

Berne Public Library Planning Focus Group 9/14/2015

Question 2: What do you like most about living in this community?

Participant ID	Response
4	I like that it's small towny. I like the shops; people are helpful in the shops.
2	People seem to be ready to be friendly. Here is you're in line at a red light, not paying attention, the light turns green, it takes 3-4 seconds before someone honks at you.
1	Rural environment to this day. Urbanity impinges, but not to the point of overwhelming. Not suburbia.
2	We have bears wandering around.
3	I have kids in middle school and elementary school. If you do it, you can be involved in a lot of things - sports. Also difficult because I live in the Town of Bethlehem, I think if I lived in Ravena I'd have a different perspective. I grew up in Voorheesville, where there was always something going on. Here could go out in the yard in July and I would wonder if anyone was alive. It's very quiet sometimes - not good.
2	For services - if you don't drive, God help you. You do have to drive to find things that you might want.
1	On a scale of 1 to 10, Town of Coeymans, services - 4. It's a far cry from the city (of Albany).
2	I wouldn't even give them a 4. It's pretty terrible.
1	I believe there's a fairly good access to ambulance. I feel safe.
2	Growing old in this community, trying to age in place, will be very very hard. Services aren't here.
1	Ravena has some good services for seniors.
2	Yes, but stacked up against other places, very poor.
3	They've pulled a lot of good stores into Glenmont, which isn't that far. But you still have to drive.
1	This general RCS area has a fabulous library - exceeds expectations. Beautiful restroom.

Legend:	Gender	Age	Residence	How long in area	How often use library
1	F	68	Selkirk	22 years	4 to 8 times/mo
2	M	60'S	Coeymans	9 years	Left before question
3	F	40'S	Selkirk	15 yrs	3 Or 4 times/month
4	F	60'S	Selkirk	2 yrs	16 times/month

Berne Public Library Planning Focus Group 9/14/2015

Question 3: How do you think the community is changing?

Participant ID	
4	My experience is that there seems to be a lot of crime for such a small area. Heard last week that someone was caught who was breaking into homes in Selkirk. I was checking the Police Department website, listed all the crimes in this area up to 2014; for such a small area, seemed to be a lot of crimes. Across from where I live police are often called. Only major impression of change I've seen.
2	Physical plant of area deteriorating, especially in village. Seem to be more abandoned buildings that are deteriorating rapidly - not seeing anything that has been spruced up in the 9 years we've been there - steady deterioration.
1	I don't see those things as change. I think that's part for the course in a town that has only a very focused economic pipeline. The crime thing has not changed either. Always was and probably always will be and news can sometimes blow it out of proportion. What I do see is in population that numbers and demographics - sea change there. More people. One of obvious increases is an increase in traffic as a result of increase in population. Demographics: used to be all white protestants, agrarian community, many long-time residents who inherited their house from their parents, and that's all changed. Those people are either still there or have passed on; influx is much more of a soup of different backgrounds and nationalities. Today looking out window of library - would never have known I was in Ravena. Such a variety of people were walking by . . . nationalities, dress, age, gender. It's interesting in a good way.
3	In Selkirk, I haven't seen a lot of change in RCS area. Where I see change is in Glenmont. I've heard that they're not going to build housing on 9W because of the cement plant. I don't think it [Selkirk] has changed at all. The port of Coeymans is changing; they're making a lot of business there. The only thing the RCS area is going to do is get smaller in terms of population.
1	I disagree. Glenmont is urban sprawl and it's coming.
3	I've heard they're not going to build by the cement plant because of the blasting.
2	The population of the Town has decreased every year.
1	I have a dread of population increase.

Legend:	Gender	Age	Residence	How long in area	How often use library
1	F	68	Selkirk	22 years	4 to 8 times/mo
2	M	60'S	Coeymans	9 years	Left before question
3	F	40'S	Selkirk	15 yrs	3 Or 4 times/month
4	F	60'S	Selkirk	2 yrs	16 times/month

RCS Public Library Planning Focus Group 9/14/2015

Question 6: What do you think is not so great about the library?

