

Build for the Future Preserve the Past

The architectural rendering (left) and site plan (below) by James Wassell, Sunapee, illustrate the current conceptual plan for a new town library-community center in the Old Town Hall.

The library would use two levels and upper mezzanine area that would provide the needed space for collections, services, reading areas, and information technology (IT) resources. A community room and children's craft room is included, and a history room is envisioned for the upper level mezzanine.

A new larger wing (on the east side of the building) would replace the old police department wing.

The lower level, not be used by the library, would be available for community use. The Riverwalk would continue to pass through the building, as shown.

The plan provides for 31 parking spaces and enhanced green space along the Sugar River.

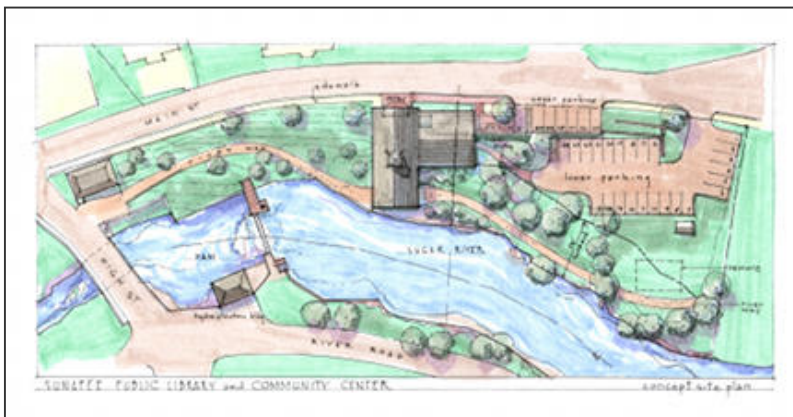


A message from...

James L. Garvin, State Architectural Historian
NH Division of Historical Resources

I understand that the Sunapee Library Building Committee has proposed to adapt the Old Sunapee Town Hall, originally the livery stable for the Sunapee Harbor House, into a new town library. The adaptive re-use of this landmark building would not only represent an inspired example of historic preservation, but would place the new library in the very heart of Sunapee Harbor, the town's historic village center. A town library provides social and informational nourishment to any community. It is important that such an institution be placed where the sense of community identity is strong, and where the architectural setting clearly expresses the image of the village center.

As you know, I had the privilege of studying the Old Town Hall in the fall of 2008. I can attest to the uniqueness of the building, which has evolved to serve an astonishing range of community functions since its construction in 1889. The building embodies much of the civic and social history of Sunapee. It is a beloved landmark, long regarded as a symbol of the community and adapted with imagination and determination to serve the community in ever-changing ways. A building that is imbued with so much history, pride, and symbolic identity is a treasure such as few communities can boast of. It would be fitting if this structure, so interwoven into Sunapee's community fabric, could assume yet another life of service as the town's meeting place and intellectual heart.



☒ "The Abbott library is an important educational, recreational and social institution to the Sunapee community as it strives to serve the needs of all its residents. The library has yet to reach its full potential due to the space constraints of the current building. The library could become a true community center if it had more space to dedicate to book and media collections, computers workstations, quiet reading areas, and dedicated meeting space for the community. A new library facility would help turn our great library into an exceptional one!"

– John Walden, director of Abbott Library