

FOCUS GROUP #1 – MAY 5, 2024 (PARTICIPANTS = 7)

1. WHAT ARE THE VERY FIRST TWO WORDS YOU THINK OF WHEN YOU THINK ABOUT THE LIBRARY?



- Community (2)
- Community Space
- Entertaining
- Free Resources
- Fun
- Innovative
- Multigenerational
- Programs (3)
- Small
- Useful

2. HOW HAS YOUR LIFE CHANGED POST-PANDEMIC?

- **Expanded Use of Online and Convenience-Based Services (6)**
 - I get takeout a lot.
 - I use a lot more convenience-oriented services, like Amazon Fresh.
 - I use the Library's app more frequently and do a lot more e-reading. I used to do a lot of in-person browsing. Now, I put books on hold and go into the Library to grab them. I have a personal relationship with the Library's staff.
 - I use more online services (i.e., Instacart and Amazon).
- **Increased Number of Remote Workers (hybrid or virtual) (5)**
 - In the past four years, I experienced life changes that would have happened regardless of the pandemic. I stopped working but am never alone in the house because my husband and 26-year-old daughter work primarily from home full-time.
 - Life is more routine than when I worked in an office. There are more people in the house. Working from home is a good way to start or shake up your routine. You can walk before and after work more easily, which I do.
 - It's very hard working from home all the time. Currently, I sometimes work at home and sometimes in the office. I like the hybrid work model much better. Many people work in a hybrid model; they only work one day in the office and the rest of the days at home. It reduced local commuting traffic.

- My workdays start later because I work at home, and our kids start school later.
- I work from home most of the time. My work and interactions with colleagues are virtual on a laptop, so I live in sweatpants. Because I don't commute to work, I have less reading time.
- **More Reading (3)**
 - I'm doing a lot more reading.
 - Before the pandemic, I loved to read but never found the time. During the pandemic, I found time to read and am continuing to do so. I just finished a book and am ready for another.
 - I'm working from home and using social media more. I'm trying to scale back on the use of social media and get back to reading.
- **Focused on Family-Oriented Local Travel and Activities (2)**
 - I reviewed a Google app that tracks where I've been, which isn't far. We stay local. I mostly stay in the house with the kids.
 - My priorities changed significantly. My family's world is much smaller than it used to be. My family stays local. We don't attend as many non-local activities ("big-world stuff") as we previously did. I focus on art, quiet hobbies, and family-oriented activities.
- **Misc. (2)**
 - Before the pandemic, I spent a lot of time in libraries reading, studying, etc. I stopped during the pandemic but am now visiting the Library. I'm starting to connect with people and am traveling a little more. I'm slowly returning to pre-pandemic norms.
 - During the pandemic, many people turned inward to their families. Some remain wary about interacting with large groups, but many now want to go out to meet people; they enjoy the social engagement (e.g., Library programs).

COMMENT/FEEDBACK (1): The Library offers virtual and in-person programs for people of all ages, abilities, and interests. People like attending Library programs to engage with other community members.

3. WHICH LIBRARY RESOURCES OR MATERIALS DO YOU USE MOST FREQUENTLY?

- **COLLECTIONS (6)**
 - **Children's Books (2):** I have 7, 4, and 1 ½-year-old children. They read to us—the adults—at home. We love the Tonies! We have two of them. We visit WML every two weeks so our kids can pick out their books and read them at the Library or at home. They love things like the scavenger hunt. || I take my kids to visit WML a lot to get books, or we reserve books and pick them up.
 - **Historical Resources (2):** I use historical items, including some online town reports and other historical materials. || WML has provided me with a lot of historical information about Wilmington.
 - **Reading-Related Materials (2):** Audiobooks and eBooks || I don't subscribe to the Boston Globe or Wall Street Journal, but I read them at the Library.

