of the building (a recent assessment of Ramsdell valued it at \$1,858,700), **521 CMR requires that the entire building be brought into compliance with the Architectural Access Board code for universal accessibility**. Therefore, this Concept Estimate includes both the Historic Preservation Scope plus the Accessibility Scope that would be required.

The Concept Estimate for the Historic Preservation and Accessibility Scope is **limited strictly to that immediate scope as part of the larger addition and renovation project**. It does not include other work that would be necessitated by but not directly related to the accessibility upgrades, such as a new vestibule, cladding or roof for the elevator, additional space required to accommodate universally accessible stacks or restrooms, or new or upgraded building systems.

As such, this estimate should not be interpreted as the total construction cost if the accessibility upgrades were done as a standalone project or if the construction was done piecemeal. **The total construction cost for a renovation limited to just the Historic Preservation and Accessibility Scope would likely be considerably higher than the breakout cost for accessibility upgrades, and crucially a standalone historic preservation and accessibility project would not be eligible for MPLCP grant funding.**

Sincerely,



Michael Bellefeuille, AIA
Senior Associate

APPENDIX COST ESTIMATE



Ramsdell Library

Historic Preservation and Accessibility Scope

Housatonic, MA

20-Nov-25

Concept Estimate

MAIN CONSTRUCTION COST SUMMARY

	Construction Start	Estimated Construction Cost
Historic Preservation and Accessibility Scope		
HISTORIC PRESERVATION AND ACCESSIBILITY SCOPE		\$1,172,414
HAZARDOUS MATERIALS		NIC
SUB-TOTAL	Jan-27	\$1,172,414
ESCALATION TO START - Jan 2027	4.6%	\$53,931
DESIGN AND PRICING CONTINGENCY	20.0%	\$234,483
SUB-TOTAL		\$1,460,828
GENERAL CONDITIONS	12.0%	\$175,299
GENERAL REQUIREMENTS	6.0%	\$87,650
P&P BONDS	1.0%	\$14,608
INSURANCE	2.0%	\$29,217
PERMIT		Waived
OVERHEAD AND PROFIT	10.0%	\$176,760
CONSTRUCTION CONTINGENCY		By Owner
TOTAL OF ALL CONSTRUCTION	Jan-27	\$1,944,362

APPENDIX COST ESTIMATE



Ramsdell Library

Historic Preservation and Accessibility Scope
Housatonic, MA

20-Nov-25

Concept Estimate

This Concept cost estimate was produced from drawings, outline specifications and other documentation prepared by Perry Dean Rogers Partners Architects. and their design team dated October 10th, 2025. Design and engineering changes occurring subsequent to the issue of these documents have not been incorporated in this estimate.

This estimate includes all direct construction costs, general contractor's overhead, fee and design contingency. Cost escalation assumes start dates indicated.

Bidding conditions are expected to be public bidding under Chapter 149 of the Massachusetts General Laws to pre-qualified general contractors, and pre-qualified sub-contractors, open specifications for materials and manufactures.

The estimate is based on prevailing wage rates for construction in this market and represents a reasonable opinion of cost. It is not a prediction of the successful bid from a contractor as bids will vary due to fluctuating market conditions, errors and omissions, proprietary specifications, lack or surplus of bidders, perception of risk, etc. Consequently the estimate is expected to fall within the range of bids from a number of competitive contractors or subcontractors, however we do not warrant that bids or negotiated prices will not vary from the final construction cost estimate.

