# The Community Library – Cobleskill, New York
## Long Range Planning
## Report on Community Workshops
## April 27, 2021

Summary

The Community Library recently embarked upon a process to update its mission statement and develop a new plan of service. This long range plan will enable the library to meet the needs of the community it serves over the upcoming years.

It is especially challenging to take on these tasks in the midst of a pandemic. Normally, community members would contribute to the process by participating in collaborative workshops. Instead of hosting in-person meetings, The Community Library hosted a series of virtual workshops facilitated by a representative from the Mohawk Valley Library System (MVLS). More than 50 individuals participated in 10 virtual workshops that were conducted via Zoom.

The purpose of the workshops was not simply to obtain feedback on the library. Rather, participants also shared their thoughts about the state of the community as a whole, along with their dreams for the future. By looking at the issues from a community-wide perspective, the library will gain a more complete picture of the needs of the community.

Participants eagerly engaged in productive discussions. Data collected during the workshops will be useful to the library as it develops its plans for the future and works to meet the needs of the community. Additionally, the data could be useful for other organizations within Schoharie County.

It is clear that the discussion is just beginning. These workshops have only begun the process of enhancing the connections between the library and a diverse range of people and groups. There is great potential for continuing community discussions and building future partnerships with many other organizations.

<u>Background</u>

The Community Library established a Long Range Planning Committee, and they started by creating new mission and vision statements for the library. The committee followed a set process, they reviewed and compared mission and vision statements from other libraries, and they shared their final product with the entire board of trustees for final approval.

The new mission and vision statements are found below:

- **Mission:** The Community Library builds strong communities by preserving the past, enriching the present, and inspiring the future.

- **Vision:** The Community Library is a central part of thoughtful, inclusive, dynamic communities where people and ideas connect.

After creation of the mission and vision statements, The Community Library brought in a facilitator from MVLS to conduct the virtual workshops, collect data, analyze it, and create this report.

The first workshop was conducted with members of the library's Board of Trustees. This workshop functioned as a "soft" opening for the process, allowing organizers to seek feedback and make pertinent adjustments to future workshops.

Subsequently, another nine workshops were held with groups including library employees, members of the Friends of The Community Library, SUNY Cobleskill faculty and staff, Cobleskill-Richmondville Central School District representatives, local teenagers, government leaders, business owners, and other community leaders. More than 50 individuals participated in the 10 workshops. In addition, other individuals provided their feedback and suggestions via email.

The workshops were conducted virtually via Zoom, and they were strictly limited to one hour. They consisted of discussions of the following questions:

1. *Define your community in just a few words.*

2. *What do you see as the future of the library and the community over the next 5 to 10 years?*

3. *Who else should we talk to?*

Additionally, other questions, specifically tailored to each group, were discussed during the forums. Some of those questions are listed below:

- *We currently have architectural drawings for expansion of the library building. What ideas do you have for the design and usage of those spaces?*

- *What can the library do to help you in your role in the community?*

- *How does the library play a role in dealing with the access to broadband in our communities?*
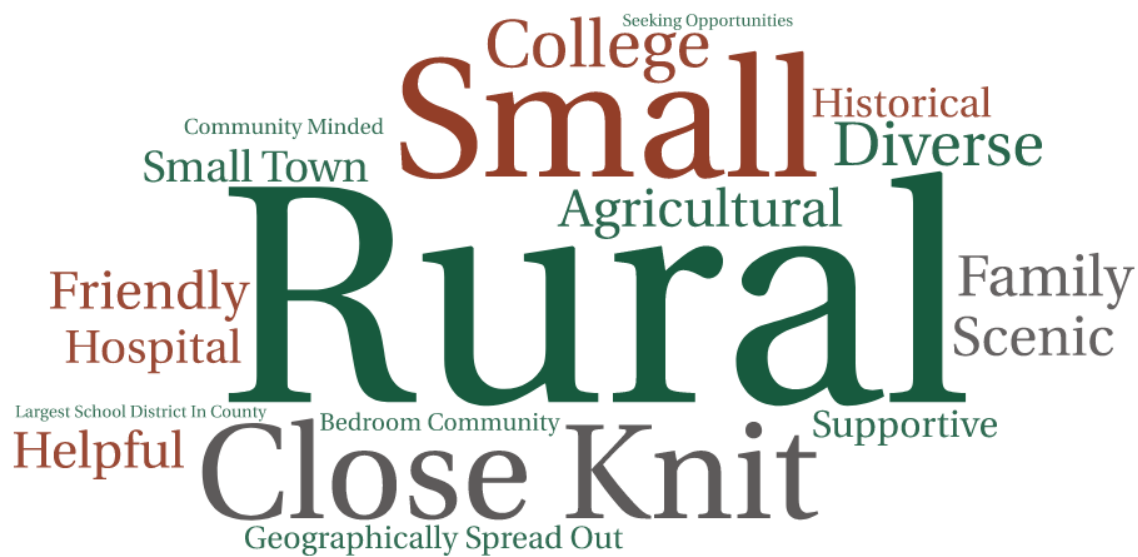
- *What activities, events, or programs would you like to see at the library?*

- *What hours should the library be open, once COVID is not a factor?*

A significant amount of data was collected during the workshops. A complete list of that information can be found in Appendix 2.

To make that data useful, it was categorized and analyzed. That process is detailed in the upcoming sections in this report.

The Community Library
Long Range Planning
Report on Community Workshops

Question: *Define your community in just a few words.*

Participants wrote down short phrases to describe their community. Each participant provided at least one word or phrase.

Participants provided over 100 words or phrases during the forums. For the purposes of this analysis, some of the descriptions were modified slightly to either condense them, or to change them to a single consistent term. For example, the word *agrarian* was changed to *agricultural*, and *close* was changed *to close knit*.

A visual representation of the descriptions is found below. The larger the text, the more often it was encountered:



The words or phrases mentioned multiple times are listed below:

| Term | Times Mentioned |
|---|---|
| Rural | 9 |
| Close knit | 6 |
| Small | 6 |
| Agricultural | 5 |
| College | 4 |
| Diverse | 4 |
| Geographically spread out | 4 |
| Small town | 4 |
| Supportive | 4 |
| Bedroom community | 3 |
| Friendly | 3 |
| Community minded | 2 |
| Family | 2 |

| | |
|---|---|
| Helpful | 2 |
| Historical | 2 |
| Hospital | 2 |
| Largest school district in county | 2 |
| Scenic | 2 |
| Seeking opportunities | 2 |

In an effort to simplify the visual representation, the graphic below includes only those words or phrases that were mentioned more than once:

Seeking Opportunities
College
Small
Historical
Diverse
Community Minded
Small Town
Agricultural
Friendly
Rural
Family
Hospital
Scenic
Largest School District In County
Bedroom Community
Helpful
Close Knit
Supportive
Geographically Spread Out

These phrases paint a cohesive picture of the community. In particular, the most common terms, *rural, close knit, small, agricultural*, seem to fit quite well with each other. They also fit well with other terms like *small town* and *geographically spread out*. Taken together, they provide a good description of the current community and a good comparison as workshop participants began to look toward the future.

Overall, the participants conveyed a positive view of the community. Of the descriptions provided, 45 were classified as positive descriptions and 51 as neutral. The seven remaining descriptions described challenges and difficulties that the community is facing. Of course, the classifications of many of these descriptions, especially those designated as neutral, are quite subjective.

Question: *What do you see as the future of the library and the community over the next 5 to 10 years?*
-and other related questions-

The majority of the time during the workshops was spent discussing the question above, along with the various related questions that were tailored to each group.

Analyzing the answers to these questions is significantly more difficult than the other questions discussed during the workshop.

The ideas collected from participants in response to these questions are likely to be the most useful in developing specific plans and programming for the library. Many of the answers are quite broad, lacking concrete suggestions. Other answers are quite specific, but limited in their scope. Some of the ideas have a clear connection to the library. Others are likely to be completely outside the sphere of the library's influence.

Certainly, the library cannot develop plans and offer services that will address all of the ideas presented during the forums. Even so, the library may be able to use these ideas to come up with creative programming to help address the issues and/or connect the groups that need to be involved in tackling these challenges. Additionally, the library could function as neutral ground for various outside groups working on these issues.

All of the ideas that came up during the meeting are found in the raw data located in Appendix 2 of this report. However, the raw data is not easy to analyze without some further sorting.

Fortunately, a number of themes emerged during the process, and this report creates categories under which most of the ideas can be sorted. Many ideas fall under multiple categories. To aid in the planning process, Appendix 1 of this report contains the full lists of the ideas within each category.

Here are the categories that have been identified, with brief summaries of the answers that participants provided. The categories are listed below with the categories listed in order from the most number of ideas to the least number of ideas:

### Diverse Programming & Services
- This category received more than 120 comments, and workshop participants provided a wide range of suggestions. These bullet points are just a summary, and it is worthwhile to review the complete list of suggestions in Appendix 1.
- Building and maintaining a flexible library collection is important. Participants appreciate the collection of books and DVDs, but also mentioned adding other things such as tools that could be loaned out to patrons.
- Reading programs such as Battle of the Books, the Summer Reading Program, National Poetry Month, and NaNoWriMo (National Novel Writing Month) are important.
- Programs and activities that allow for building, crafting, and hobbies are a good addition. These could allow participants to get messy, involve a variety of age groups, use maker spaces, and promote STEM.

- Workshop participants encouraged the library to take programs outside the walls of the library building and into the community. Programs could be conducted in conjunction with the school district or brought to other villages in the library's service area.

- Structured teen programming was suggested. This could include gaming, e-sports, LEGO building tournaments, and career/college planning workshops.

- Many participants mentioned the appeal of hosting art events and programs. Art shows and/or a gallery could showcase artwork, including indigenous creators, school children, college students, and other local artists. Music and poetry performers could share their talents at the library.

- Local history could be shared at the library through discussions, lectures, and artifact displays.

- Other outside groups would benefit from having meeting spaces to use and conduct programs. Businesses and small-scale creators might also be able to use these spaces and conduct a variety of activities.

**Building & Infrastructure**
- This category received more than 100 comments.

- Participants identified a need for a large multipurpose room that could be used for larger community meetings, events, performances, and programs. A stage, flexible seating and tables, and audio/visual capabilities were also mentioned for this room.

- Smaller rooms were also mentioned. These could be flexible spaces, adaptable for various purposes, with comfortable seating, areas to display artwork or artifacts, and with access to technology and Wi-Fi. Smaller spaces could also be used for multigenerational activities or to create a maker space.

- Workspace efficiency improvements were also mentioned. (More details on this subject are provided later in this report.)

- Many participants identified a need for greater storage space for employees, Friends of the Library, and possibly even other groups who routinely use the library.

- Improvements to increase the building's curb appeal were frequently discussed. These include suggestions about lighting, signage, parking, building improvements, and outdoor gathering spaces.

- Participants of all ages, including teens, identified the need for an improved space for teens to gather, play games, do homework, and interact. They would benefit from a space that is separate from other library spaces, so they do not disturb others. Yet, it should also be a space that can be easily monitored and supervised.

- Some participants provided comments about the library's children's spaces including suggestions to make these areas more welcoming, creating a play area, and having a place for parents to sit and watch their children play and read.

- The addition of a snack area or coffee bar was frequently mentioned. Many workshop participants indicated that an area for a coffee or a snack could be a comfortable place for people to gather, talk, and read.