- **FACILITY (3)**
 - **Children’s Room:** My kids like to browse for books, which means I always have overdue books. They love the scavenger hunt and activities they can do on the Library floor. I feel comfortable letting them go and explore.
 - **First Floor Renovation:** I love the new space on the first floor. The new floor plan is so much easier to browse. It feels like you’re entering a bookstore—a true browsing experience. I take out many more physical and digital books than I used to.
 - **Meeting Rooms:** WML offers meeting space for the town for some key meetings. I participated in teaching some courses. Different organizations can use the Library for public meeting space. My stepdaughter uses the Library as a meeting space to get away from the house.
- **PROGRAMS (1):** I participate in the book discussion group at the Library.
- **TECHNOLOGY (14)**
 - **Audiobooks and eBooks (Hoopla and Libby) (7):** Hoopla (3) || Libby (2) || I use Hoopla and Libby. I love audiobooks on Hoopla. When necessary, I use Hoopla and Libby on the iPad for kids. I prefer physical books for kids. || I use Hoopla, especially during long drives.
 - **Online Resources (3):** I frequently use WML’s online resources to look things up and for research. || Occasionally, I browse in-house, but I like the convenience of online reading. || When I was working, I used to use WML’s online resources, digital town reports, etc. I accessed them mostly for work, but I still use them. A lot of my usage is online.
 - **Periodicals (2):** I read the Library’s online periodicals, such as the Boston Globe and the NY Times. || I read the Washington Post, NY Times Cooking and Games, and occasionally, the Wall Street Journal.
 - **Misc. (2):** Freegal || I use all the Library’s electronic offerings, including its new app.
- **MISC. (8)**
 - I’ve used WML’s materials and resources for research and have been there to tutor.
 - The Library is a public place of engagement for users of all ages. It has a relationship with the schools.

COMMENTS/FEEDBACK (4)

- Most reading I do is for professional reasons. I don’t do a lot of reading for enjoyment. If I read too long and too much, I have to nap.
- The children’s room and staff are wonderful. WML is an important part of our community.
- The electronic offerings have really improved.
- The Library is the most fun thing in the community for all of us. It is the place that my kids clamor to go to when we’re looking for something to do.

4. HOW CAN THE LIBRARY’S PHYSICAL SPACE BE IMPROVED?

- **Make the Library Bigger (6)**

- **Improve the Children’s and Teen Spaces (4):** Add a third floor so we can have a dedicated floor for teens or children. Then, their collections can be better. We don’t have as big a collection as we need for them. || I don’t spend much time in the Children’s Room, but it has always been used as a pathway to somewhere else. Create a dedicated children’s area that doesn’t use it as a pathway. || I’m a little out of touch with kids’ needs, but the Children’s Room has a high-traffic pattern. That’s a potential safety issue. || The Children’s Room needs to be used as more than a “pass-through” area.
- **Enhance Meeting Spaces (3):** Provide access to our meeting spaces without going through the Library (e.g., exterior entrance/exit to the meeting space). Tewksbury sometimes offers YA programs after-hours, which is possible because attendees can access the meeting space from the outside. || We can’t be a meeting space for the town, but there are very few meeting spaces in town. A municipal space should offer public meeting space. || Would love more meeting space and to be able to partition the space. The High School has this.
- **Offer More Comfortable, Welcoming Spaces (2):** We need more cozy, welcoming spaces instead of just tables and chairs. || Softer spaces are needed. People visit the Library as a destination and want to stay. Adding more comfortable furniture will increase people’s use of WML. I go to the Library, but I’m not as much a user as some people.
- **Misc. (3):** Expand the collection. Kids don’t have many books. I know we had to winnow down the number of onsite books, and I understand the browsing experience. I understand it’s not how big a collection is; it’s how much each book is used. There’s not enough room to have all those books. I’m always ordering books from other libraries. I order a lot. || Meet ADA requirements. Regardless of age or mobility, ensure all community members can access the Library. Make sure everyone can access and navigate the Library’s physical space. || We should think about safety and security at the Library. Make sure the private areas are kept safe.

COMMENTS/FEEDBACK (4)

- I attended a “learning day,” a series of mini-seminars at WML. These types of programs add value. Another library had goats on their front lawn. When people saw them, they were curious and looked up what was going on. This extremely visible event gave people a reason to see what their library offered. Staff members are doing everything they can to vary the Library’s programming offerings.
- I was on another library’s strategic plan committee. I’m very much into the programs. I have done some programming there. I’m all about the programs.
- The space is small but very thoughtfully organized. In the children’s space, you can go from gaming to books. Given the small space, it’s not necessarily a bad thing. The staff has done a really good job of organizing the space. I liked the program that had many “things” going on simultaneously.
- There may be many great public building concepts suggested here. However, they could present collective bargaining issues and budget challenges. Some ideas may also raise concerns regarding competing town needs and wants that make us unable to pursue

these changes. These things need to be planned well in advance. The town’s leadership team wants to lead with “yes” but may not be able to do so.

