

Stop The Waste--Renovate!!!

"Mission [of the East Baton Rouge Parish Library]: To meet the informational, educational, cultural, and recreational needs of the citizens of East Baton Rouge." There's nothing in there about attempting to create a tourist attraction for any area of the parish or a legacy for any politician.

The population in the River City Branch (RCB) service area and the facility's historic usage (last out of 13 branches) don't even come close to justifying the 15,000 square foot branch size established as policy for new branches by the Library Board of Control (LBC) in recent years. Yet this board and their hired consultant are proposing a 57,000 square foot monument for the downtown branch! It costs only \$6,000,000 to build a new 15,000 sq. ft. branch, but the LBC wants to spend \$21,000,000 to demolish and rebuild. The existing building needs only to be remodeled, which can be done for \$9,000,000. With the above facts, together with the fact that the well-used new Carver Branch is less than a mile away from the RCB, designating the downtown branch a "Super-regional" branch in order to justify the proposed plan is preposterous.

If the budget passes as proposed, and this modern day Monstrosity of the Mississippi is built, State and city employees will continue to work in their offices all day and rush home to their families at the end of the day. In the evening and on weekends, they will still take their kids to the branch nearest to home or to the Main Library centrally located in Independence Park. No matter how glitzy, no matter what sexy accoutrement the Downtown Developers rack their brains to come up with to fill the space, the River City Branch will still be an expensive echo chamber.

Help reverse this atrocious decision by the LBC. Call and write your Metro Council members, and tell them to vote to amend the budget to delete the \$19,000,000 building amount allocated by for the RCB. Attend the hearing in the Metro Council chambers on Tuesday, November 16 at 3:00 p.m. (not 4:00 p.m., as previously reported). Get there early to be heard, as space is limited by fire code.

Some might consider this waste of taxpayer money to be malfeasance, a punishable crime, and Metro Council members who don't vote for a motion to strike the exorbitant amount from the budget would be aiding in its act. Maybe charges won't be brought, but we'll make sure that taxpayers don't forget, come next elections for library tax renewal and council member elections.

If you would like more detail, including data, charts, and graphs which show how the RCB is grossly oversized and underutilized, as well as Metro Council member contact info, email me: hjlandryjr@cox.net

Feel free to copy the above to a note on your Facebook site, and post a notice to let friends know where to find it. Also, send it as an email to your East Baton Rouge friends.

Thanks,

Harvey Landry