



Robert H. Rohlf Associates
*Providing Consulting Services to
Libraries for Over 30 Years*

May 22, 2007

Preliminary Comments on St. Joseph County Main Library Plans –no date but Received May 21, 2007.

Chuck;

Without the benefit of your presentation certain assumptions must be made.

I was not certain if I was to review the plans before your presentation to the library or when any plans would arrive. As you know I am out of my office and in California, returning over the Memorial Day weekend. I will be leaving again on May 29 for the rest of the week. I will be in the office then June 4-12.

I think that the interior suffers from the long and narrow form.

I have concerns over some of the expanded square foot areas. Are they caused by the forms and shapes or by layout problems? See my email last night re: shelving.

If the increased space is affordable that might be O K but I have neither totals nor any net to gross information

Areas that concern me the most are increases in:

Lobby +895
Children's +1676 (see my shelving remarks)
Information services collection +1342
Non fiction collection +1920
Large print collection + 1088 (triple the program and only 3+ books per sq. ft)

Except for the Lobby these are all collection differences and it seems we are on different calculation methods or they do not layout easily in the spaces. Again, see my email which I sent after your office did these calculations. The large print discrepancy is at the least, amazing.

As to areas on the plan, and electronic plans are not ideal for reviews particularly when on the road:

The entrance/ exit can work as shown given your assurances based on Greensboro. The lobby is impressive and over Program (this could be seen as a major improvement over the present lobby)

I do not understand the way you have configured the circulation work area. It looks like a factory assembly line and that is not how the circulation work stations work or how the automated sort systems work.

I would prefer to see the large print collection-sized appropriately - in the northeast corner of the first floor, pull new books up front and have the fiction shelving less strung out and readers more central within the collection.

The very large stair will hide the service desk where it is shown on the plan

Special Services located at the very rear of the floor is unfortunate. Did you consider placing this function between fiction and audio visual?

The second floor lays out well but suffers from the long narrow shape .

The location of the Information Service desk works well with the Technology center and the workroom but is far too removed from the non-fiction collection. This would seem to be an inherent problem caused by the narrow shape.

I would look forward to receiving some print plans and to scale so that I could provide some more helpful review comments.

Please review shelving calculations or have someone on your staff call or email me next month.