**Community Center**

- This category received nearly 70 comments.

- The concept of a community center was mentioned frequently during the workshops, and participants often pointed to the library as the logical location for a community center.

- There is a need within the community for a large community meeting room.

- Multi-functional meeting spaces would be useful in the library, especially a mix of smaller, larger, and/or flexible-sized meeting spaces.

- Intergenerational gathering spaces were mentioned: from spaces for children, to teens, to seniors.

- Many participants described the library's current community spaces as less than ideal, especially in reference to the library basement and the teen spaces.

- Participants envisioned community spaces in the library to display artwork and hold performances.

- A fair number of participants dreamed of having a coffee/snack bar in the library where they could have a beverage while relaxing, chatting, and enjoying the library.


**Community Partnerships**

- This category received more than 50 comments.

- Community partnerships between the library and a wide range of outside groups came up frequently during the discussions.

- Strengthening and expanding existing partnerships with the school district were discussed often, including Battle of the Books, the Summer Reading Program, library card sign-up events, homework help, and STEM activities.

- SUNY Cobleskill would be a vital partner with opportunities to host community workshops conducted by university staff, homework and tutoring initiatives, and opportunities to involve students studying early literacy at SUNY.

- With the library serving a rural area, many participants suggested building connections with agricultural producers and organizations like Cornell Cooperative Extension. For example, seed swaps were mentioned.

- Partnerships with arts councils, teachers, and organizations were mentioned. This could include artwork displays and performance from local artists, school children, and college students.

- Local history organizations would benefit from having the library as a place to display historical artifacts and conduct lectures and discussions.

- Connecting with businesses could be economically beneficial for the community. Perhaps there are opportunities for business incubator types of spaces or events.

- There is a great need in the community, especially in the wake of COVID, to help people connect with organizations that deal with social, economic, and healthcare issues. This includes organizations like county departments, economic development organizations, political leaders, and healthcare providers.

**Community Resources, Social Services & Economic Development**

- This category received nearly 30 comments.
- Some of the greatest community needs that were identified during the workshops include healthcare, economic difficulties, and access to community information.
- Participants discussed the importance of helping people connect to the right organizations to address healthcare, social and emotional wellbeing, and mental health concerns. Library staff may need additional training to assist with these needs, and guest speakers and programs could be helpful, too.
- Economic recovery, especially after COVID, will be important to the region, and having the library participate in helping connect businesses with job seekers could help in this process and contribute toward building a more vibrant downtown area.
- The library could serve as an information clearinghouse, helping connect members of the community with the local resources they need, especially in a changing community.

**Access to Broadband & Technology**

- This category received nearly 20 comments.
- Access to broadband was mentioned periodically throughout the workshops. Clearly, there are areas within the community that lack access to adequate broadband. The library already serves as an important location for many people lacking access to broadband or computers.
- Going forward, many participants see the need for the library to help fill the gap for those who do not have access to broadband. Having access to Wi-Fi at the library can provide a stop-gap solution to this problem.
- Additionally, access to technology and training at the library, including computers, "how-to" classes, audio/visual equipment, scanners, 3D printers, and other emerging technology is important to many of the workshop participants.

**Miscellaneous Comments**

- This category received 8 comments.
- Most of the remaining comments discussed the demographic shifts in the community served by the library. This includes comments on an aging population and that a significant number of people are moving into the area from more urban locations downstate.

- A number of comments also discussed the types of businesses and organizations that exist in the community.

Of course, this analysis of participant responses is not all-inclusive, and it is quite subjective. The raw data may lead others to different conclusions. Having other individuals or groups analyze the data could lead to more creative ways for the library to have an impact on the dreams, insights, and ideas shared during the workshops.

Even though this question was typically the last to be asked and had the least amount of time dedicated to it, the answers may prove to be some of the most valuable in the long run. These responses identify various community groups with whom the library can establish and strengthen long-term partnerships.

Participants offered a wide range of suggestions including:

- School districts (including nearby smaller districts)
- **School librarians** (K-12)
- **School board**, administrators, **teachers**
- Students: middle school and **high school**
- **SUNY Cobleskill**
- College students
- Other libraries (college, public, and school)
- Parents
- Young adult professionals
- **Local government and political leaders** (from all nearby communities)
- Office for the Aging
- **Community leaders**
- Non-resident property owners
- Tourists/travelers/campground visitors
- **Local businesses and business leaders**
- Economic development organizations
- Local planning boards
- **Schoharie Economic Enterprise Corp - SEEC**
- Cobleskill Partnership, Inc. - CPI
- Seniors
- Basset Health Care Network/Hospital
- Head Start
- Girl Scouts
- Literacy New York - Fulton, Montgomery, and Schoharie Counties
- Adult Learning Group at SCHOOL (Schoharie County Home of Ongoing Learning)
- Schoharie County Community Action Program,
- Art teachers
- Arts councils or programs
- Schoharie County Historical Society
- Iroquois Museum
- Grosvenor Art Gallery
- Cobleskill Historical Society
- County Historian
- Farming community
- Schoharie County Farm Bureau
- Cornell Cooperative Extension
- 4H

- The Theater Project of Schoharie County
- Harmony Acres
- Backstreet Music
- Church and faith groups
- Service clubs: Rotary, Elks, etc.

Some forums or meetings have already been held with individuals from the groups listed above in **bold.** This list is just a starting point. Many other groups will likely be identified along the way.

<u>Additional Observations</u>

Throughout the process, a handful of topics received specific attention, either due to the inclusion of direct questions on the topic during the workshop, or based upon the role of the group participating in a workshop. Details of those discussions are found below.


**Communications and Marketing**

During the workshops, many participants identified opportunities to improve how the library communicates with the public and how it markets its services and programs. Specific participant comments are listed below:

- Communicate with a changing community.

- Use a variety of outlets: newspapers, Facebook, online, outdoor signage.

- Communicate with other organizations in the community such as the Rotary, the school district, and other clubs and organizations. This could be done using a variety of methods, including attending other groups' meetings.

- We need to get the word out about the services provided by the library.

- Make use of seasonal outreach/festivals where we can advertise what the library is doing.

- Want to become more visible at public events and get publicity in the newspaper.

- Many, if not most people, are not fully aware of the current plans. The public needs a good understanding of the plans for expansion.

- A formal fundraising program will be helpful for the public to fully understand the costs and scope of whatever the final plans are for expansion or renovation.

- Establishing an open line of communication between the library and the college could be vital. One option for this could be to reach out to SUNY Cobleskill's Director of Greek Life, Orientation and Community Engagement, in particular for his community engagement role.

- The scope and cost of an expansion would need to be made public.

- More extended library hours may be necessary, and making sure the community knows those hours is important.


**Hours of Operation**

Many of the groups were asked specifically about the library's hours of operation. The topic also came up on occasion during other workshops. Opinions varied, but there was a general consensus that more hours are better and that there may be a need to shift the current hours. Specific participant comments are listed below:

- You can't please everyone, but perhaps eliminate some evening hours to be open longer on Saturdays.

- Yes. Library hours need to be changed. (Recognizing that the budget can limit this.)

- Staying open until 9 pm on some nights would be useful, especially when community rooms are reopened, or for people who travel a significant distance to work.

- Expanding some of the hours on Saturday would be good.

- The more days we're open, the better the access.

- Later hours! Would like to see it close at 8 pm most nights.

- Also stay open later on Saturdays since teenagers tend to sleep in later.

- More extended library hours may be necessary, and making sure the community knows those hours is important.

- I would love to see the Library's hours expand, especially after school. So many students have nowhere to go when school is over before their parents pick them up, and it would be amazing for them to be able to utilize the library as a safe community space after school on the weekends.

**Board of Trustees Concerns**

During the workshop with members of the library's Board of Trustees, a number of topics were discussed that directly pertained to the board. Those comments largely revolved around library funding, the makeup of the board, and board training. Specific participant comments are listed below:

- Review our budgeting process. May need different categories within the budget.

- Need to know what grants/information are available to libraries.

- Increased funding is needed.

- Might need someone on the board or a volunteer who is more familiar with grants/grant-writing.

- Need a more diverse board. Tend to be a board consisting of retired folks with a significant number of retired teachers.

- Board meeting hours might need to be changed. Maybe attract younger board members, maybe attract farmers.

- Board meetings at a different time to involve college students/current teachers, etc.

- Need more board training. Maybe more virtual board training opportunities.

**Employee Concerns**

During their workshop, library employees provided useful feedback that directly pertains to their roles in the library. Much of that information revolved around changes to the workspace that would make their jobs easier and more efficient. Other comments focused on training needs and how the library spaces could be adapted to better serve patrons. Specific participant comments are listed below:

- Need more office space with the renovations.

- More efficient workspaces so that work can be done without having to face away from the patrons being served.

- A pick-up area where children's materials can be picked up without having it at the clerk's desk.

- Better and more efficient staff spaces.

- Better break room.

- Improved circulation desk.

- Increased storage space.

- Training manual/reference binder/program for new staff.

- We do have a lot of patrons that use the library that have mental health issues. Having the staff take some kind of training to help provide the best services to them would be helpful. Sometimes staff wants to be more helpful but just does not have the tools to do so.

- Need a better teen space: a separate teen room, lounge-like and relaxed, somewhat separated from the rest of the library patrons, but also a place where they can be supervised.

- Coffee shop.

- More community rooms.

- Would like some smaller groups of tables, rather than longer tables.

- Some smaller space, especially rooms that could be used for smaller groups such as supervised visits that need a bit more confidentiality.


**Friends of the Library Concerns**

Participants in the Friends of the Library workshop provided feedback on a number of changes that would make it easier for them to conduct their work and support the library. Their comments focused largely on their visibility and on the changes that could be made to library spaces to improve their work efficiency. Specific participant comments are listed below:

- Want to become more visible at public events and get publicity in the newspaper.

- The library has a prime location in the community, being across from the post office and near a bus stop, and this is important in increasing the visibility of the library.

- Find ways to encourage people to stop in from the street – maybe things like a snack bar in the library.

- Buttons or nametags for the Friends would be helpful.

- Improved coordination and connection with library staff. Perhaps have the Friends wear name tags to indicate when they are going in to work on Friends activities.

- Need a storage space, perhaps one a bit "closer to the action" to minimize moving materials up and down floors.

- Could use a work space, perhaps closer to the storage space, just a small designated space.

- A ramp to make it easier for the Friends to move things in and out.

- Need a room for the Friends to meet in and conduct work, store materials, and perhaps access via the side door. This could be a temporary setup before renovation is started, although heating would need to be addressed.

- Would also like tables and chairs, shelving around the room to store baskets, books, and supplies, a cupboard that could be locked and kept pest-free.

- Long-term, the Friends' spaces could be incorporated into other larger community spaces/rooms.


**Social Media Feedback from Teens**

A discussion about social media use was included during the workshop with teens. This was intentionally included because younger social media users often use different social media platforms than their parents or other adults. They may also be one of the first groups to try out the next popular social media platform. Having their feedback may prove useful as the library looks to connect more with teens. Specific participant comments are listed below:

- Participants do use Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Twitch, Snapchat, TikTok, and Pinterest.

- TikTok is very popular among their peers.

- One attendee uses YouTube or Twitch most frequently.

- YouTube is often used for tutorials.

- They are probably not likely to see posts on Facebook. More common among parents and grandparents.

- They do not typically use the library's website.

- One participant does use the Libby app for audiobooks, but this has become more common for her after COVID.

