

DECATUR PUBLIC LIBRARY  
Decatur, Illinois

Special Meeting to Discuss the Parking Lot With  
The City Council, March 9, 1960

Members present: Mr. Madden, Mrs. Moothart, Mr. Cheeks, Mrs. Greider, Mr. Felts, Mr. Morey, Mr. Koslofski, Mayor Grohne, Mr. Colburn, Mr. Kopetz, Mr. Lloyd, Mr. Merris, and Mr. Dever. Mrs. Howe, Mrs. Goff, Mrs. McNabb, Mrs. Appelt, and Mr. Puhek were also present.

Mr. Madden talked with members of the Library Board of Directors before lunch in the Boyd Room of the Main Library. The proposed parking lot was considered and the plot examined and questioned. A petition from the Library employees was read protesting the public parking lot on the library lawn and the entrance which had been suggested by the City Council.

Pressures on the library were suggested by Mr. Felts that we need parking. "We do not need beautiful trees and views. It would be different if the library were located in the country where we could appreciate those things."

Other points considered before the City Council arrived:

- Aerial rights and supports in case the library needed to build,
- Placement of the Auto-page,
- Retaining wall on Eldorado as well as along the South side of the library,
- Lease for 15 years,
- Three favorable telephone calls to Mr. Madden,
- Facts and Ideas on the Parking lot,
- Entrance from Eldorado Street,
- Eliminating employee parking.

Mrs. Moothart asked if the Council considered they were helping the Library. Mrs. Howe pointed out the 150 space parking lot one block from the Library.

Members of the City Council arrived later and joined the Directors of the Library Board in luncheon. After a very agreeable meal, the meeting was called to order by Mr. Madden.

Mr. Dever said that the technical questions could be worked out. "The City wished to acquire 54 feet where the American Legion building stands and pay \$42,000. The proposal is to obtain the commitment for the Library to lease it as a public parking lot for the period of 15 years and the design of the parking lot is such that you would come in from Main Street and go out on Main Street. You do have the alternative of coming in from Eldorado Street because there is access to the back of the Library and the Library property is 'no man's land' and an alley, which goes up to the Library building, however, I would assume that one reason it was laid out this way is that the Library would want to close off the entrance on Eldorado during the times they are using it for Bookmobiles and so on. They could use some sort of rope or chain affair that you could put up when you wanted to block it off, because there is a perfect way to get in and get out from Main Street without any problem as far as the back of the Library is concerned. The grades, the improvement, the cost and so on, change of grades so that there would be reasonable grades in the lot, the front of the sidewalks so they would conform is a good deal more than would be necessary in the estimate to take care of the approaches and sidewalks and changes in grades."

Mr. Merris said there is a provision in the law that property that is not needed for Library purposes may be sold or otherwise disposed of. "I think a lease would probably be another "otherwise" disposition, but there must be a finding that it is not needed for Library purposes. If you leased it, it might be recovered at the termination of the lease if you can declare that it is needed for Library purposes."

Mr. Dever said "what is in the back of the thinking here is to provide parking for the Library as a public institution as the City's responsibility and, of course, also in acquiring the American Legion property this is protecting the Library for future development because if somebody would buy that property and put a substantial investment there, it may be very expensive in the future...in essence we are putting our money in the bank really to protect itself...for library purchases in 10 years...actually" Mr. Dever said, "we will pick up some more spaces, there are 3 or 4 more there, so we won't lose more than maybe 1 space if you shut that off, but personally I think you would be unwise to do so, you lose another way of getting around the building. There's lots of possibilities."

After much discussion pro and con Mr. Madden said we would have to work a more specific contract and lease. He asked if there were more questions...if the Trustees wanted to think about this more or at the present time express an opinion. Mr. Felts said he would suggest that they have a meeting. Mr. Colburn said the Council members would withdraw and the Board could have their meeting "now". Mrs. Howe said all of the Trustees were not present. Mr. Madden said the Board should not wait till the next Board meeting and suggested an answer would be given to the Council next week. He thanked the Council members for coming and discussing the matter with the Board of Directors. Mrs. Graider expressed appreciation to the Council for meeting with the Board.

The members present paid \$1 for the lunch.

The combined Board and Council meeting adjourned at 1:40 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary T. Howe  
Secretary