ITEMS NOT CONSIDERED IN THIS ESTIMATE

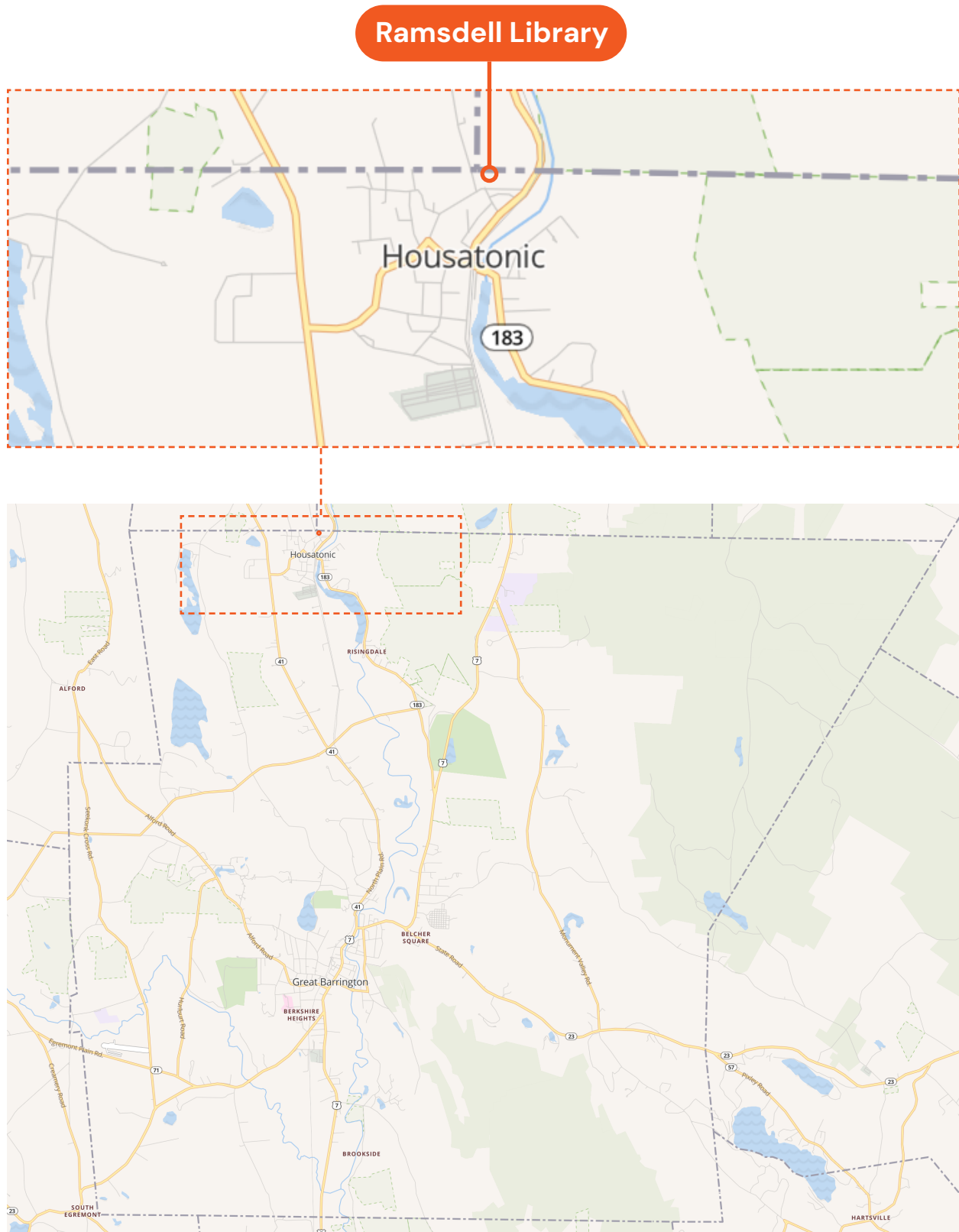
Items not included in this estimate are:

- Land acquisition, feasibility, and financing costs
- All professional fees and insurance
- Site or existing conditions surveys investigations costs, including to determine subsoil conditions
- All Furnishings, Fixtures and Equipment
- Items identified in the design as Not In Contract (NIC)
- Items identified in the design as by others
- Owner supplied and/or installed items as indicated in the estimate
- Utility company back charges, including work required off-site
- Work to City streets and sidewalks, (except as noted in this estimate)
- Construction contingency (GMP Contingency is included)
- Rock removal
- Contaminated soils removal