Recommendations

This is just an early step in the long-term planning process. Looking ahead, this report includes the following recommendations:

1. Communicate the final results of the workshops with all the workshop participants and the general public. Make this report available online via the library's website. Share the results widely by exploring options such as the following:
   - Conduct a public presentation of the results. This could be in-person, if appropriate, or virtual.
   - Share the results with library stakeholders including the library Board of Trustees, library employees, and the Friends of the Library.
   - Set up question and answer sessions to discuss the results with some of the groups who participated in the workshops.
   - Publicize the results via press release and social media.

2. Begin the strategic planning process to incorporate this community input into a plan of service for the library.

3. Follow up with other announcements and outreach to the public when the strategic planning has been completed.

4. Create and implement a Communications Plan for the library.

5. Develop an outreach plan to continue the efforts to build and enhance connections with outside groups.

# Appendix 1
# Categorized Idea Lists

## Diverse Programming & Services

- Less focus on books.
- Transferring from a written word to more of an oral/video world.
- Others see a continuation of written word, but perhaps in additional formats of e-books and audiobooks.
- Return to face-to-face interactions.
- Still see a need for books, perhaps more and different books.
- Black box theater, lecture hall in annex.
- Involve the college.
- We seem overcrowded in terms of space for things like books and DVDs.
- With more space available, there would be more flexibility in what items could be purchased for the collection.
- Changing technology – the library needs a 3D printer.
- Finding the balance between in-person and virtual.
- Growth of outreach: going out into the community to make connections at places like schools, community centers, etc.
- Services for the homebound.
- Need to increase the selection of books for children and teens, including multi-language books, even for the youngest readers.
- Become a library of things and loan out other physical items like baking items and tools.
- We need to get the word out about the services provided by the library.
- Seasonal outreach/festival where we can advertise what the library is doing.
- Library card sign-up events.
- Library as a center of a multitude of activities.
- Increased communication and coordination between the library and the school, such as "Battle of the Books."
- Need larger spaces for a wider range of events such as yoga, concerts, etc.
- Space for an art gallery, especially for local art.
- Continue to be involved in schools, like park and summer reading programs.
- Have more tween/teen activities.
- Have some structured activities for teenagers away from parents and the school.
- Gaming, coding and hands-on crafting activities for teenagers. Let the kids constructively make a "mess" without getting in trouble for it, things like art projects.
- The summer reading program is an important piece of the equation.
- Encouraging students, and working with the district, to get students to sign up for library cards.
- Continuing with "Battle of the Books" and working with the library to bring in similar programming. Huge number of participants in Grades 3-5. The numbers drop off in middle school and high school. Having The Community Library play a facilitation role in this program is very helpful.
- Perhaps creating book clubs for students, or a non-competitive reading incentive program, (similar to the summer reading program), during the school year.
- Robust programming for young children and for teens can be very powerful.
- Conduct a seed swap: work with SUNY, Cornell Cooperative Extension, high school agriculture department.

- Have a library presence at the fair with library card applications.
- Have a library presence at the open houses for each of the school buildings
- NaNoWriMo (National Novel Writing Month)
- Inktober
- National Poetry Month
- The Community Library has more human resources (volunteers, Friends, etc.) that can help out with activities in the school.
- Performance space.
- Teen space for gathering and gaming.
- Build a venue to support the artists locally: music, artwork, poetry, etc.
- Continue sharing local artwork, high school artwork, etc.
- Hub for community events.
- Multi-functional space
- A place to celebrate Cobleskill history and arts, showcases, music, museum-related artifacts, and arts events.
- A repository and source for books and media.
- Strong children's programming.
- Expanded collections.
- Children's theater.
- Open-ended multipurpose spaces.
- Alternate study space.
- Host programs for home-schoolers that could bring supplemental classes such as science and art.
- Loan out items like rarely-used tools.
- By hosting community events, especially activities for children, the library would be a more welcoming and engaging center for the community.
- Access to children's books can be helpful for the college students who are in the early childhood education program.
- Continue to have the literacy program students go to The Community Library as part of their program.
- Provide space for local businesses or even smaller-scale creators to conduct meetings, etc.
- There could be additional synergies between the early childhood education program and The Community Library, such as conducting story hours or observing programs.
- A larger multi-purpose room could bring other college programs to the community members who might be more comfortable coming to The Community Library, rather than campus. Things like financial education workshops, forums, or other opportunities for faculty members to conduct programs for the local community.
- The Community Library could be a good neutral location for connecting with agricultural producers and others.
- Create community gathering spaces within the library.
- Flexible multi-use space that could be used by local craft guilds, quilters, needlework, etc.
- Create a maker-space.
- Spaces where it's okay to bring and share food.
- Moving away from the library being that "quiet" place.

- A sustainable real maker-space for any age group to explore and create. Have access to hands-on technology like computers for research and materials to create something related to their research. Any time the library is open.
- The availability of computers and technology will be increasingly important to elders, job searchers, etc. Have the ability to help folks safely use and learn computers and other technology.
- Have the library be an information gateway/resource center to help connect people to other organizations in the community.
- Cooperative efforts with organizations like senior centers in the community, especially to avoid duplication of services.
- Word of mouth is very important in building programs, and it can take time to build up a program.
- Have some resources, study guides, and study rooms for students to gather and prepare for exams like the Regents Exams.
- It's important that students learn more about the public library, even through events like school assemblies, and other events at the school.
- Library card sign-ups at school.
- The school district is vast geographically, and it would be great to bring the library outside of the walls of the building and bring the library to communities like Richmondville and others outside Cobleskill itself. Perhaps pickup locations for materials, or even a "mobile library."
- Continue to put artwork from schools in the library. Host student art shows.
- Have a drive-through "get and go" for drop-off and pick-up of library materials.
- Would like programs directed toward kids their age, but they would like it to be easier for them to sign up to use the rooms.
- A smaller local comic-con conducted every year or every few years.
- Having game nights like Dungeons & Dragons. A local game store hosts gaming events, but their space is limited.
- Game-sharing events where kids could donate/swap some of their games to others who don't have those particular games.
- An audio-visual group to create movies and similar things.
- Would like well-publicized music events where school music groups perform for the community.
- Building tournaments using LEGOs or other materials.
- E-sports.
- Career-centered books and events to help students make their future career decisions. Brochures from other colleges, even from outside the area.
- Would like more graphic novels! Often doesn't check out the book, but they just read books while they are at the library, rather than checking them out.
- Would like book and video "bucket lists" that contain must-read and must-watch lists that can be tailored for teens. Include classics with more modern selections.
- Host themed days and events such as hobbies or interests like Harry Potter, D&D. This would be a way for people with similar interests to meet and interact with each other.
- Events where college students provide information about what it's like to be in college, talk about life after high school.
- Want a library that is no longer underutilized.
- More than books – a community hub.

- Center for both elders and younger generations – intergenerational programming.
- Maker space.
- History discussions.
- Computers and technology – "How-To" classes.
- Create unique programming such as homesteading training which could include canning, raising crops, even making sausage.
- Meeting rooms, especially a larger community room, are needed within the community.
- Bring back the bookmobile to reach those outlying villages and families!
- There's a need for a coffee house/place to chat/place for people to do presentations/place for training/place for performances.
- Setting aside some space for business owners to do some work on occasion. Not quite a business incubator, but similar.
- Spaces and display cases to display historical artifacts and other items.
- A high-tech space with good internet access, scanners, 3D printers, and other state of the art equipment.
- Host events to bring people into town like arts events and concerts.
- Businesses partnering with the library (for example in story time and craft time) can be helpful to both the library and the local business.
- The library (and the community) should be encouraging local/indigenous artists and musicians to share and develop their creations.
- Have the library provide spaces and displays for historical items and events for people to learn more about local history.
- It would be a great place for people learning about local history.
- Offer a wider variety of unique programs for kids. Maybe food competitions, drawing/art classes, etc.
- Offer programming for seniors to connect.
- I am teaching Pre-K-2 general music at Ryder now as well as Orchestra (currently after school). I would love for there to be community programs available that relate to topics I am teaching, or be able to reference, "If you want to learn more about this you can find resources at The Community Library."
- I also love having my string ensemble play at the library around holidays or for special events-- when COVID is over.
- We really need a stage. Even if it was just a room with a raised, carpeted or wooden platform like at Fusion Church. Then music groups could come and play and do Q&A sessions with the audience, guest speakers could do events for small children, the local community theater would utilize it.
- My husband and I do puppetry and we could do puppet shows.
- Catholic Charities runs a yearly Domestic Violence Awareness event and my orchestra plays music at it, which I think would be great to have at the library.
- I really would love to see The Community Library become a hub of community events that bring people and resources that might be out of our community's reach due to distance or financial restraints.

- Create a Civic Engagement Academy. Potentially partner with local political leaders who have had exemplary careers and portray what it means to "work across the aisle" to advance programs for the betterment of our communities. The idea is to build more civic-minded leaders, recruiting youth, too. Perhaps SUNY Cobleskill Clubs & Organizations and/or Institute of Rural Vitality "Rural Policy" may have a lead role. SUNY and the library may cooperate to offer a "Certificate Course." All sorts of topics are possible: host civic debates, FEMA library resources may be a way to highlight and specialize in disaster recovery resources, intro to volunteer opportunities in government or elsewhere, board member training, budgeting 101 for municipalities, etc.
- Wonderopolis/Play: Create a play space that is founded on the concept of wonder and curiosity, the building blocks of interest and innovation. Schoharie County is desperate for indoor recreation serving toddlers, tweens and teens especially during inclement weather. Part of the play area/equipment could be sponsored by local employers. A teen gaming center may bring in other sponsors, too.
- Hobby Shop: Offer monthly introduction to hobbies – it's both therapeutic and may lead to entrepreneurship. A platform to develop mentor programs bridging the intergenerational gaps of learning.
- Building Wealth/Financial Literacy: Recognizing poverty within our community, develop programming to better understand what that means and how to fill the gaps – financial management is a key component.
- The Power of Women: Tap the female support networks to build confidence, engagement and leadership among women. May mitigate the rise of domestic violence, cause more girls to continue practicing/exploring STEM careers, adds diversity and balance to community conversations and decision-making. This can be done in coordination with outside sponsors.
- Focus on the spectrum of wellness. Encourage group activities, host guest speakers, sponsor a research project.

## Building & Infrastructure

- Community meeting place.
- Less focus on books.
- Need for meeting places.
- Generally happy with the current organization of the library space.
- Black box theater, lecture hall in annex.
- Need smaller rooms and offices in better locations.
- Current basement has smaller rooms.
- We seem overcrowded in terms of space for things like books and DVDs.
- With more space available, there would be more flexibility in what items could be purchased for the collection.
- An in-person coffee shop type setup might be good.
- Outside spaces and outside activities.
- Need more office space with the renovations.
- More efficient workspaces so that work can be done without having to face away from the patrons being served.
- A pick-up area where children's materials can be picked up without having it at the clerk's desk.
- Need a better teen space: a separate teen room, lounge-like and relaxed, somewhat separated from the rest of the library patrons, but also a place where they can be supervised.
- The shades in the library block the light from the windows in the evenings, so the building looks dark. Warm, cozy light coming through the windows would make the building more inviting in the evening.
- More space for book displays.
- Need an updated sign outside, perhaps an electronic sign. (Although that might not fit in with historic nature of the community.)
- Need to improve the exterior of the building to make it appear more welcoming.
- Parking lot improvements including lighting and signage.
- Better and more efficient staff spaces.
- Better break room.
- Coffee shop.
- More community rooms.
- Kids space and teen space.
- Would like some smaller groups of tables, rather than longer tables.
- Some smaller space, especially rooms that could be used for smaller groups such as supervised visits that need a bit more confidentiality.
- Improved circulation desk.
- Increased storage space.
- Find ways to encourage people to stop in from the street – maybe things like a snack bar in the library.
- Need a storage space, perhaps one a bit "closer to the action" to minimize moving materials up and down floors.
- Could use a work space, perhaps closer to the storage space, just a small designated space.
- A ramp to make it easier for the Friends to move things in and out.

