

City Council eager to approve library plans

■ Mayor Jim Torrey, however, feels the council might be overzealous and ignoring parking issues

By Sara Lieberth
Oregon Daily Emerald

In a 5-2 vote Wednesday evening the Eugene City Council accepted the proposed project and financing plans for the city's new library, for which construction bids are expected to commence early this summer and completion is slated for early 2002.

Planners boasted of their success in creating a design space largely from citizen input gleaned from four community workshops

over the last year, as well as upping the capacity for parked bikes from 43 to 156 and creating an energy-efficient interior operating at 30 percent below building code requirements.

The new four-story building will be located at West 10th Avenue and Olive Street and will cost at current estimates more than \$32 million.

Several present on Wednesday referenced a Feb. 16 Register-Guard article in which the new library was reported to be much larger and more expensive than what was called for in the proposed tax levy voters passed in the

November 1998 general election. "I think from studying the project it is on budget, but it has been pushed to the ends of its budget," councilman Gary Rayor said. "There's a certain amount of trust the public has that we're building them a better library, and it's important we do what we told them we'd do."

But the added costs have come from a number of sources, including cleaning contaminated groundwater at the new site and an expanded design that includes 33,000 square feet of fourth-floor office space approved by the council last March.

The new 127,000-square-foot building will be about 3 1/2 times larger than the current 37,000-

square-foot library built in 1959. Proponents of the expansion first submitted a report to the City Council in August of 1987 requesting a new, larger facility.

Excited about the progress made to date, Council President Bobby Lee said the draft design will be an enticing spot for city residents, himself included.

"I know exactly where I'll be sitting, next to the coffee station, reading my newspaper on Sunday mornings," he said.

The issue of parking availability dominated much of the discussion during council's work session, with concerns raised over the expense and logistics of the planned underground space for 70 vehicles. As the existing library has 110

parking spots, Gary Papé called the proposed plan "woefully insufficient" considering future use.

Mayor James Torrey also cautioned the council from acting hastily in approving the plan because of similar concerns he said he had over inadequate parking.

"I am very concerned that we are too anxious to move forward," he said. "I hope before we put this to bed somebody can assure me we can do this."

But Lee answered by motioning to approve the plan as it stood saying that any additional spaces can easily be negotiated at Monday's council session, where the issue will be readdressed.

"I really think we are almost there," he said.



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Robberies

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years of age, six-foot tall, weighing 150 pounds with shoulder-length black hair. He was last seen wearing a three-quarter length leather jacket over a green collarless shirt, black pants and a green stocking cap.

Just a few hours later, a second robbery occurred at the Little Y Market, 603 W. 19th Ave. at 8:54 p.m. The suspect in this case, still at large, displayed a handgun and demanded money from the store's clerk. He fled on foot after the robbery. The second suspect was described as a white-male adult, approximately 25 years old, six-foot-four-inches tall, with a heavy build and blonde hair. He was last seen wearing a dark-colored baseball cap and a long-sleeved sweater with blue pinstripes.

Jan Power, public information

assistant for the Eugene Police Department, said the two robberies were considered unrelated because the suspects did not resemble each other. Both store's managers did not wish to comment.

Power said it is not that uncommon for two seemingly unrelated robberies to occur so close together in Eugene.

"This wouldn't happen on a monthly basis, but I do see it from time to time," Power said.

Nevertheless, reports from the EPD's West University police substation say overall crime is down. Officer Randy Ellis, who patrols 13th Avenue and works out of the West University Station, said campus-area safety is a lot better than it used to be.

"It may not seem like that because crime still happens in the area, but overall crime is down," he said.

Despite these incidents, University Bookstore General Manager Jim Williams said 13th Avenue is a relatively safe place to do business.

"I've been here for 30 years, and the amount of armed robbery in the area has been fairly small," Williams said.

Although crime is down, Ellis said crime is still a problem in the West University area.

"There are people I know for a fact who are heroine addicts who prey on students' backpacks at Knight Library and go sell their books at Smith Family [Bookstore]," Ellis said. "Personally, people are much safer than they have been. Property wise, students need to be more careful with their personal belongings."

Anyone with information regarding either of these robberies is encouraged to contact the EPD's Violent Crimes Unit at 682-5111.

Media critic

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bers to look at the language in magazine and newspaper coverage and fairness in viewpoints presented.

He offered Time magazine as an example of a major publication that presented lop-sided coverage of the protest. To Solomon, the magazine's pro-WTO coverage would have been fine had there also been another side presented in the Dec. 13, 1999, issue.

Traditional journalists operate within constraints, which is why they present narrow viewpoints, Solomon said. This constricted and

narrow coverage results in inaccurate reporting of events, he said.

Solomon will urge audience members to support alternative media, which have fewer constraints. There are journalists doing good work, but it is an "island swamped by an ocean of dreck," he said.

The Register-Guard carries Solomon's weekly syndicated column "Media Beat," in which he criticizes different aspects of the media. "As a progressive media analyst, my voice is almost the only one [in mainstream media] taking a strong progressive viewpoint," Solomon said.

Carl Bybee, associate professor in

journalism and communications, said he appreciates Solomon's work. Solomon will visit Bybee's communication and democracy class Thursday to discuss the coverage of the WTO protest.

Bybee, who also teaches media criticism, said it is important for students to understand the important role politics plays in mass media coverage because the media is critically involved in political and social change.

Solomon said all people, not just journalists, can make a difference. It is important to challenge complacency because that is how things will change, he said.

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