5. WHAT TWO WORDS WOULD YOU USE TO DESCRIBE THE LIBRARIANS WHO ASSIST YOU?



- Committed
- Creative
- Engaging
- Friendly (2)
- Helpful (2)
- Incredibly Giving
- Inviting
- Knowledgeable
- Like Family
- Professional
- Welcoming (2)

COMMENT/FEEDBACK (1): Going to the Library is like going home to where I wanted to be.

6. WHAT TECHNOLOGY SHOULD THE LIBRARY FOCUS ON OVER THE NEXT THREE YEARS?

- **Increase Technology Literacy (10):** Educate people about AI (6) || I don’t know what’s out there. The Library does a good job of finding out about new tech and staying current. || Have a tech day that presents information about many different tech topics (antivirus apps, AI, cybersecurity) and How-To workshops (how to back up data, connect multiple devices, etc.). Offer something for people with different levels of tech experience. || Help people understand what tech exists in the world and educate them on it. || Something with Artificial Intelligence. It’s scary, but it’s the future. See all the scams. There is a cool side to it. Maybe a program about AI would make it less scary.
- **Misc. (3):** Help people learn how to use a new device they purchased. || Help people with assistive technology. || Some people need tech help all the time.

COMMENT/FEEDBACK (2)

- Much more is being done to accommodate those who need tech resources and support.
- One-on-one tech support is very helpful. Most places don’t have a technology librarian.

UNRELATED IDEA (1): Add items to the Library of Things focused on helping remote workers work from home. Make these items available and educate people about their availability, benefits, and functional use.

7. ARE THERE ANY BARRIERS TO SERVICE—THINGS THAT IMPEDE YOUR ABILITY TO RECEIVE THE SERVICE YOU NEED OR WANT FROM THE LIBRARY?

WML WEBSITE: All 7 Participants Use the WML Website

- Site is Easy to Navigate (6)
- **Improve the Website’s Calendar (5):** I don’t like how the calendar is presented now. I liked the old monthly calendar. If you go to the monthly calendar now, there is a series of dots and times you must click on. Sometimes, I go to the website and can’t find what I need. [3 participants experienced this issue] (3) || I liked the 3-month program calendars. Now, it only shows one month. I feel less informed than I was. || Sometimes, I want to see past programs, but the new calendar doesn’t offer that function.

WML APP: 6 Participants Use the WML App

- It’s useful. I love it. I have a smartphone and would rather use a mobile app than a website. I can browse books and like how it’s set up. It pairs well with my other reading apps.
- Sometimes, I use the app. I already have Libby and Hoopla on my phone, so I don’t want to use the app. I’ll look at it again.
- I look at programs and meeting rooms. I like that I can scan a book at a store to see if we have it in the Library’s collection.

COMMENTS/FEEDBACK (1): I like “Our Recommended Reads” best. I like the help offered with the “What should I read next” question.

8. HOW IMPORTANT IS IT TO HAVE A GOOD LIBRARY IN OUR COMMUNITY?

EXTREMELY IMPORTANT (7)

- 20-25 years ago, when a new Library building was first proposed, it was the dawn of the internet era. Many people asked, “What do you need a library for when there’s the internet.” Information is out there, but it doesn’t mean everyone can access it or that they understand it. Our Library has been great at making information available and instructing people how to access it.
- A good library is essential. As a child, it felt like it was a privilege to go to the library for research and information. We have bookstores, but they may be going away. I like physical books. It’s important for our kids to understand that libraries are essential. No matter how much they get on the internet, they need to go to the library to study, research, etc. It’s a safe place. My son is in college, and he has a team that must study at the library.
- A good library is part of our social community. It’s an important “Third Place” (work, home, library).
- It’s the most important! The library is the heart of the community. It’s where everything happens and where your kids can get what they need for school. The library knows what the community needs.
- No matter how much information is online, a good library is still essential.