- Need a room for the Friends to meet in and conduct work, store materials, and perhaps access via the side door. This could be a temporary setup before renovation is started, although heating would need to be addressed.
- Would also like tables and chairs, shelving around the room to store baskets, books, and supplies, a cupboard that could be locked and kept pest-free.
- Long-term, the Friends' spaces could be incorporated into other larger community spaces/rooms.
- Need larger spaces for a wider range of events such as yoga, concerts, etc.
- Space for an art gallery, especially for local art.
- Multi-use large room.
- Safe space for teenagers.
- Performance space.
- Gathering space indoors. (The basement is not ideal.)
- Teen space for gathering and gaming.
- Build a venue to support the artists locally: music, artwork, poetry, etc.
- Gathering space outdoors.
- Meeting space with internet connectivity.
- Multi-functional space.
- A place to celebrate Cobleskill history and arts, showcases, music, museum-related artifacts, and arts events.
- A repository and source for books and media.
- Open-ended multipurpose spaces.
- Alternate study space.
- Parking at The Community Library is likely easier than trying to park at the college.
- A larger multi-purpose room could bring other college programs to the community members who might be more comfortable coming to The Community Library, rather than campus. Things like financial education workshops, forums, or other opportunities for faculty members to conduct programs for the local community.
- Create community gathering spaces within the library.
- Flexible multi-use space that could be used by local craft guilds, quilters, needlework, etc.
- Create a maker-space.
- Spaces where it's okay to bring and share food.
- Having a place in the library for patrons to get a snack or a beverage/coffee, a place for a relaxed chat.
- A sustainable real maker-space for any age group to explore and create. Have access to hands-on technology like computers for research and materials to create something related to their research. Any time the library is open.
- Structure of the library needs to accommodate the range of ages in the community, from children to elders, allow them to safely interact with each other and be separate from each other as needed.
- Have some resources, study guides, and study rooms for students to gather and prepare for exams like the Regents Exams.
- If you create study rooms, have white boards for writing.
- Have a place in the library where people can sit and socialize.
- Have a place in the library where children can be like children, a little louder and more active.

- The current teen area is not an ideal setup because it's a little too open, but it would still need to be supervised.
- Have a drive-through "get and go" for drop-off and pick-up of library materials.
- There is a need for more parking. It would be easy to outgrow the availability of parking.
- Need a separate room for a library cat, maybe work with a local animal shelter.
- Would like a teen space somewhat separated from the rest of the library where teens can talk without being shushed.
- Would like comfy places to sit: carpeted space with comfortable chairs and seating.
- Want a library that is no longer underutilized.
- Maker space.
- Meeting rooms, especially a larger community room, are needed within the community.
- There's a need for a coffee house/place to chat/place for people to do presentations/place for training/place for performances.
- Space is very much needed in the community: for example, space for the Girl Scouts to meet.
- Setting aside some space for business owners to do some work on occasion. Not quite a business incubator, but similar.
- A SAFE place for kids in the county to go to do homework, play games, and participate in activities.
- Perhaps some of the annex spaces could be accessible and usable during hours when the library is not open.
- Could there be opportunities to rent these annex spaces to supplement the library's funding stream? Might not be legally possible.
- A common room for the public to gather would be important.
- Spaces and display cases to display historical artifacts and other items.
- A high-tech space with good internet access, scanners, 3D printers, and other state of the art equipment.
- Could companies like MidTel help fund/supply high-tech spaces like this?
- Need meeting space for large groups (up to 50 people) in the community, especially a multipurpose room that could be converted as necessary. (The library basement just doesn't quite cut it.)
- The library could be more welcoming to younger children, including play areas and having more toys out.
- Have the library provide spaces and displays for historical items and events for people to learn more about local history.
- Accessibility would be very important for many people.
- There needs to be audio-visual capability in a multipurpose room: microphone, speakers, projector, screen, etc.
- A place for people to connect online, maybe even remote learning opportunities.
- A smaller play-space for children, maybe where parents could use a computer or connect online while their children play.
- An improved space for teenagers where they aren't distracting others, make use of after school, do homework, hang out.
- Parking can be a challenge.
- Wild wish from the Quilt Guild: would love to have a closet they could lock up materials that are donated.
- Storage/work room with multiple heavy-duty rolling carts for moving books.

- Waist-high shelves around edges of room would be useful for books or raffle baskets.
- Two nice tables for raffle basket prep and enough chairs for use in meetings.
- A small closet or cupboard for storing supplies out of sight with storage containers.
- The room would preferably be on a ground level floor near an exit.
- Storage cupboard that would be able to keep rodents and insects out.
- Space in room to wrap baskets for raffle.
- Area to store book stands and books that are donated.
- Boxes of books need to be stored in an area that is close to an exit for used book sale and outdoor raffles.
- We really need a stage. Even if it was just a room with a raised, carpeted or wooden platform like at Fusion Church. Then music groups could come and play and do Q&A sessions with the audience, guest speakers could do events for small children, the local community theater would utilize it.

## Community Center

- Focal point in the community for groups and people to gather.
- Community meeting place.
- Need for meeting places.
- A lively community due to an active and open college.
- People will need to be together.
- Generally happy with the current organization of the library space.
- Need smaller rooms and offices in better locations.
- Current basement has smaller rooms.
- Need to be a 24/7 resource for the community.
- Finding the balance between in-person and virtual.
- An in-person coffee shop type setup might be good.
- Outside spaces and outside activities.
- Staying open until 9 pm on some nights would be useful, especially when community rooms are reopened, or for people who travel a significant distance to work.
- More community rooms.
- Kids space and teen space.
- Library as a center of a multitude of activities.
- The library has a prime location in the community, being across from the post office and near a bus stop, and this is important in increasing the visibility of the library.
- Find ways to encourage people to stop in from the street – maybe things like a snack bar in the library.
- Need larger spaces for a wider range of events such as yoga, concerts, etc.
- Space for an art gallery, especially for local art.
- Multi-use large room.
- Performance space.
- Gathering space indoors. (The basement is not ideal.)
- Teen space for gathering and gaming.
- Build a venue to support the artists locally: music, artwork, poetry, etc.
- Gathering space outdoors.
- Hub for community events.
- Multi-functional space.
- A place to celebrate Cobleskill history and arts, showcases, music, museum-related artifacts, and arts events.
- By hosting community events, especially activities for children, the library would be a more welcoming and engaging center for the community.
- It could be a resource for some of the off-campus students, but there are struggles in getting the SUNY students to use the college library.
- Provide space for local businesses or even smaller-scale creators to conduct meetings, etc.
- A larger multi-purpose room could bring other college programs to the community members who might be more comfortable coming to The Community Library, rather than campus. Things like financial education workshops, forums, or other opportunities for faculty members to conduct programs for the local community.
- Create community gathering spaces within the library.

- Flexible multi-use space that could be used by local craft guilds, quilters, needlework, etc.
- Spaces where it's okay to bring and share food.
- Moving away from the library being that "quiet" place.
- Having a place in the library for patrons to get a snack or a beverage/coffee, a place for a relaxed chat.
- Structure of the library needs to accommodate the range of ages in the community, from children to elders, allow them to safely interact with each other and be separate from each other as needed.
- Have a place in the library where people can sit and socialize.
- Have a place in the library where children can be like children, a little louder and more active.
- The current teen area is not an ideal setup because it's a little too open, but it would still need to be supervised.
- Bigger population since the community is at a bit of a crossroads.
- Sees a more diverse population in the future.
- More people moving up from downstate for affordable and more spacious housing.
- Would like programs directed toward kids their age, but they would like it to be easier for them to sign up to use the rooms.
- Would like a teen space somewhat separated from the rest of the library where teens can talk without being shushed.
- Would like comfy places to sit: carpeted space with comfortable chairs and seating.
- More than books – a community hub.
- Build community relationships – library could be part of this.
- Center for both elders and younger generations – intergenerational programming.
- Meeting rooms, especially a larger community room, are needed within the community.
- Would like to see the area become more business-friendly, family-friendly, and visitor-friendly.
- Would like to become the heart of the county again.
- There is a need for a community center, and ideally the library could draw people to the community by being a community center.
- There's a need for a coffee house/place to chat/place for people to do presentations/place for training/place for performances.
- Space is very much needed in the community: for example, space for the Girl Scouts to meet.
- Perhaps some of the annex spaces could be accessible and usable during hours when the library is not open.
- A common room for the public to gather would be important.
- Drawing more people into town and increasing foot traffic into town would be very helpful to the local business leaders.
- Host events to bring people into town like arts events and concerts.
- The library (and the community) should be encouraging local/indigenous artists and musicians to share and develop their creations.
- Need meeting space for large groups (up to 50 people) in the community, especially a multipurpose room that could be converted as necessary. (The library basement just doesn't quite cut it.)
- The library could be more welcoming to younger children, including play areas and having more toys out.
- A place for people to connect online, maybe even remote learning opportunities.

- An improved space for teenagers where they aren't distracting others, make use of after school, do homework, hang out.
- Places for groups to hold monthly meetings.
- I would love to see the Library's hours expand, especially after school. So many students have nowhere to go when school is over before their parents pick them up, and it would be amazing for them to be able to utilize the library as a safe community space after school on the weekends.
- I really would love to see The Community Library become a hub of community events that bring people and resources that might be out of our community's reach due to distance or financial restraints.

## Community Partnerships

- Communicating with other organizations in the community: rotary, exchange club, the school, etc. (It would be important to discuss how to do this, including attending other groups' meetings, etc.)
- Involve the college.
- Growth of outreach: going out into the community to make connections at places like schools, community centers, etc.
- Increased communication and coordination between the library and the school, such as "Battle of the Books."
- Increased communication and coordination between the library and SUNY, especially their library.
- Improved connections between various library groups. Perhaps, a community calendar.
- Continue to be involved in schools, like park and summer reading programs.
- School district working through a financial crisis.
- Decreasing school population but starting to stabilize.
- The summer reading program is an important piece of the equation.
- Encouraging students, and working with the district, to get students to sign up for library cards.
- Continuing with "Battle of the Books" and working with the library to bring in similar programming. Huge number of participants in Grades 3-5. The numbers drop off in middle school and high school. Having The Community Library play a facilitation role in this program is very helpful.
- Conduct a seed swap: work with SUNY, Cornell Cooperative Extension, high school agriculture department.
- Have a library presence at the fair with library card applications.
- Have a library presence at the open houses for each of the school buildings.
- The Community Library has more human resources (volunteers, Friends, etc.) that can help out with activities in the school.
- Continue sharing local artwork, high school artwork, etc.
- A place to celebrate Cobleskill history and arts, showcases, music, museum-related artifacts, and arts events.
- Host programs for home-schoolers that could bring supplemental classes such as science and art.
- Access to children's books can be helpful for the college students who are in the early childhood education program.
- Continue to have the literacy program students go to The Community Library as part of their program.
- Establishing an open line of communication between the library and the college could be vital.
- There could be additional synergies between the early childhood education program and The Community Library, such as conducting story hours or observing programs.
- A larger multi-purpose room could bring other college programs to the community members who might be more comfortable coming to The Community Library, rather than campus. Things like financial education workshops, forums, or other opportunities for faculty members to conduct programs for the local community.
- The Community Library could be a good neutral location for connecting with agricultural producers and others.

