

Ames Public Library Expansion Meeting: Teens
March 18, 2009

Attendance: 10

Architect Jeffrey Scherer met with several teen-age library users to explain some of the options that were being discussed in the public meetings and asked about their preferences. Their comments appear below, grouped into general categories.

Building Issues

- Keep the library at its current location, but add another floor or two.
- I wouldn't want a branch. You should keep all the areas on one place downtown.
- I like this building, but it's too old fashioned.
- This building is really boring – it needs to be “out there” so people will know what it is, or at least notice it. I would paint it pink.
- Put a big sign out front.
- We need more room for more stuff.
- We need a larger (teen) area.
- We need our own separate place, away from the adults.
- We need a place that's soundproof. We need to be able to make some noise without disturbing other people; we could leave and go somewhere else to study.
- The book aisles need to be wider. They are too cramped.
- I want a safe place where I can put my bike so it won't get frozen.

Materials

- We need better books, more books, and newer books.
- The library needs more modern movies, more current DVDs.
- You should have Mac programs.
- The library needs more books written by African-Americans.

Amenities

- We should have big, flat (computer) screens.
- We need faster computers. There are only four in the teen area. We should have 12.
- I wish we could have laptops and longer usage times.
- (When asked if they would prefer having laptops or a computer lab, the group said the library should have both, but liked the idea of being able to go anywhere in the library to work.)
- I'd like the library to have Xbox 360.
- I'd like space to dance in.
- A game room would be neat; it could have Xbox 360 and Nintendo Wii so we could play games and dance.
- How about a drinking station with soft drinks, like a café area, but it would have to be affordable. Now all we have is the coffee stand (in Literary Grounds).
- If there was a plaza outside, you could put up a big screen for outdoor movies.
- You could put in a theater for movies and serve popcorn.
- Paintball would be good.

Other

The group mentioned that they would like to get jobs at the library. Scherer asked what they thought about the idea of getting tokens for keeping the teen space clean, where the tokens might be used to get free books or for usage time on a special computer game station that would only run on tokens. They seemed to like the idea.

When asked if they would use the library if it were open on Fridays until 9 p.m., they said they would like to. Several said their parents wouldn't let them stay out that late. Others said the only other thing to do is go to the mall.