- The library is very important! In colonial times, there would be a tavern where everyone met. Now, this gathering space is the library. Establishing relationships at the library helps people feel like they're a part of the community.
 - Some programs may generate controversy, but you don't have to attend if you don't want to.
 - I applaud the efforts that Tina (past Director), Kate (current Director), and the staff have made over the last 20 years since the Library building project vote failed. They continue to really reinvent and improve upon what the Library does.

IDEA-IMPROVE MEDIA LITERACY (2): Offer classes that instruct people on how to determine if the information they have is credible. Help people understand what information is and how to organize it. Ensure we have professionals who understand information and who know how to educate people. || Provide easy access to information and help people identify what's factual versus not factual.

9. WHAT ISSUES NOW FACING THE TOWN DO YOU THINK MAY IMPACT THE LIBRARY?

- **Mental Health and Wellness Challenges (3):** Going to the Library is a more socially acceptable place to get information and help that may be needed (e.g., health and wellness programs). || It is easier for people to go to a library for education than the police, etc. The Library has the opportunity to provide self-care programs to the community (e.g., activities for adults with ADHD). || The town is experiencing mental health and addiction issues. The Library can provide support and information on these issues.
- **Need to Increase Community Engagement (3):** WML needs to expand its community outreach and engagement activities. || We need to develop a better way for the Library to reach the community. || The Library should be a welcoming place for seniors and children and offer various programs that will help the community.
- **Misc. (2):** Pursue supplemental grant monies. || The town needs more meeting spaces. Community engagement and involvement can be improved if there are publicly accessible meeting spaces at the Library. For example, community groups are formed for all sorts of causes/issues, and they need meeting spaces. A group I'm in wanted a space to meet every month, which the Library didn't have. It would be great if WML helped support independent groups' meeting space needs. It would also be good for people looking for resources after their meetings. Other towns have spaces available for local groups to meet every month.

COMMENTS/FEEDBACK (2)

- Any monetary investments are subject to town support. The Selectboard and Town Manager's office are very committed to supporting the Library, and the town is very committed to allocating the resources needed to keep the WML sufficiently funded. Town committees are trying to strategically position WML as a community center. Personnel allocated to the Library have increased over time, and WML has really expanded its offerings to the town and the schools.

- WML is the biggest thing in town. Even though our world is smaller, I still need to leave Wilmington to entertain my child. The one thing that enables me to stay in Wilmington is the Library. I hope to have more things in town for my children to do.

10. WHAT COULD THE LIBRARY DO TO SERVE THE WILMINGTON COMMUNITY BETTER? WHAT ADVICE DO YOU HAVE?

- **IDEA:** Educate those who don't use the Library. Talk about available media resources and how to use them. People may not be able to access these resources independently.
- **IDEA:** Increase the community's awareness of the Library's many programs, services, and materials.
- **COMMENT/FEEDBACK:** I'm sad that the Library cut its hours. Many residents who don't work in Wilmington have longer commutes and can't participate in Library programs because they get home later in the evening. I wish the Library would extend hours back to what they were. Several years ago, I was glad the Library started opening on summer Saturdays.

FOCUS GROUP #2 – JULY 10, 2024 (PARTICIPANTS = 4)

1. WHAT ARE THE VERY FIRST TWO WORDS YOU THINK OF WHEN YOU THINK ABOUT THE LIBRARY?

- Cozy, Intimate, Multi-Faceted, Network, Small (3), and Welcoming (2)

COMMENTS/FEEDBACK (2)

- I have two kids aged 10 and 7. 1 of my siblings work in libraries.
- I am married and do not have kids. I mostly use WML's digital services. I listen to a lot of audiobooks. The small size of the library doesn't impact my use, so the size isn't necessarily bad.

2. HOW HAS YOUR LIFE CHANGED POST-PANDEMIC?

- **Modified/Reduced Use of Social Media (4)**
 - Previously, I used Facebook to keep in touch with friends and family, but now I just use it to access Wilmington groups. It's the best place to get Wilmington information, but it's a lousy place to keep in touch with family.
 - I relied on social media during the pandemic, but I've gotten away from it. The feeds are full of ads, promotions, or algorithms I don't want to see. I still have my social media accounts because that's how I know what's happening in the community... I have a love/hate relationship with social media.
 - I try to limit my social media activities. It's an enormous time suck. I think that with the upcoming election, a lot of people feel like they did four years ago. I'm involved in Sole Sisters. We talked about whether we should move away from Facebook.
 - My family uses Discord. There are no ads. We can have channels.