- Flexible multi-use space that could be used by local craft guilds, quilters, needlework, etc.
- Cooperative efforts with organizations like senior centers in the community, especially to avoid duplication of services.
- Word of mouth is very important in building programs, and it can take time to build up a program.
- Growing and expanding the partnerships between The Community Library and the school libraries is important.
- It's important that students learn more about the public library, even through events like school assemblies, and other events at the school.
- Library card sign-ups at school.
- The school district is vast geographically, and it would be great to bring the library outside of the walls of the building and bring the library to communities like Richmondville and others outside Cobleskill itself. Perhaps pickup locations for materials, or even a "mobile library."
- Need a separate room for a library cat, maybe work with a local animal shelter.
- Would like well-publicized music events where school music groups perform for the community.
- Events where college students provide information about what it's like to be in college, talk about life after high school.
- Build community relationships – library could be part of this.
- Include economic development agencies, SUNY, schools, County Department of Health in partnerships.
- Make agricultural connections with cooperative extension and other agricultural groups.
- Mental health and social health issues are big issues, especially in the aftermath of COVID. Need to connect with health agencies like the hospital.
- Partnering with SUNY for tutoring, community service, etc.
- Connect with agriculture and agritourism.
- Bring back the bookmobile to reach those outlying villages and families!
- Space is very much needed in the community: for example, space for the Girl Scouts to meet.
- Setting aside some space for business owners to do some work on occasion. Not quite a business incubator, but similar.
- Partnerships with businesses could be a great way to bring those activities to the library.
- More cooperation and coordination between the various libraries in Schoharie County would be beneficial.
- Could companies like MidTel help fund/supply high-tech spaces like this?
- More grant proposals from The Community Library to the Arts Council might be an important aspect in the future of the community and the library.
- Businesses partnering with the library (for example in story time and craft time) can be helpful to both the library and the local business.
- The library (and the community) should be encouraging local/indigenous artists and musicians to share and develop their creations.
- Wild wish from the Quilt Guild: would love to have a closet they could lock up materials that are donated.
- Head Start is trying to promote literacy and reading every day with their families. Partnering together could be important in doing so.

- Create a Civic Engagement Academy. Potentially partner with local political leaders who have had exemplary careers and portray what it means to "work across the aisle" to advance programs for the betterment of our communities. The idea is to build more civic-minded leaders, recruiting youth, too. Perhaps SUNY Cobleskill Clubs & Organizations and/or Institute of Rural Vitality "Rural Policy" may have a lead role. SUNY and the library may cooperate to offer a "Certificate Course."  All sorts of topics are possible: host civic debates, FEMA library resources may be a way to highlight and specialize in disaster recovery resources, intro to volunteer opportunities in government or elsewhere, board member training, budgeting 101 for municipalities, etc.
- Wonderopolis/Play: Create a play space that is founded on the concept of wonder and curiosity, the building blocks of interest and innovation. Schoharie County is desperate for indoor recreation serving toddlers, tweens and teens especially during inclement weather. Part of the play area/equipment could be sponsored by local employers. A teen gaming center may bring in other sponsors, too.
- The Power of Women: Tap the female support networks to build confidence, engagement and leadership among women. May mitigate the rise of domestic violence, cause more girls to continue practicing/exploring STEM careers, adds diversity and balance to community conversations and decision-making. This can be done in coordination with outside sponsors.

## Community Resources, Social Services & Economic Development

- Communication with a changing community.
- Library becomes a broader source of information for the community.
- Provider of local information about what is going on in the local community, finding out how things work locally. Provides a deeper understanding of what is going on locally.
- Job losses, so there's hope that these issues will stabilize in the long-term.
- A fine-free or fine forgiveness program at the library would be helpful in the community, especially for folks struggling financially.
- Community economically recovering from COVID over the next five years.
- The availability of computers and technology will be increasingly important to elders, job searchers, etc. Have the ability to help folks safely use and learn computers and other technology.
- Have the library be an information gateway/resource center to help connect people to other organizations in the community.
- Have some resources, study guides, and study rooms for students to gather and prepare for exams like the Regents Exams.
- The school district is vast geographically, and it would be great to bring the library outside of the walls of the building and bring the library to communities like Richmondville and others outside Cobleskill itself. Perhaps pickup locations for materials, or even a "mobile library."
- Bigger population since the community is at a bit of a crossroads.
- Sees a more diverse population in the future.
- More people moving up from downstate for affordable and more spacious housing.
- Foresees a good economic environment.
- Destination for tourism.
- Include economic development agencies, SUNY, schools, County Department of Health in partnerships.
- Mental health and social health issues are big issues, especially in the aftermath of COVID. Need to connect with health agencies like the hospital.
- Partnering with SUNY for tutoring, community service, etc.
- More meaningful jobs are necessary to prevent the outmigration of people, especially younger people and families.
- Would like to see the area become more business-friendly, family-friendly, and visitor-friendly.
- Setting aside some space for business owners to do some work on occasion. Not quite a business incubator, but similar.
- A really vibrant downtown with people out and about would be great, including businesses and the arts.
- Economic growth to fill the empty storefronts is important. Filling those stores with businesses that are missing locally would be ideal.
- A walkable village and family fitness events and trails would be great.
- It would be helpful if the library was a clearinghouse for community information for people seeking answers to questions locally. Help connect families to the right resources.
- Perhaps the library could provide jobs, volunteer opportunities, or internships for teenagers or students seeking library or similar roles.

- We do have a lot of patrons that use the library that have mental health issues. Having the staff take some kind of training to help provide the best services to them would be helpful. Sometimes staff wants to be more helpful but just does not have the tools to do so.
- Building Wealth/Financial Literacy: Recognizing poverty within our community, develop programming to better understand what that means and how to fill the gaps – financial management is a key component.
- Focus on the spectrum of wellness. Encourage group activities, host guest speakers, sponsor a research project.

## Access to Broadband and Technology

- More and diverse technology will be needed.
- Need to address connectivity problems, pockets of the community that lack access to broadband.
- Changing technology – the library needs a 3D printer.
- Need to meet the technology needs of the community including lack of broadband access. The library might need to fill that gap.
- A place that provides access to the internet/broadband.
- Meeting space with internet connectivity.
- Increasing importance of the library in providing computer access for those who remain unconnected to the internet.
- A sustainable real maker-space for any age group to explore and create. Have access to hands-on technology like computers for research and materials to create something related to their research. Any time the library is open.
- The availability of computers and technology will be increasingly important to elders, job searchers, etc. Have the ability to help folks safely use and learn computers and other technology.
- Technologically connected community.
- Computers and technology – "How To" classes.
- Better infrastructure, particularly internet access is needed in the area. The library will play an important role in filling this gap. It's not as big of a challenge for business owners in town; more for residents who live in the rural areas that have minimal, if any options for broadband access.
- A high-tech space with good internet access, scanners, 3D printers, and other state of the art equipment.
- Could companies like MidTel help fund/supply high-tech spaces like this?
- There needs to be audio-visual capability in a multipurpose room: microphone, speakers, projector, screen, etc.
- A place for people to connect online, maybe even remote learning opportunities.
- A smaller play-space for children, maybe where parents could use a computer or connect online while their children play.
- Especially during COVID, so many people in our community do not have reliable internet. The Community Library should be a place where they can do homework on the weekends and afternoons (or during the day for remote and hybrid students) or have access to the internet. Right now many students have to sit in the school parking lot to get Wi-Fi.

## Miscellaneous Comments

- An increase in nonresidents/people moving in from the City.
- An increase in renters, becoming more suburban.
- The community will be smaller, fewer people, small farms.
- Changing demographics: an influx of people moving in from downstate.
- Community will have an increasing percentage of elders.
- The main thoroughfare would benefit from being much more attractive commercially and residentially, especially to be attractive to small businesses.
- There are businesses and organizations that make Cobleskill unique compared to the rest of the county: movie theater, fast food, grocery store, college, hospital.
- I think because of COVID we are going to start seeing an influx of people migrating upstate from downstate areas like Long Island. I am hoping that will mean growth for our community, which would use the library more often than now.

# Appendix 2
# Raw Data

Meeting Number:         1

Meeting Date/Time:      Thursday, October 8, 2020; 2:30 pm

Meeting Location:       Zoom Conference Call

Group Description:      Library Trustees

General notes:          Held an hour-long meeting via Zoom. Eight trustees participated. The discussion was useful and productive.

**Standard Question 1: Define your Community.**

- diverse
- agricultural
- insular
- rural
- rural
- diverse
- diverse
- geographically spread out
- rural
- suburban
- stable
- parts of the area are technologically needy
- multiple towns in the school district
- multigenerational

**Standard Question 2: What do you see as the future of the library and the community over the next 5 to 10 years?**

- Focal point in the community for groups and people to gather.
- Community meeting place.
- Less focus on books.
- Transferring from a written word to more of an oral/video world.
- Others see a continuation of written word, but perhaps in additional formats of e-books and audiobooks.
- Return to face-to-face interactions.
- Still see a need for books, perhaps more and different books.
- Need for meeting places.
- A lively community due to an active and open college.
- An increase in nonresidents/people moving in from the City.
- An increase in renters, becoming more suburban.
- More and diverse technology will be needed.

- People will need to be together.
- The community will be smaller, fewer people, small farms.
- Communication with a changing community.

**Standard Question 3: Who else should we talk to?**

- School librarians (K-12)
- School board, administrators, teachers
- Students
- Young adult professionals
- Parents
- Political leaders
- Community leaders
- Non-resident property owners
- Tourists/travelers/campground visitors

Specific Large Group Question

**Question: What does the Board of Trustees need in order to be successful in their role?**

- Review our budgeting process. May need different categories within the budget.
- Need a more diverse board. Tend to be a board consisting of retired folks with a significant number of retired teachers.
- Board meeting hours might need to be changed. Maybe attract younger board members, maybe attract farmers.
- Need to address connectivity problems, pockets of the community that lack access to broadband.
- Need more board training. Maybe more virtual board training opportunities.
- Need to know what grants/information are available to libraries.
- Might need someone on the board or a volunteer who is more familiar with grants/grant-writing.
- Increased funding.

Specific Breakout Questions - Group 1

**Question: How do we market the library and increase its visibility in the community?**

- Newspapers
- Facebook
- Online
- Outdoor signage

- Communicating with other organizations in the community: rotary, exchange club, the school, etc. (It would be important to discuss how to do this, including attending other groups' meetings, etc.)

**Question: Is there a better way to organize and use the current space for patron use?**

- A difficult question during this time of COVID.
- Generally happy with the current organization of the library space.

Specific Breakout Questions - Group 2

**Question: What programs or groups need to be added?**

- Black box theater, lecture hall in the annex.
- Involve the college.
- Board meetings at a different time to involve college students/current teachers, etc.

