

## **PETOSKEY DISTRICT LIBRARY**

### **SUMMARY OF FOCUS GROUPS**

*Change in the past 5 years in Petoskey:*

- Growth of the area
- Reduction in jobs
- Hard to find jobs and many are under-employed
- Change in downtown – stores closed; turnover in stores
- Over 50% of taxable housing is non-homestead
- Foreclosures have increased
- Local college is collaborating with other colleges and offers more now
- Bay View is beautiful now
- More development
- More retirees moving in
- Volunteer force increasing
- Demographics declining so less students, less teachers
- More big box stores
- There is the “hole”
- Biggest change in the community is the Library
- Major development in Bay Harbor
- Lots going on in downtown yet remains a small town; unique feel
- Sense of collaboration among the arts and culture organizations
- Collaboration among the historical groups county-wide
- Economy is more local than 10 years ago – strong year-round presence now; people shop here

*Change to be expected in next 5 years in Petoskey:*

- Decrease in school enrollment
- Less young people in 25-35 years category
- Population will be older
- Village will be completely renovated
- Improving economy
- New baseball field will be completed
- More collaboration among cultural organizations and governments

*The Petoskey area residents expect from the Petoskey District Library:*

- Technology and information
- Access from home
- To be on the cutting edge
- Knowledgeable staff and volunteers
- Lots of Programs
- A sense of place – a community feeling; a meeting place – a positive feeling when you are there
- Good books
- Books for homework
- To be able to study
- To use computers
- To keep up with technology
- A children's area and programs
- Exposure and access to the rest of the world
- Portal to the rest of the world
- Convenient hours
- Magazines and newspapers
- Staff that is friendly

*Given the limits of the Library's resources (money, staff, space), the Library should focus its efforts on:*

- Having the items – Books, DVDs – own it or get it
- Seniors – who are less likely to own technology
- Children – they are the future
- Technology
- New books and books on CD (audiobooks)
- Need to be sure to take care of the school children as there are no librarians in the schools
- Marketing
- Web redesign to let the public know what programs are available
- Increasing the demographics that use the library
- Programming
- Marketing

*Participants liked:*

- Good reputation of the library
- Visually appealing building
- Meeting spaces
- Beautiful building
- A place for everyone

- Staff know people and will save material for users
- Variety of services offered
- Open to all
- The staff, the service, and the open attitude
- How going to the library makes me feel virtuous
- Good summer reading program
- Wonderful teen and children's programs
- Library database that allows access to books, DVDs, CDs, lets users know that books will be due soon
- Availability of MelCat
- The breadth of the library offerings
- Serendipity – walking in and just discovering something new
- Access to information and materials

*Negative perceptions include:*

- How it is funded
- Lack of parking
- Hours not being predictable - lack of consistent opening / closing times
- “Middle schooler” section is dark and gloomy and cold; doors are closed
- Not a friendly, welcoming place
- Customer service is an issue – staff often not friendly
- Some people are not aware of what the library offers
- Environment is sterile
- Not enough marketing being done

*Should the Library still provide the same services to people who do not support the Library financially through the district-wide millage?*

- The fee should be adequate enough to compensate what is paid in taxes
- Outside users should pay a premium – have a resident and non-resident fee
- Allow them to buy a card
- Charge anyone who wants a card the amount their household is worth – use the SEV statement

*Additional comments and ideas:*

- Create a way for students in school to be rewarded for their participation in summer reading program
- More soft chairs; comfortable seating
- Include a quiet area
- Add a coffee shop
- Consider an old fashioned bookmobile that could go out to the townships and have computers on it
- Find a way to attract high school or young college students
- Have a space for Skyping
- Allow grandparents to get grandchild a card
- Support genealogy class and group like Charlevoix Library
- Hire a technology person who helps with technology and computers and is up-to-date in technology
- Needs to be a comfortable welcoming place
- Make the courtyard area more inviting – do activities outside – look at the Crooked Tree to see how the space can be utilized differently
- The labyrinth is not being used well – has 2 benches that are not very comfortable – make it more inviting; a flower garden; make it a park with umbrellas and tables and fountain for people to read there
- Young adult sections needs to be lighter and enlarged; more friendly; add bean bags; make it a relaxing area
- Customer service training for staff
- Computer classes – in Excel, Facebook, Email
- Have volunteers with the expertise to teach classes
- More coordination – when a speaker is at the college or bookstore or a play the library should have some signs, books about it – need a liaison officer
- Make it known where parking is available
- Increase the DVDs for young children
- Increase music on CDs
- Buy and allow check-out of iPads, e-readers, and Leapfrog materials
- Kids need to be our priority – they are the next generation; make sure they have cards
- Look for alternative funding to get first graders their library card who do not get a card because of their residency
- Need to overcome the anti-tax sentiment
- Need a visual presence either walking in the door or through the website

- Move from a traditional model to a retailing concept – library is competing against Amazon and bookstores; need to add value; merchandise the store
- Create a welcoming environment that holds people in
- Create a stronger collaboration with the local arts community, including performing arts, jazz ensemble
- Market authors – think like a retailer
- Hire a PR person
- Use volunteers
- Create additional displays
- Add a refreshment bar
- Find ways to collaborate with the bookstore – jointly host a book club – bookstore allows buying of the book and the library is the setting for the club
- Collaboration with various organizations’ websites
- County-wide calendar for Emmet and Charlevoix counties being created – library needs to be part of that
- Find a way to reach the 25-35 age group
- Show how the library adds value through its services
- Offer consistent hours
- Extend hours during school year past 7 PM