- **Expanded Use of Technology (2)**
 - I feel like I don't talk to as many people anymore, but I use technology a lot more. I moved, so much of my life is managed digitally. I'm way more focused on applications now. I just used DoorDash to order food for my husband and daughter. I'm so much more invested in my smartphone. I use Libby and the WML app. The WML app has been very useful. I order books to pick up at the Library. I do mobile orders.
 - I also use the WML app and Libby. I participate in two book clubs. I reserve books the Clubs pick out. I will pick up physical books but am more likely to finish them if I listen to audiobooks.
- **Slowly Increasing In-Person Activity Levels (2)**
 - My kids were three and six years old when we came out of it. They've had difficulty adjusting. When we took my daughter to Boston for the first time, just going on the train terrified her. I've been trying to take them to stores, buildings, and playgrounds so they can get used to places with groups of people and can resume more pre-pandemic activities. We do a lot online but are trying to do a lot more in-person.
 - We have a 10-year-old. Before the pandemic, we did so much in person. We've been trying to get back into the habit, but it's been really hard to readjust.

COMMENT/FEEDBACK (1): The Library was the first place I brought my daughter. I felt very seen by the Library.

3. WHICH LIBRARY RESOURCES OR MATERIALS DO YOU USE MOST FREQUENTLY?

- **COLLECTIONS (9)**
 - **Physical and Audiobooks (4):** I am a fiction reader. I'm an English teacher. I like physical books. || I listened to 85 audiobooks last year and maybe 15 physical books. || Often, we have more than 100 items checked out. We walk out with bags of stuff. We all like different things, like non-fiction (tech, business, etc.). I like cooking, the arts, and music. I sometimes read fiction. My husband loves pulp fiction, and he reads a lot. || We use print books the most. It bothers my eyes to read on a screen. We place a lot of holds. I'm specifically requesting a book for my book club. A lot of times, I'm on a waitlist because book club books are often popular. Cookbooks.
 - **Library of Things (LOT; 3):** The LOT is terrific. We rely on it all the time. We got the lawn games. || We love the LOT. || We use the LOT. It's harder to find items now. I've been trying to understand that.
 - **Children's Books (2):** My daughter loves picking out books in the bins (Favorite Friends). We're always coming home with cool books from the Children's Department. || Our kids are into chapter books.
- **FACILITY (4)**
 - **Displays (2):** I like the popular books wall but don't usually go into the stacks. || The Library's displays are terrific.

- **Misc. (2):** We use the Children’s area a lot. We go and sit there. Every month, my daughter does the scavenger hunt. || We use the community space.
- **PROGRAMS AND SERVICES (4)**
 - **Museum Passes (2):** Agree with everyone who likes the museum passes. || We use the museum passes.
 - **Programs (2):** I don’t use any children’s services, but I check out the classes. There’s not a lot that aligns with my interests, but the programs do look very varied. || We did an outdoor movie night. We have done events in the past.
- **TECHNOLOGY (3)**
 - I use the digital resources the most.
 - We frequently use the InterLibrary Loan (ILL) service when our kids want the next book in a series. Losing the ILL would be the worst! I use Libby a good bit.
 - I have been meaning to use Mango. I asked about it last year, and then it just showed up.

COMMENTS/FEEDBACK (5)

- **Collections (3):** I can’t get the popular new releases because I can’t return the books by their due dates. || I don’t check out any music CDs and have never checked out a DVD. || My sister tells me about Hoopla, but I am still into physical books. I’m open to digital materials but haven’t gotten there yet.
- **Programs (2):** I miss the jobs club that used to meet on Mondays. || We’re not always around during program times.