**Question: How do we move forward in renovation of the annex? Are the current plans still appropriate?**

- Need smaller rooms and offices in better locations.
- Current basement has smaller rooms.

Specific Breakout Questions - Group 3

**Question: Should the hours of the library be changed?**

- You can't please everyone, but perhaps eliminate some evening hours to be open longer on Saturdays.

**Question: Is the current budget allocation of funds appropriate? Should we be spending more money on books? Do we need to expand the type of collections we have?**

- We seem overcrowded in terms of space for things like books and DVDs.
- With more space available, there would be more flexibility in what items could be purchased for the collection.

Meeting Number:        2

Meeting Date/Time:     Friday, October 16, 2020; 9:00 am

Meeting Location:      Zoom Conference Call

Group Description:     Library Staff

General notes:         Held an hour-long meeting via Zoom. Four staff members participated. There were some technical difficulties at the beginning of the meeting. The discussion was frank, useful, and productive.

**Standard Question 1: Define your Community.**

- Welcoming
- Receptive
- Ready for programs
- Close knit
- Willing to help
- My family

**Standard Question 2: What do you see as the future of the library and the community over the next 5 to 10 years?**

- Changing technology – the library needs a 3D printer.
- Need to be a 24/7 resource for the community.
- Finding the balance between in-person and virtual.
- An in-person coffee shop type setup might be good.
- Growth of outreach: going out into the community to make connections at places like schools, community centers, etc.
- Outside spaces and outside activities.
- Changing demographics: an influx of people moving in from downstate.
- Services for the homebound.

**Standard Question 3: Who else should we talk to?**

- Schoharie Economic Enterprise Corp. (SEEC)
- Local businesses
- Local government leaders
- School districts (including nearby smaller districts)
- Middle schoolers
- Seniors
- Hospital

Specific Large Group Questions

**Question: How do we best serve the needs of the community?**

- Need to increase selection of books for children and teens, including multi-language books, even for the youngest readers.
- Become a library of things and loan out other physical items like baking items and tools.
- We need to get the word out about the services provided by the library.
- Need to meet the technology needs of the community including lack of broadband access. The library might need to fill that gap.

**Question: How can the Library better support the staff and its work?**

- Need more office space with the renovations.
- More efficient workspaces so that work can be done without having to face away from the patrons being served.
- A pick-up area where children's materials can be picked up without having it at the clerk's desk.
- Need a better teen space: a separate teen room, lounge-like and relaxed, somewhat separated from the rest of the library patrons, but also a place where they can be supervised.
- Training manual/reference binder/program for new staff.
- We do have a lot of patrons that use the library that have mental health issues. Having the staff take some kind of training to help provide the best services to them would be helpful. Sometimes staff wants to be more helpful but just does not have the tools to do so.

Specific Breakout Questions - Group 1

**Question: How do we increase the visibility of the library and its programs?**

- Seasonal outreach/festival where we advertise what the library is doing.
- Library card sign-up events.
- The shades in the library block the light from the windows in the evenings, so the building looks dark. Warm, cozy light coming through the windows would make the building more inviting in the evening.
- More space for book displays.
- Need an updated sign outside, perhaps an electronic sign. (Although that might not fit in with historic nature of the community.)
- Need to improve the exterior of the building to make it appear more welcoming.
- Parking lot improvements including lighting and signage.

Specific Breakout Questions - Group 2

**Question: Should the hours of the library be changed?**

- Yes. (Recognizing that the budget can limit this.)
- Staying open until 9 pm on some nights would be useful, especially when community rooms are reopened, or for people who travel a significant distance to work.
- Expanding some of the hours on Saturday would be good.
- The more days we're open, the better the access.

**Question: What are your ideas regarding the expansion into the annex?**

- Better and more efficient staff spaces.
- Better break room.
- Coffee shop.
- More community rooms.
- Kids space and teen space.
- Would like some smaller groups of tables, rather than longer tables.
- Some smaller space, especially rooms that could be used for smaller groups such as supervised visits that need a bit more confidentiality.
- Improved circulation desk.
- Increased storage space.

Meeting Number:        3

Meeting Date/Time:     Thursday, October 22, 2020; 2:00 pm

Meeting Location:      Zoom Conference Call

Group Description:     Friends of the Library

General notes:         Held an hour-long meeting via Zoom. Four members of the library's Friends group participated in a productive and useful discussion.


**Standard Question 1: Define your Community.**

- Bedroom community
- Community-minded for events
- Supportive
- Village & town
- State college
- Commercial hub
- Educational component
- SUNY
- Economically diverse
- Agricultural
- Rural
- Lack of jobs
- Bedroom community
- Largest public school system in county
- Hospital


**Standard Question 2: What do you see as the future of the library and the community over the next 5 to 10 years?**

- Library as the center of a multitude of activities.
- Library becomes a broader source of information for the community.
- Provider of local information about what is going on in the local community, finding out how things work locally. Provides a deeper understanding of what is going on locally.
- Increased communication and coordination between the library and the school, such as "Battle of the Books."
- Increased communication and coordination between the library and SUNY, especially their library.
- Improved connections between various library groups, including the library. Perhaps, a community calendar.

**Standard Question 3: Who else should we talk to?**

- Parents
- Head Start
- Other libraries (college and public school)
- Montgomery-Fulton-Schoharie County literacy organization
- Adult Learning Group at SCHOOL (Schoharie County Home of Ongoing Learning)

Specific Large Group Questions

**Question: How can the Friends increase their visibility in the community in support of the Library?**

- Want to become more visible at public events and get publicity in the newspaper.
- The library has a prime location in the community, being across from the post office and near a bus stop, and this is important in increasing the visibility of the library.
- Find ways to encourage people to stop in from the street – maybe things like a snack bar in the library.
- Buttons or nametags for the Friends would be helpful.

**Question: What can the Library do for the Friends?**

- Need a storage space, perhaps one a bit "closer to the action" to minimize moving materials up and down floors.
- Could use a work space, perhaps closer to the storage space, just a small designated space.
- Improved coordination and connection with library staff. Perhaps have the Friends wear name tags to indicate when they are going in to work on Friends activities.
- A ramp to make it easier for the Friends to move things in and out.

Specific Breakout Questions - Group 1

**Question: Do the Friends need more space for their use?**

- Need a room for the Friends to meet in and conduct work, store materials, and perhaps access via the side door. This could be a temporary setup before renovation is started, although heating would need to be addressed.
- Would also like tables and chairs, shelving around the room to store baskets, books, and supplies, a cupboard that could be locked and kept pest-free.
- Long-term, the Friends' spaces could be incorporated into other larger community spaces/rooms.

Specific Breakout Questions - Group 2

**Question: What are your ideas regarding moving forward with the renovation of the annex?**

- Need larger spaces for a wider range of events such as yoga, concerts, etc.
- Space for an art gallery, especially for local art.
- Multi-use large room.
- Storage/work room with multiple heavy-duty rolling carts for moving books.
- Waist-high shelves around edges of room would be useful for books or raffle baskets.
- Two nice tables for raffle basket prep and enough chairs for use in meetings.
- A small closet or cupboard for storing supplies out of sight with storage containers.
- The room would preferably be on a ground level floor near an exit.
- Storage cupboard that would be able to keep rodents and insects out.
- Space in room to wrap baskets for raffle.
- Area to store book stands and books that are donated.
- Boxes of books need to be stored in an area that is close to an exit for used book sale and outdoor raffles.

**Question: Do the current plans still work?**

- We are not fully aware of the current plans. The public needs a good understanding of the plans for expansion.
- A formal fundraising program will be helpful for the public to fully understand the costs and scope of whatever the final plans are for expansion or renovation.

Meeting Number: 4

Meeting Date/Time: Wednesday, November 4, 2020; 7:00 pm

Meeting Location: Zoom Conference Call

Group Description: Cobleskill-Richmondville Central School District representatives.

General notes: Held an hour-long meeting via Zoom. Five members of the CRCSD community, including staff and teachers, participated in a very productive discussion.


**Standard Question 1: Define your Community.**

- Supportive
- Involved
- Invested
- Close
- Small
- Open to new opportunities
- Looking for opportunities for children/students
- Small town
- Spread out
- Geographically challenging
- Geographically challenging


**Standard Question 2: What do you see as the future of the library and the community over the next 5 to 10 years?**

- Continue to be involved in schools, like park and summer reading programs.
- Have more tween/teen activities.
- Have some structured activities for teenagers away from parents and the school.
- Safe space for teenagers.
- Gaming, coding, and hands-on crafting activities for teenagers. Let the kids constructively make a "mess" without getting in trouble for it, things like arts projects.
- School district working through a financial crisis.
- Decreasing school population but starting to stabilize.
- Job losses, so there's a hope that these issues will stabilize in the long-term.


**Standard Question 3: Who else should we talk to?**

- SCCAP (Schoharie County Community Action Program)
- Cornell Cooperative Extension
- SUNY Cobleskill

- Cobleskill Historical Society/County Historian
- 4H
- Local arts council/Schohariearts
- Art teachers


Specific Large Group Questions

**Question: How can the library reach out to the communities within the CRCS District?**

- The summer reading program is an important piece of the equation.
- Encouraging students, and working with the district, to get students to sign up for library cards.
- Continuing with "Battle of the Books" and working with the library to bring in similar programming. Huge number of participants in Grades 3-5. The numbers drop off in middle school and high school. Having The Community Library play a facilitation role in this program is very helpful.
- Perhaps creating book clubs for students, or a non-competitive reading incentive program, (similar to the summer reading program), during the school year.
- A fine-free or fine forgiveness program at the library would be helpful in the community, especially for folks struggling financially.
- Robust programming for young children and for teens can be very powerful.
- Conduct a seed swap: work with SUNY, Cornell Cooperative Extension, high school agriculture department.
- Have a library presence at the fair with library card applications.
- Have a library presence at the open houses for each of the school buildings.


**Question: How can the Library work with you in the future?**

- NaNoWriMo (National Novel Writing Month)
- Inktober
- National Poetry Month
- The Community Library has more human resources (volunteers, Friends, etc.) that can help out with activities in the school.


**Question: We currently have architectural drawings for expansion into the annex. Do you have ideas or questions about that expansion?**

- Performance space.
- Gathering space indoors. (The basement is not ideal.)
- Teen space for gathering and gaming.
- Build a venue to support the artists locally: music, artwork, poetry, etc.
- Gathering space outdoors.
- Continue sharing local artwork, high school artwork, etc.

Meeting Number:        5

Meeting Date/Time:     Thursday, November 12, 2020; 4:00 pm

Meeting Location:      Zoom Conference Call

Group Description:     SUNY Cobleskill representatives

General notes:         Held an hour-long meeting via Zoom. Six members of the SUNY Cobleskill community, including faculty and staff, participated in a useful and productive discussion.


**Standard Question 1: Define your Community.**

- Small town
- Untapped potential
- Small town
- Strong sense of community
- Rural
- Small
- Agrarian
- Scenic
- Small town
- Changes when college students leave
- College is centrally located


**Standard Question 2: What do you see as the future of the library and the community over the next 5 to 10 years?**

- A place that provides access to the internet/broadband.
- Hub for community events.
- Meeting space with internet connectivity.
- Multi-functional space.
- A place to celebrate Cobleskill history and arts, showcases, music, museum-related artifacts, and arts events.
- A repository and source for books and media.
- Strong children's programming.
- Expanded collections.
- Children's theater.
- Open-ended multipurpose spaces.
- Alternate study space.
- Host programs for home-schoolers that could bring supplemental classes such as science and art.
- Loan out items like rarely-used tools.