Participant ID	
2	Not enough parking.
1	They have a large walking-in population but for those of us not in the neighborhood, it's a little tricky.
3	Like new building, wish more thought had been put into the layout. Wish there were walls strategically placed to make cozy areas - anything but a big rectangle with a whole bunch of bookshelves. There are three actual librarians there. A reference desk away from the checkout would also be nice.
2	Don't seem to have a reference service [story about getting telephone reference service at another library] . . . Doesn't seem to be something that they're in the habit of, or are set up to do that consistently. I don't think it's space, it's limited resources.
3	Can't tell who the reference and the clerks are. If the librarians had their reference desk, you would know that person was a librarian and you would go over and ask them that reference question.
3	Couple of terminals where you can go and look the book you wanted. I've been asking for that for years!
2	You can do that on their computers.
3	But you always feel like those you have to sign up for. I just want one where there's no chair at it, it's up high enough that you can just go and stand and look your book up.
2	The catalog (Sierra): I didn't like it before, and it's only been marginally improved. Example: like reading books in a series. Cannot easily get on that catalog and see the books in a series and see the order. I have to go the library. For comparison, go to Amazon . . . there are filters on the left, able to sort by price, eliminate things. When I go to your catalog . . . give me the filters!
3	Actual books at the library are good, but that doesn't even matter because you can get them from other libraries. But I'm pleased with the books.
2	Irritating that many libraries will not lend certain media . . . borrow ours, but not lend theirs. Incredibly unfair and very irritating. Particular DVDs. DVDs ought to hev better instructions on the covers. Do not allow kids to handle. We've gotten so many that are just unplayable - crap on them, won't even start to play. Instructions are not sufficiently clear and right there on the cover.
4	Do libraries ever change the books they have on their shelves? I look at a certain type of author and it's the same two books by that author. If I want anything else by that author I have to get it from another library (talking about fiction MYS). Do the libraries ever rotate what they have? Certain authors I like to read and only 2-3 titles available.
3	Some of books in collection are very beat up; don't get enough maintenance. Even when rebound, don't hold up.
4	Not much available of TV series at RCS libraries.
2	Things "in transit" for weeks. I've seen some that don't come for months.
1	Parking - fills up quickly.
3	Nice that it's on a wide street, but that fills up quickly.
2	I know they want to raise funds, but they should not have a chicken BBQ right there at the library. It makes the library unusable. Could not park, and almost could not get in the library.
1	Could be a problem for parking for non-neighborhood people.
	Wish they had more adult programs, and not at 2:00 on Wednesday - rather have them at night at 7:00. Book club or other activities like Nimblefingers (VOOR). Did ask former librarian about that idea (Nimblefingers), who said it was really community-driven and you need people to come. Apparently they tried it before and didn't get people.
3	Something that they used to do and they stopped doing it. . . You get sign up to get recommend lists of a particular genre. I considered it was one of the services of the library. I'm not sure it was just new books. I thought that was great, and it stopped relatively quickly.
2	Two things that have been unpleasant for me: one is when using the computer the lights overhead (strong, close) are right in my eyes. I ended up wearing some amber sunglasses while I used the computer. Other thing is people on cell phones. Rarely does anyone ask them to lower their voices or shut them off. It's a problem for people using the phones. They're on the computer and on the phone trying to get help for their social service questions.
4	Not a low noise place. Kids are in there and kids will make noise. It's great that they're in there and the younger you get them started, the better. If you're doing research or trying to think about what you're reading . . . there's no adult reading room that's kept quiet.
3	They have loud toys. They should have a children's room.
	They should segregate the game playing computers. Every time I'm in there's kids playing games on a substantial number of computers. If they put them in a different room and said no game son these, games on those, that would be good. Back to my comment on cell phones . . . Wouldn't let them to stop using them because they can't do their social service computer task without the phone connection, but bring voice down or have separate area. The computer area has a sign that says "no cell phones" so they need to be accommodated elsewhere.
4	Part of all these computer use distraction level issues is that people face one another. Not set up for concentration.
1	Another. Not set up for concentration.
2	If they had sound dampened carrels.
3	It's a little bit logistical.
1	I acknowledge that it's harder to keep an eye on people if they're ensconced on a carrol . . . it all takes money.
2	Also a problem when the wonderful hand-on computer comes to help someone with their problem. You have to hear all about it. Logistical - could be easily improved.
1	I've heard that soon they're going to own or rent the entire building.
2	Not that big, it's 30 x 30.
	"I don't want to give the impression that our comments on the negative are hopeless frustration. We're delighted to offer these inputs because we feel that the library is on a continuous improvement program. When you go in the library now you sense that they're here for you. Not in the old days where you got let in because you were lucky. We have a sense that they try very hard there to meet everyone's needs."

Legend:	Gender	Age	Residence	How long in area	How often use library
1	F	68	Selkirk	22 years	4 to 8 times/mo
2	M	60'S	Coeymans	9 years	Left before question
3	F	40'S	Selkirk	15 yrs	3 Or 4 times/month
4	F	60'S	Selkirk	2 yrs	16 times/month

Berne Public Library Planning Focus Group 9/14/2015

Question 7: What might the library do to better serve your needs and encourage you to use the library more?