4. HOW CAN THE LIBRARY’S PHYSICAL SPACE BE IMPROVED?

- **Improve Children’s Room Seating (3):** After every program, there is a battle for that little two-seater couch. It’s too small. Having some kind of adult seating for people to monitor their toddlers is needed. || I love what you have done with the seating downstairs and hope for a similar treatment upstairs. || My daughter uses the computer or the trains. There’s never anywhere for me to sit, so I’m often on the floor. The tables are not super cozy. We could get out from behind the desk if there were floor pillows.
- **Misc. (1):** The non-fiction shelves are “adult-sized.” Kids can’t see books at the top, so I must read them. It would be great if the kids could read the titles independently.

COMMENTS/FEEDBACK (3)

- The children’s room is a nice little nook. Kids love the puppet theater.
- My daughter camps out in the Library. It’s already fantastic.
- The first floor looks beautiful. My daughter loves the mural. You’re already doing it. The former Director (TS) knew you had to be creative with the space. A library is not the four walls. It’s the people, programming, innovation, and creativity.

5. How can the Library improve its services?

- **Adjust the Programming Schedule (3):** Offer more Saturday programming for adults. || The programming schedule focuses on stay-at-home parents. Offering early evening and Saturday programs would be helpful. || There aren't a lot of Saturday programs for adults. I feel like I'm always bringing my daughter to the library for events, but adult programs are few and far between on Saturdays.
- **Add Programs (2):** Offer Jobseeker.com services and some additional professional resources. It would be nice to have a networking group. || There aren't as many Zoom programs as there used to be. If we could collaborate with other libraries, we might be able to offer more. Offer more virtual programs for working people.
- **Misc. (1):** My schedule doesn't change at all, but the Library doesn't have any weekend hours in the summer. I would like it to open on Saturdays in the summer.

6. WHAT TWO WORDS WOULD YOU USE TO DESCRIBE THE LIBRARIANS WHO ASSIST YOU?

- Dedicated, Enthusiastic (2), Helpful (2), Kind, Passionate, and Supportive

COMMENT/FEEDBACK (1): The staff clearly love their jobs; they want to be there. They're dedicated, enthusiastic, and passionate.

7. WHAT TECHNOLOGY SHOULD THE LIBRARY FOCUS ON OVER THE NEXT THREE YEARS?

- Instead of lending out so many LOT items, they could be added to a makerspace in the Library. For example, if you moved the Cricut into a makerspace instead of making people wait three months to borrow it, people could access it in the makerspace much more quickly. That would be really good use.

8. ARE THERE ANY BARRIERS TO SERVICE—THINGS THAT IMPEDE YOUR ABILITY TO RECEIVE THE SERVICE YOU NEED OR WANT FROM THE LIBRARY?

- **Book Requests:** I request that books be added to the collection, but I don't get much feedback on that.
- **Hours of Operation:** Chelmsford is open 1-4 pm (on Sunday) during the school year. It might be a pipe dream, but limited Sunday hours would be great. I don't know if there would be enough interest.
- **Improve Renewal Reminder System:** I find the reminder systems a bit weird. It reminds me that my books need to be renewed, but it's a few days away. Then, I never hear again. Then, it's not the whole list. Libby's reminders are pop-ups and maybe an email. And then it dies. It can be a little strange.
- **Reduce Hold Times:** Reduce the long wait times for holds. Sometimes, when I get a notice that my hold is in, I've forgotten that I put the hold on.

COMMENTS/FEEDBACK (1): When your book's lending time runs out, it comes back pretty quickly. It remembers where you were. I find that amazing!

9. HOW IMPORTANT IS IT TO HAVE A GOOD LIBRARY IN OUR COMMUNITY?

- Very important.
- Some people think books are absolute, but the Library is the place to get answers to any question.

IDEAS (2)

- **Increase Community Awareness of Library Offerings:** Educate people that there is so much they can do.
- **Serve as a Community Space:** The Library serves its people. It's all about being a community space. The Library should pivot to be a community space, a "meet with you" club, a "check out your club," a place to network, etc.

10. WHAT COULD THE LIBRARY DO TO SERVE THE WILMINGTON COMMUNITY BETTER? WHAT ADVICE DO YOU HAVE?

- **Expand/Improve Marketing (2):** The Library must do a lot more outreach and educate more people regarding what the Library can do. This group is preaching to the choir. We know what's happening, but many people don't realize what the Library offers. || You post a lot on the Library's Facebook page, but I'm not always seeing your stuff on the Wilmington community page. I want to make sure I see your posts. It's hard with the algorithm. Email is a really good way to send information. I would be willing to receive more emails.
- **Misc. (1):** High school students need to learn how to do research.