**Standard Question 3: Who else should we talk to?**

- School board
- Teachers
- Basset Health Care Network
- Office for the Aging
- Arts council
- Schoharie County Historical Society
- Iroquois Museum
- Grosvenor Art Gallery on campus
- Economic development organizations

Specific Large Group Questions

**Question: How can the library reach out to the communities you serve?**

- By hosting community events, especially activities for children, the library would be a more welcoming and engaging center for the community.
- It could be a resource for some of the off-campus students, but there are struggles in getting the SUNY students to use the college library.
- Access to children's books can be helpful for the college students who are in the early childhood education program.
- Continue to have the literacy program students go to The Community Library as part of their program.
- Provide space for local businesses or even smaller-scale creators to conduct meetings, etc.

**Question: How can the library work with you in the future?**

- There could be additional synergies between the early childhood education program and The Community Library, such as conducting story hours or observing programs.
- A larger multi-purpose room could bring other college programs to the community members who might be more comfortable coming to The Community Library, rather than campus. Things like financial education workshops, forums, or other opportunities for faculty members to conduct programs for the local community.
- The Community Library could be a good neutral location for connecting with agricultural producers and others.
- Parking at The Community Library is likely easier than trying to park at the college.
- Establishing an open line of communication between the library and the college could be vital.

**Question: The Community Library currently has architectural drawings for expansion. Do you have ideas or questions about that expansion?**

- Create community gathering spaces within the library.
- Flexible multi-use space that could be used by local craft guilds, quilters, needlework, etc.
- Create a maker-space.
- Spaces where it's okay to bring and share food.

Meeting Number:          6

Meeting Date/Time:       Tuesday, November 17, 2020; 7:00 pm

Meeting Location:        Zoom Conference Call

Group Description:       Cobleskill-Richmondville Central School District representatives

General notes:           Held an hour-long meeting via Zoom. Four members of the CRCSD community,
                         including a school board member, two teachers, and a school counselor,
                         participated in a very productive discussion.

**Standard Question 1: Define your Community.**

- Hard-working
- Cozy
- Supportive
- Caring
- Friendly
- Rural
- Farming
- Diverse socioeconomically
- Diverse ages
- College
- Hospital
- Largest school district in the county

**Standard Question 2: What do you see as the future of the library and the community over the next 5 to 10 years?**

- Community economically recovering from COVID over the next five years.
- Moving away from the library being that "quiet" place.
- Having a place in the library for patrons to get a snack or a beverage/coffee, a place for a relaxed chat.
- Community will have an increasing percentage of elders.
- Increasing importance of the library in providing computer access for those who remain unconnected to the internet.
- A sustainable real maker-space for any age group to explore and create. Have access to hands-on technology like computers for research and materials to create something related to their research. Any time the library is open.
- Structure of the library needs to accommodate the range of ages in the community, from children to elders, allow them to safely interact with each other and be separate from each other as needed.

- The availability of computers and technology will be increasingly important to elders, job searchers, etc. Have the ability to help folks safely use and learn computers and other technology.
- Have the library be an information gateway/resource center to help connect people to other organizations in the community.
- Cooperative efforts with organizations like senior centers in the community, especially to avoid duplication of services.
- Word of mouth is very important in building programs, and it can take time to build up a program.

**Standard Question 3: Who else should we talk to?**

- School-age children
- Parents of children in daycares
- Office for the Aging
- Schoharie Economic Enterprise Corp - SEEC
- Cobleskill Partnership, Inc. - CPI
- SUNY Cobleskill
- Hospital
- Farming community
- Schoharie County Farm Bureau
- Local officials from all the local communities

Specific Large Group Questions

**Question: How can the library reach out to the communities within the CRCS District?**

- Have some resources, study guides, and study rooms for students to gather and prepare for exams like the Regents exams.
- Growing and expanding the partnerships between The Community Library and the school libraries is important.
- It's important that students learn more about the public library, even through events like school assemblies, and other events at the school.
- Library card sign-ups at school.
- The school district is vast geographically, and it would be great to bring the library outside of the walls of the building and bring the library to communities like Richmondville and others outside Cobleskill itself. Perhaps pickup locations for materials, or even a "mobile library."

**Question: How can the Library work with you in the future?**

- Continue to put artwork from schools in the library. Host student art shows.

**Question: We currently have architectural drawings for expansion into the annex. Do you have ideas or questions about that expansion?**

- If you create study rooms, have white boards for writing.
- Have a place in the library where people can sit and socialize.
- Have a place in the library where children can be like children, a little louder and more active.
- The current teen area is not an ideal setup because it's a little too open, but it would still need to be supervised.
- Have a drive-through "get and go" for drop-off and pick-up of library materials.
- The scope and cost of an expansion would need to be made public.
- There is a need for more parking. It would be easy to outgrow the availability of parking.
- Need a separate room for a library cat, maybe work with a local animal shelter.

Meeting Number:        7

Meeting Date/Time:     Thursday, November 19, 2020; 4:00 pm

Meeting Location:      Zoom Conference Call

Group Description:     Teens

General notes:         Held a 45-minute meeting via Zoom. Two tenth-grade high school teens
                       participated. The discussion was very productive.


**Standard Question 1: Define your Community.**

- Small
- Small
- Close-knit
- Country
- Historical
- Not modern
- Old fashioned


**Standard Question 2: What do you see as the future of the library and the community over the next 5 to 10 years?**

- Bigger population in Cobleskill since the community is a bit of a crossroads.
- Sees a more diverse population in the future.
- More people moving up from downstate for affordable and more spacious housing.


**Standard Question 3: Who else should we talk to?**

- The popular kids at school (not just the "nerdy" kids)
- Middle school students
- College students


Specific Large Group Questions

**Question: What activities, events, or programs would you like to see at the library?**

- Would like programs directed toward kids their age, but they would like it to be easier for them to sign up to use the rooms.
- A smaller local comic-con conducted every year or every few years.

- Having game nights like Dungeons & Dragons. A local game store hosts gaming events, but their space is limited.
- Game-sharing events where kids could donate/swap some of their games to others who don't have those particular games.
- An audio-visual group to create movies and similar things.
- Would like well-publicized music events where school music groups perform for the community.
- Building tournaments using LEGOs or other materials.
- E-sports.

**Question: We currently have architectural drawings for expansion of the library building. What would you like to see for teen space and teen collections?**

- Would like a teen space somewhat separate from the rest of the library where teens can talk without being shushed.
- Would like comfy places to sit: carpeted space with comfortable chairs and seating.

**Question: What can the library do for you?**

- Career-centered books and events to help students make their future career decisions. Brochures from other colleges, even from outside the area.
- Would like more graphic novels! Often doesn't check out the book, but they just read books while they are at the library, rather than checking them out.
- Would like book and video "bucket lists" that contain must-read and must-watch lists that can be tailored for teens. Include classics with more modern selections.
- Host themed days and events such as hobbies or interests like Harry Potter, D&D. This would be a way for people with similar interests to meet and interact with each other.
- Events where college students provide information about what it's like to be in college, talk about life after high school.

**Question: What social media do you use? Do you use websites like the library's website?**

- Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Twitch, Snapchat, TikTok, Pinterest
- TikTok is very popular among their peers.
- One attendee uses YouTube or Twitch most frequently.
- YouTube is often used for tutorials.
- They are probably not likely to see posts on Facebook. More common among parents and grandparents.
- Don't typically use the library's website.
- One participant does use the Libby app for audiobooks, but this has become more common for her after COVID.

**Question: What hours should the library be open, (once COVID is not a factor)?**

- Later hours! Would like to see it close at 8 pm most nights.
- Also stay open later on Saturdays since teenagers tend to sleep in later.

Meeting Number:          8

Meeting Date/Time:       Friday, November 20, 2020; 3:00 pm

Meeting Location:        Zoom Conference Call

Group Description:       Local Officials

General notes:           Held an hour-long meeting via Zoom. Ten local and state officials participated in a very productive discussion. They included state legislators, town and village leaders, and others. The discussion was more free-flowing and less directed than many of the other meetings, but the input was very valuable. Unfortunately, some of the comments made during the meeting may not be included below because the meeting was not recorded. Even so, the main themes of the meeting are included below.

**Standard Question 1: Define your Community.**

- Rural
- Diverse
- Economically struggling
- Economic bright spots
- Broadband difficulties

**Standard Question 2: What do you see as the future of the library and the community over the next 5 to 10 years?**

This was the lead-off question, and the discussion never really strayed from this initial question. Topics and details of the conversation are described below:

- Technologically connected community.
- Good economic environment.
- Destination for tourism.
- Library that is no longer underutilized.
- More than books – community hub.
- Build community relationships – library could be part of this.
- Include economic development agencies, SUNY, schools, County Department of Health in partnerships.
- Make agricultural connections with cooperative extension and other agricultural groups.
- Mental health and social health issues are big issues, especially in the aftermath of COVID. Need to connect with health agencies like the hospital.
- Partnering with SUNY for tutoring, community service, etc.
- Connect with agriculture and agritourism.
- Center for both elders and younger generations – intergenerational programming.

- Maker space.
- History discussions.
- Computers and technology – "How-To" classes.
- Create unique programming such as homesteading training which could include canning, raising crops, even making sausage.
- Meeting rooms, especially a larger community room, are needed within the community.


**Standard Question 3: Who else should we talk to?**

Did not get to this question.


Specific Large Group Questions

**Question: How does the library meet the needs of the community in the next 5-10 years?**

Did not specifically discuss this question, but the discussion covered aspects of this question.
(See above.)


**Question: We currently have architectural drawings for expansion of the library building. What ideas do you have for the design and usage of those spaces?**

Did not specifically discuss this question, but the discussion covered aspects of this question.
(See above.)


**Question: What can the library do to help you in your role in the community?**

Did not specifically discuss this question, but the discussion covered aspects of this question.
(See above.)


**Question: How does the library play a role in dealing with the access to broadband in our communities?**

Did not specifically discuss this question, but the discussion covered aspects of this question.
(See above.)

Meeting Number:        9

Meeting Date/Time:     Tuesday, November 24, 2020; 7:30 pm

Meeting Location:      Zoom Conference Call

Group Description:     Business Leaders

General notes:         Held an hour-long meeting via Zoom. Six local business leaders participated in a very productive discussion. They represented businesses focused on music, arts, crafts, books, and even the local newspaper.

**Standard Question 1: Define your Community.**

- Rural
- Scenic
- Historic
- Culturally challenged
- Bedroom community
- Family

**Standard Question 2: What do you see as the future of the library and the community over the next 5 to 10 years?**

- More meaningful jobs are necessary to prevent the outmigration of people, especially younger people and families.
- Better infrastructure, particularly internet access, is needed in the area. The library will play an important role in filling this gap. It's not as big of a challenge for business owners in town; more for residents who live in the rural areas that have minimal, if any options for broadband access.
- Would like to see the area be more business-friendly, family-friendly, and visitor-friendly.
- Would like to become the heart of the county again.
- There is a need for a community center, and ideally the library could draw people to the community by being a community center.
- Bring back the bookmobile to reach those outlying villages and families!