Participant ID	
3	We use it a lot. I don't think I could use it any more than I already do.
1	Just when you think you use everything, bring out a new program. It's a jumping place
2	Tax base of the Town of Coeymans is not going to support a 25% increase, What do you want the most? More hours, more people?
4	If there were programs for adults, I'd prefer that they ended before darkness. As soon as it's dark, I have trouble driving.
1	We can talk about programs but people don't come.
1	I go there to find out what's going on at the library.
2	They could improve the website. Have an opening page that would list proposed programs, upcoming programs. The kind of do that, but they're home page is too busy with too many different things on it (4 agreed). Make easy menus - adult programs during the day, adult programs at night, children's programs, movies, concerts.
3	I like the email newsletter they send out . . . That's how I find out about this.
1	How do you get it? (responses)
1	That's an example of not being told. Go in the library - onslaught of information, same online. In
All	All four have email addresses
2	Pretty cheap way (email) to do it.
3	Really like getting email when books are due.
4	One thing the library does for children's programs that they could do for adult programs: - large lettered sign right on the lawn. If you were a parent, you'd see it and bring them.
2	Hard to get enough content on it, but great as far as it goes.
4	Do all programs have to be done by paid presenters or can we have peer programs? (response) I'm a writer in poetry and I would be very happy to offer a weekly poetry writing group, peer critique workshop. There's one at Howe library, believe the teacher is paid.
3	Back to VOOR; they have a ton of stuff like this.
1	Kudos to Howe Library.
4	Under previous librarian, there were attempts to have poetry readings but only three people showed up. Maybe now more would come because it does seem to be hopping.
2	Keep in mind that if there's not enough demand, it's not efficient.
4	Need to build momentum with programs . . . things grow.
1	We're in changing times; it's so hard to say what people are interested in doing.

Legend:	Gender	Age	Residence	How long in area	How often use library
1	F	68	Selkirk	22 years	4 to 8 times/mo
2	M	60'S	Coeymans	9 years	Left before question
3	F	40'S	Selkirk	15 yrs	3 Or 4 times/month
4	F	60'S	Selkirk	2 yrs	16 times/month

Berne Public Library Planning Focus Group 9/14/2015

Question 8: Thinking about the future, what risks and opportunities do you see for this library?

Participant ID	
3	Ebooks. I would never be comfortable doing this. I don't own an iPad and I would never . . . I can't picture myself ever reading it on the screen.
4	But it's nice that ebooks are available through the system.
2	The higher the tax burden not just for the library but for governmental; units, the schools, park districts, fire . . . The less that there will be left for the library. There's a danger. The library's on the tail end of the line.
2	The lib is on the tail end of the line.
4	Culturally could the lib become a negative hangout place . . . Drug-selling. If it becomes more of a community center . . . Is it a problem?
3	If they keep trying more programs they'll get more people in there. Girl Scout meeting brings new people in.
2	Getting the kids in . . . Starting them young.
3	My kids were doing a project on Iroquois Indians and I didn't even bother going there, because I had perused the books before on that topic and there was nothing there. So I went to Colonie, who had a million books on the Iroquois. It was just disappointing that there really wasn't much down there.
1	"My silence is significant. I think that the library is doing a wonderful job of taking risks and looking for opportunities and doing what they're doing very well to stay opportunistic.
3	I like to think it's that one particular clerk that is coming up with these ideas and I think that she deserves a raise . . . (described to the group and identified as Michelle.)
2	Carol is invaluable.
1	And Judith of course.
3	There is one is not well-placed in that job. She's not terribly helpful, I don't feel that she knows what she's doing.
2	Just an observation . . . Some of these people are probably working for minimum wage, if they can get them in there and they can shelve books and do this and do that, God bless 'em. They need those people.
4	There's an opportunity for speakers. . . . Othe rlibraries have these big easels with author's photos and the author is coming to speak. I think there are a lot of local author in these hills. Even if there isn't a new book. It's an opportunity, I would go. If the person is a local author and they're invited - maybe no one's invited them. I see oportunities at locations I can't go to.
1	The TU advertises them . . . There's a market for that.
2	RCS is a much different community than Delmar.
4	It is but I have met people who live in Ravena who are from Brookly, who are poets. I'm fron Manhattan; I'm a poet and an educator. If you had ten people who expressed interest, that would be good. If I had a book out, I would be very honored to read it to ten people in Ravena Library.
2	(Exits)

Legend:	Gender	Age	Residence	How long in area	How often use library
1	F	68	Selkirk	22 years	4 to 8 times/mo
2	M	60'S	Coeymans	9 years	Left before question
3	F	40'S	Selkirk	15 yrs	3 Or 4 times/month
4	F	60'S	Selkirk	2 yrs	16 times/month

