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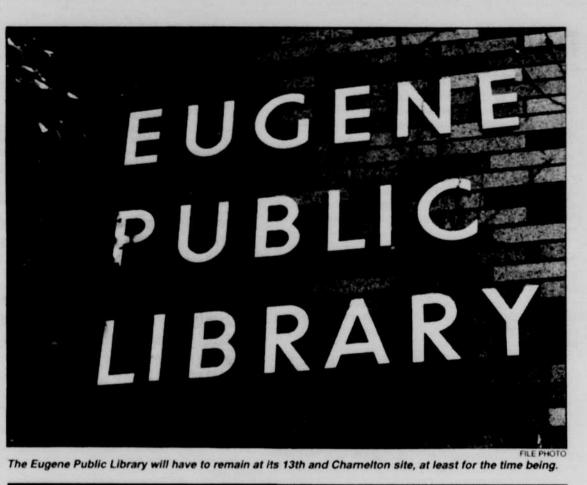
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LIBRARY Continued from Page 1

area, kicked off the town meetings on Monday. Ward 8, the Churchill area, will host a meeting on Wednesday, June 29.

Councilor Jim Torrey separately organized a third town hall meeting - to take place today that will involve presentations from proponents and opponents of a new library.

Several members of the Monday night crowd at Petersen Community Center pointed to government waste. "The city is bloated," said Tim Brandt, who suggested the city cut its payroll 10 percent.

Others said the library was a losing proposition, no matter what. "We've voted on this library issue before. I want to know, what part of 'no' don't you understand?" demanded Eugene Lynch. He said the city should build several smaller branches instead of a major new facility.

Jim Johnson, executive manager of the city's Library, Recreation and Cultural Services Department, said outlying branches are part of a larger library plan developed by a citizen's group in 1988. But, Johnson said, for smaller branches to operate, a large central facility is necessary.

Supporters of a new library point to the increases in circulation, patronage, and library materials since the library was built in 1959. Before Monday's meeting, Johnson pointed out that:

 Circulation increased 6.5 times between 1959 and 1993 — from 211,000 items to 1.38 million items annually

 Library patronage increased 3.7 times — from 16,711 in 1959 to 62,043 in 1993.

 Materials the library houses increased 4.5 times - from 57,345 to over 260,000.

Eugene's population grew 2.4 times - from 50,000 to 120,000 - during the same period, said Johnson.

Some residents at Monday's meeting asked why the existing library couldn't be expanded by adding a story. But library proponents at the meeting, and some residents, pointed out adding a second floor is untenable because of new earthquake codes.

Some library supporters say the time is not right.

"This thing that we've got to have it right now and right down there is not good planning," said Jean Fisher, a supporter of a new library.

But some library proponents worry that a delay might threaten the Sears site for a new library. "We need to go back to the voters while people still understand the measure reasonably well," said former City Councilor Emily Schue, who has championed the new library.

The fears may be well founded. While seven out of 10 Eugene voters who went to the polls in March 1991 endorsed a new library in the Sears Building, only one lone person at Monday's meeting raised his hand when Fisher asked how many favored the Sears site.

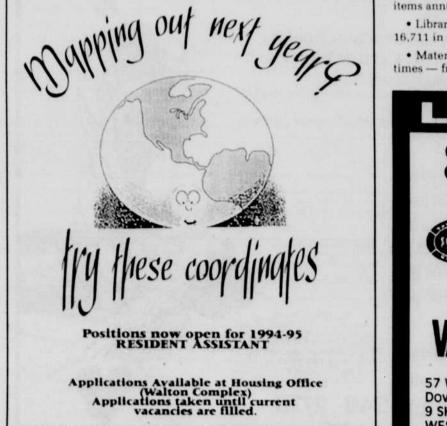
"We keep getting fed in the paper that this (the Sears building) is what we selected," said Fisher. "This is not what we selected. It was selected and we endorsed it.

Opponents of the library say it should be at the bottom of the city's plan. Bill Mason, who campaigned against 20-09, said the city should balance its budget and provide public safety services before setting out to build and run a new library.

"I live in a seven-minute response time area," he said. "My neighbor died earlier this year before the ambulance could get there.'

OVER 500 DIFFERENT TYPES AND STYLES OF MEN'S & WOMEN'S SHOES, SIZES 1-16





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4 Oregon Daily Emerald Tuesday, June 28, 1994