**Standard Question 3: Who else should we talk to?**

- Church and faith groups
- Cobleskill Partnership, Inc. - CPI
- Girl Scouts

Specific Large Group Questions

**Question: How does the library meet the needs of the community in the next 5-10 years?**

- There's a need for a coffee house/place to chat/place for people to do presentations/place for training/place for performances.
- Space is very much needed in the community: for example, space for the Girl Scouts to meet.
- Setting aside some space for business owners to do some work on occasion. Not quite a business incubator, but similar.
- A SAFE place for kids in the county to go to do homework, play games, and participate in activities.
- Partnerships with businesses could be a great way to bring those activities to the library.
- More extended library hours may be necessary, and making sure the community knows those hours is important.
- More cooperation and coordination between the various libraries in Schoharie County would be beneficial.

**Question: We currently have architectural drawings for expansion of the library building. What ideas do you have for the design and usage of those spaces?**

- Perhaps some of the annex spaces could be accessible and usable during hours when the library is not open.
- Could there be opportunities to rent these annex spaces to supplement the library's funding stream? Might not be legally possible.
- A common room for the public to gather would be important.
- Spaces and display cases to display historical artifacts and other items.
- A high-tech space with good internet access, scanners, 3D printers, and other state of the art equipment.
- Could companies like MidTel help fund/supply high-tech spaces like this?

**Question: What can the library do to help you in your role in the community?**

- Drawing more people into town and increasing foot traffic into town would be very helpful to the local business leaders.
- More grant proposals from The Community Library to the Arts Council might be an important aspect in the future of the community and the library.
- Host events to bring people into town like arts events and concerts.
- Businesses partnering with the library (for example in story time and craft time) can be helpful to both the library and the local business.
- The library (and the community) should be encouraging local/indigenous artists and musicians to share and develop their creations.

Meeting Number: 10

Meeting Date/Time: Thursday, December 3, 2020; 7:00 pm

Meeting Location: Zoom Conference Call

Group Description: Other Community Leaders

General notes: Held an hour-long meeting via Zoom. Four local community leaders participated in a very productive discussion. They included community members involved with economic development, the community's history, a local craft guild, and a local preschool.

**Standard Question 1: Define your Community.**

- Small
- Tight-knit
- Connected
- Close-knit
- Small
- Unique
- Friendly
- Helpful
- Interconnected community groups
- Same people involved in many groups
- Friendly
- Supportive

**Standard Question 2: What do you see as the future of the library and the community over the next 5 to 10 years?**

- A really vibrant downtown with people out and about would be great, including businesses and the arts.
- Economic growth to fill the empty storefronts is important. Filling those with stores with businesses that are missing locally would be ideal.
- A walkable village and family fitness events and trails would be great.
- The main thoroughfare would benefit from being much more attractive commercially and residentially, especially to be attractive to small businesses.
- There are businesses and organizations that make Cobleskill unique compared to the rest of the county: movie theater, fast food, grocery store, college, hospital.

**Standard Question 3: Who else should we talk to?**

- Service clubs: Rotary, Elks, etc.
- Local planning boards
- SUNY Cobleskill
- School district

Specific Large Group Questions

**Question: How does the library meet the needs of the community in the next 5-10 years?**

- Need meeting space for large groups (up to 50 people) in the community, especially a multipurpose room that could be converted as necessary. (The library basement just doesn't quite cut it.)
- It would be helpful if the library was a clearinghouse for community information for people seeking answers to questions locally. Help connect families to the right resources.
- The library could be more welcoming to younger children, including play areas and having more toys out.
- Perhaps the library could provide jobs, volunteer opportunities, or internships for teenagers or students seeking library or similar roles.
- Have the library provide spaces and displays for historical items and events for people to learn more about local history.
- It would be a great place for people learning about local history.

**Question: We currently have architectural drawings for expansion of the library building. What ideas do you have for the design and usage of those spaces?**

- Accessibility would be very important for many people.
- There needs to be audio-visual capability in a multipurpose room: microphone, speakers, projector, screen, etc.
- A place for people to connect online, maybe even remote learning opportunities.
- A smaller play-space for children, maybe where parents could use a computer or connect online while their children play.
- An improved space for teenagers where they aren't distracting others, make use of after school, do homework, hang out.
- Parking can be a challenge.

**Question: What can the library do to help you in your role in the community?**

- Wild wish from the Quilt Guild: would love to have a closet they could lock up materials that are donated.
- Head Start is trying to promote literacy and reading every day with their families. Partnering together could be important in doing so.

- Offer a wider variety of unique programs for kids. Maybe food competitions, drawing/art classes, etc.
- Offer programming for seniors to connect.
- Places for groups to hold monthly meetings.

Miscellaneous Input:                       1

Submission Date/Time:                      November 25, 2020, 3:00 pm

Method of Submission:                      Email

Description of Individual or Group:         Local Music Teacher

General notes:  This teacher was unable to participate in a virtual forum, but they wanted to submit their input, so they responded to the same questions via email.

**Question: In just a few words, describe the local community.**

Cobleskill is a tightly knit group of working class people who tend to work and learn where they live. We are proud of our connection to agriculture, locally run and owned businesses, theater, and music, just to name a few.

**Question: What are your predictions for the future of the local community and The Community Library over the next 5 to 10 years?**

I think because of COVID we are going to start seeing an influx of people migrating upstate from downstate areas like Long Island. I am hoping that will mean growth for our community, which would use the library more often than now.

**Question: How can the library reach out to the communities within the CRCS District?**

I don't know if it will be possible, but I would love to see the Library's hours expand, especially after school. So many students have nowhere to go when school is over before their parents pick them up, and it would be amazing for them to be able to utilize the library as a safe community space after school on the weekends. ESPECIALLY with COVID, so many people in our community do not have reliable internet-- The Community Library should be a place where they can do homework on the weekends and afternoons (or during the day for remote and hybrid students) or have access to the internet. Right now many students have to sit in the school parking lot to get Wi-Fi.

**Question: How can the Library work with you and/or your colleagues in the future?**

I am teaching Pre-K-2 general music now as well as Orchestra (currently after school). I would love for there to be community programs available that relate to topics I am teaching, or be able to reference, "If you want to learn more about this you can find resources at The Community Library."  I also love having my string ensemble play at the library around holidays or for special events-- when COVID is over.

**Question: We currently have architectural drawings for expansion within the library building. Do you have ideas for how to make use of additional space within the library building?**

YES. WE REALLY NEED A STAGE. Even if it was just a room with a raised, carpeted or wooden platform like at Fusion Church. Then music groups could come and play and do Q&A sessions with the audience, guest speakers could do events for small children, the local community theater would utilize it (I am currently dreaming up a Cobleskill Youth Community Theater that is separate from the Theater Project, open to students ages 21 and under, to serve college students as well as school aged students.) My husband and I do puppetry and we could do puppet shows (when time allows for me since I'm a teacher, and I am super busy). Catholic Charities runs a yearly Domestic Violence Awareness event and my orchestra plays music at it, which I think would be great to have at the library.

I really would love to see The Community Library become a hub of community events that bring people and resources that might be out of our community's reach due to distance or financial restraints. I know a person who does events as William Shakespeare and teaches kids about theater and writing, and he is PHENOMENAL.

**Question: What other groups within the community should we be talking to?**

- The Rotary Club
- The Theater Project of Schoharie County
- The small businesses of Cobleskill group
- Harmony Acres (they host events)
- Backstreet Music (they have recitals but don't have any space)

| Miscellaneous Input: | 2 |
| --- | --- |
| Submission Date/Time: | November 23, 2020, 11:30 am |
| Method of Submission: | Email |
| Description of Individual or Group: | Participant, Local Officials Zoom Meeting |

General notes:  This was a detailed follow-up with some very concrete ideas from a participant in the meeting with Local Officials

Some "dream" programming and space planning thoughts:

1. Civic Engagement Academy: The political reps on the call have had exemplary careers and portray what it means to "work across the aisle" to advance programs for the betterment of our communities. The idea is to build more civic-minded leaders, recruiting youth, too. Perhaps SUNY Cobleskill Clubs & Organizations and/or Institute of Rural Vitality "Rural Policy" may have a lead role. SUNY and the library may cooperate to offer a "Certificate Course." All sorts of topics are possible: host civic debates, highlight and specialize in disaster recovery resources (FEMA library resources), intro to volunteer opportunities in government or elsewhere, board member training, budgeting 101 for municipalities, even "sausage-making" in Albany.
   a. SUNY Institute of Rural Vitality Center for Rural Legal & Policy Services
   b. https://www.phila.gov/programs/civic-engagement-academy/
   c. https://starkmhar.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/YLCEA-RESULTS-APRIL2017_web.pdf
   d. https://www.fema.gov/multimedia-library

2. WONDEROPOLIS/PLAY: Create a play space that is founded on the concept of wonder and curiosity, the building blocks of interest and innovation. Schoharie County is desperate for indoor recreation serving toddlers, tweens and teens especially during inclement weather. Local employers may sponsor the play areas as introduction to local industries i.e. indoor sand box by Carver Companies/Cobleskill Stone, working heavy equipment Lancaster, Price Chopper/Valley Market (see Wegmans at Museum of Play below), Farmers/Farm Bureau Food Systems/Animals etc. A teen gaming center may bring in other sponsors, too.
   a.  https://www.museumofplay.org/
   b. https://wonderopolis.org/wonders
   c. https://www.xgcenter.com/  Games A Plunder is directly across the street and may be collaborative partner

3. Hobby Shop: Offer monthly introduction to hobbies – it's both therapeutic and may lead to entrepreneurship. A platform to develop mentor programs bridging the intergenerational gaps of learning.
    a. https://www.lifehack.org/articles/money/this-list-50-low-cost-hobbies-will-excite-you-2.html
    b. https://www.ny1.com/nyc/all-boroughs/news/2020/01/16/hobby-shop-on-staten-island-nyc-is-thriving-model-cars-model-planes (PRE COVID!)
    c. https://7summitpathways.com/blog/hobbies-and-mental-health/

4. Building Wealth/Financial Literacy: Recognizing poverty within our community, develop programming to better understand what that means and how to fill the gaps – financial management is a key component. Ruby Payne has shared extensive research and framework used in education, may other models exist.
    a. https://www.ahaprocess.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/Understanding-Poverty-Ruby-Payne-Poverty-Series-I-IV.pdf
    b. http://actforyouth.net/sexual_health/community/adulthood/finances.cfm

5. The Power of Women: Tap the female support networks to build confidence, engagement, and leadership among women. May mitigate the rise of domestic violence, cause more girls to continue practicing/exploring STEM careers, adds diversity and balance to community conversations and decision-making.  Key Bank was a big proponent a few years ago, other sponsors are very likely in this sector.
    a. https://www.driven-woman.com/blog/archive/the-20-best-womens-networks-to-help-you-achieve-your-goals
    b. https://www.wblbgsu.com/
    c. Fun fact: 41% of Schoharie County Ag Producers are female! https://www.nass.usda.gov/Publications/AgCensus/2017/Online_Resources/County_Profiles/New_York/cp36095.pdf

6. Seven Dimensions of Wellness: Focus on the spectrum of wellness – encourage group activities, host guest speakers, sponsor a research project.
    a. https://www.mindbodyonline.com/business/education/infographic/7-dimensions-wellness
    b. https://allwork.space/2019/05/how-to-address-the-7-dimensions-of-wellness-in-the-workplace/
    c. https://www.amsa.org/2015/07/08/the-seven-dimensions-of-wellness/

We believe the library provides essential services to the community as neutral ground and should be revered as such.