APPENDIX COST ESTIMATE

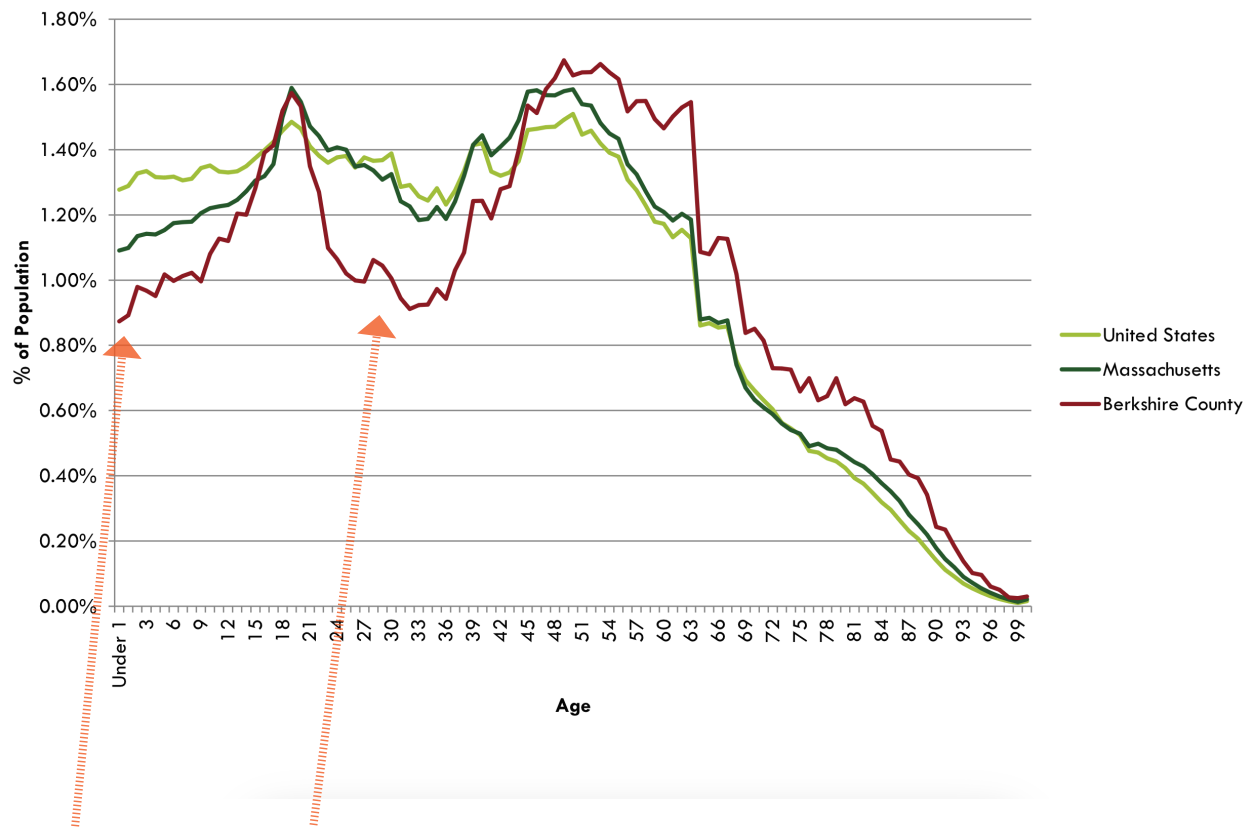
	DESCRIPTION	QTY	UNIT	UNIT COST	EST'D COST	SUB TOTAL	TOTAL COST
BACKUP							
HISTORIC PRESERVATION AND ACCESSIBILITY SCOPE							
	Elevator and associated structure			514,084.00	514,084		
	New egress stairs			102,000.00	102,000		
	Restrooms			37,465.00	37,465		
	Public service desk			5,400.00	5,400		
	New hardware on existing exterior doors			4,000.00	4,000		
	New doors at renovated areas			39,600.00	39,600		
	Window restoration			201,000.00	201,000		
	Wall cleaning and repointing			89,810.00	89,810		
	Cornice and pediment roofing			37,200.00	37,200		
	Allowance for repairing/refinishing interior woodwork, including columns, mantels, railings, trim and casings	3,600	gsf	9.00	32,400		
	Refinish wood flooring throughout first and second floors	3,600	sf	10.00	36,000		
	Repaint entirety of interior walls	6,750	gsf	4.00	27,000		
	Restore and clean terrazzo at rotunda and vestibule	600	sf	10.00	6,000		
	Repaint entity of ceilings	6,165	sf	2.00	12,330		
	Patch plaster to match existing as required by demo and new work	5,625	sf	5.00	28,125		
	SUBTOTAL					1,172,414	
TOTAL - HISTORIC PRESERVATION AND ACCESSIBILITY SCOPE							\$1,172,414

APPENDIX SITE MAP



APPENDIX AGE DISTRIBUTION GRAPH

Age Distribution Comparison



Where are all the children?

Where parents can make a living!

Where their children have a safe place to be!

Support free education, opportunities, and a place for camaraderie in a walkable community.

We can make things better!