COMMENTS/FEEDBACK (4)

- I don't know if I am doing it wrong. I would pick up a printed calendar, but I feel like I'm missing things. Recently, I didn't realize an event was coming up. I see programs I would've registered for, but I see them too late to sign up.
- I've been in town since 2010. The Library does so much. Since the last strategic plan, the Library has made dramatic improvements. Keep going!
- My daughter is obsessed with the Library. You have made it a place our family wants to go—not just my daughter. The Library has been our go-to place since we moved to town.
- There has been a lot of creativity. The Library is fresh. I really appreciate the resources and care my family gets when we show up every couple of weeks.

FOCUS GROUP #3 – JULY 11, 2024 (PARTICIPANTS = 8)

1. WHAT ARE THE VERY FIRST TWO WORDS YOU THINK OF WHEN YOU THINK ABOUT THE LIBRARY?

- Books, Community, Cozy, Educational, Events, Fun, Inviting, Library of Things, and Very Engaging

COMMENTS/FEEDBACK (3)

- I'm a mom of two. I adore the Library.
- I have a son and enjoy Craft and Chat for adults.
- We just moved to Wilmington last September. I have two kids. We love the Library.

2. HOW HAS YOUR LIFE CHANGED POST-PANDEMIC?

- **Increased Interest in In-Person Programs (4):** Everything changed for me. I found out I was pregnant a week before the shutdown. I'm more turned off by large crowds now. I do like small events. I'm not sure if it's because of the pandemic or not. || I have returned to in-person book groups and similar smaller discreet groups. I feel differently about larger events like concerts than, say, a book group. I'm more geared for small group activities than in the past. || I like to go to a program and talk to people in real life, but not in large groups. || I prefer in-person programs.
- **More Remote Workers (3):** I am fully remote for work. || I don't have to commute to Cambridge anymore. I have a little bit more schedule flexibility. || I work at home.
- **Focused on Local Activities (2):** I really appreciate local places where there are activities that aren't going to break the bank when I leave the house. || Our traveling is way down. We don't go outside the town we live in very much. Whether it's the park or the mall, we try to find interesting things around here.
- **Misc. (2):** My kids are a lot more tech-savvy now. || Those of us working from home with kids appreciate virtual activities. I can't necessarily leave the house and leave work, but I can log my kids into a virtual activity.

3. WHICH LIBRARY RESOURCES OR MATERIALS DO YOU USE MOST FREQUENTLY?

- **Consortium's Collections (2):** Being part of the consortium, even if you have to wait for a loan to become available. || I value the consortium and being able to access books at any of the libraries.

COMMENTS/FEEDBACK (2):

- I love Libby.
- I really value the programs. I have a family and appreciate having programs available—things for us to do.

4. HOW CAN THE LIBRARY'S PHYSICAL SPACE BE IMPROVED?

- **Add Book Club Displays:** For the books on display by the main desk, you could put up the book club books and have them on display for people who are joining.
- **Expand and Enhance the Teens' Space:** While the Children's Room is great, expanding it would be helpful. Teens only get a small portion of the space. If we expand the Children's Room, teens could have a little bit more space. The teen area could be closed off or more obviously dedicated to them with some fun, whimsical decor.

- **Increase Conference Room Flexibility:** Keep the conference spaces but add a movable wall.
- **Improve Exterior Space:** The outdoor space is very cute (e.g., sitting area), but when the outdoor storytime was introduced, we couldn't do it. My kids are "runners," and the cars are right there. Even just adding a small fence would be great. We've attended activities in the front of the building, but you have the busy road right there. In that case, you're facing the building.

COMMENTS/FEEDBACK (1): I spend my time downstairs. The first-floor renovation has improved the floor and the access.

5. How can the Library improve its services?

- **Enhance Programs Schedule (2):** I love the programs, but if they were offered at different times or more frequently, that would enable me to attend more. || Increase capacity or add more times for a program to be offered. Offer the same program on multiple days. Or, if you get locked out the last couple of times a program is offered, help you get into the program the next time.
- **Improve Process to Cancel Program Registration:** Provide an easier way to notify the Library that you can't make it to a program you registered for. My son was signed up for Spark Fly, and I received an email the day before that said there was capacity for him to attend. The program was supposed to be full, but only seven kids were there. If there was a way to withdraw when they sign up for something, others on the waitlist could have attended.
- **Strengthen Teens' Connection with the High School:** Bring back more of the teen connection with the high school. The previous teen services librarian (BM) did a great job with the high school's world language department. We haven't really reached out either, even after hours.

6. WHAT TECHNOLOGY SHOULD THE LIBRARY FOCUS ON OVER THE NEXT THREE YEARS?

- Having a few more computers in the Children's area would be nice. Touchscreen devices are nice, but their software isn't necessarily the easiest to navigate. The Woburn Public Library offers devices with easier-to-navigate applications.
- The video game collection is kind of slim. Add more Xbox games.
- When you try to look up an eBook, offer an option to have the application notify me.

COMMENT/FEEDBACK (2):

- There used to be a mat for checkout. You put the books on the mat, and the computer read what the books were. The kids found it easier to check out.
- I love the addition of Tonies, but we are a YOTO family.

7. ARE THERE ANY BARRIERS TO SERVICE—THINGS THAT IMPEDE YOUR ABILITY TO RECEIVE THE SERVICE YOU NEED OR WANT FROM THE LIBRARY?

- **Offer Mobile Services (2):** Do you have any information on underserved demographic groups? Learn more about people who live in the community who can't visit the Library and consider how to serve them. || Offer Library services in other local locations. I wonder if there are people who have transportation issues. For example, they can't drive, or their families just don't have the financial resources for a car or transport. They may be terrific candidates to be a library user.
- **Conduct Programs at Schools:** A lot of the programs happen at the Library, but I'm wondering if people would find it easier to attend one at a local school. If you offer a program at a school once a month, kids can attend a program at their school and try to get more people aware of what the Library offers. It's a good way to offer Library programs to kids who don't visit the Library.
- **COMMENTS/FEEDBACK (1):** I have had no trouble.

8. HOW IMPORTANT IS IT TO HAVE A GOOD LIBRARY IN OUR COMMUNITY?

EXTREMELY IMPORTANT (8)

- I feel very strongly about having a library for each and every community. It's a free service and a learning service. It's critical for all ages.
- It's so important. It's one of the things I brag about when I talk about where I live—how friendly the Library is.

COMMENTS/FEEDBACK (5)

- For the Library's smaller space, it still keeps up with the programming Lucius Beebe Memorial Library (Wakefield) offers.
- I like the smallness of the space. I have young kids, but I can sit with one while the other wanders in the shelving area. My family goes to other libraries, but I appreciate the smallness of our library—not that it couldn't be a bit bigger.
- Our library is small compared to those in other towns, but its resources and programming are above average. The challenge is the physical space.
- The Library's programming is so much better than that of other libraries. Even if a library is bigger, it doesn't make it better. Our library offers so much.
- Wilmington is a small community with good library accessibility. Our Library provides a cozy, welcoming environment for our town and surrounding areas.

9. WHAT ISSUES NOW FACING THE TOWN DO YOU THINK MAY IMPACT THE LIBRARY?

- **Finances (2):** Pursue more opportunities to raise funds. Identify relationships and philanthropic opportunities that can benefit the Library. || The MBTA's community development zoning issue was up for a vote at the May Town Meeting. If a town doesn't comply, the town will lose out on funding opportunities.
- **Town Development:** Rebuilding the schools and building the town hall.

10. WHAT COULD THE LIBRARY DO TO SERVE THE WILMINGTON COMMUNITY BETTER? WHAT ADVICE DO YOU HAVE?

- Collaborate with the Children’s Art, Recreation, and Enrichment Services (CARES) organization on children’s programming or with the teens in CARES programs. Hand out flyers.
- Get demographic information for underserved populations. Identify who isn’t taking advantage of the Library’s services. Cross-promote the Library’s services with the food pantry or local organizations like that.
- If someone can’t visit the Library but has a Kindle, promote the Library’s eCard.