

**MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

Tuesday, September 18, 2018, 5 PM  
at the **Church of the Advent Board Room**

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*Tom Swett, President of the Board, presiding*

*Those items in **bold print** will require a motion from a Trustee*

*Your Notes*

PLEASE NOTE THAT FAIRMOUNT VENTURES WILL BE MAKING A MAJOR PRESENTATION CONCERNING THE INITIAL FINDINGS OF THE FEASIBILITY STUDY. THEIR FINDINGS REPORT IS ATTACHED AND THE EXECUTIVE SUMMARY, PAGE 3, AND THE PRELIMINARY RECOMMENDATIONS, PAGE 8, ARE THE CRITICAL SECTIONS FOR YOUR REVIEW.

For this reason, we are encouraging all committee reports to be issued prior to the board meeting in writing. If you would like me to consolidate and send these reports to the board, please send me your report by Friday and I will include it with the others this weekend. Thanks.

- I. **Approval of July meeting minutes**
- II. Anneliese Van Arsdale, Fairmount Ventures –  
**Initial Findings & Recommendations of the Feasibility Study (30 min)**
- III. Library Director Report
- IV. Committee Reports
  - a. ALP – Brad
    - i. SAC Report
  - b. Board Development – Karen
  - c. Dev-Comm – Jeff
  - d. Finance – Bill
  - e. Home & Garden – Gail
  - f. New Building Project
    - i. Real estate activities (Jeff)
    - ii. Latest Cost estimate (Brad/Bill)
  - g. Personnel– Brenda
  - h. Policy – Bill
  - i. Strategic Plan Committee - Cathy
- V. **Adjournment.**

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*next board meeting is scheduled for  
Tuesday, **October 16, 2018 at 5 PM**, at the Church of the Advent*



**FAIRMOUNT**  
VENTURES

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The Kennett Library  
Capital Campaign Feasibility Study  
Interim Findings & Implications

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**September 2018**

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## I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Nestled in the heart of Southern Chester County, Kennett Library (the library) has served families and communities living in the surrounding municipalities and townships for over 122 years. During that time, the function, purpose and role of libraries has changed substantially amidst profound advances in digital information and technology. For Kennett Library, keeping pace with local and global changes has translated into developing new programs and investing in new technology. At the same time, the library has outgrown its outdated, 1962-built facility. Hence, the Library is finalizing plans to build a new home in the heart of Kennett Square. While the design process is still underway, it is expected that the facility will cost approximately \$15 million, requiring Kennett Library to raise a minimum of \$12 million when combined with an estimated \$3 million in reserves earmarked for the project.

Fairmount Ventures was retained to: evaluate the interest and capacity of the area's philanthropic community to support the campaign; identify barriers to success and how to overcome them; determine how the campaign should be organized; identify who needs to be involved to maximize success; and create a practical action plan and timetable. This document presents Fairmount's findings from its research, outlines the implications for fundraising, and presents *preliminary* recommendations for the library's consideration. Once the contents of the Findings have been vetted by the Library's leadership, Fairmount will develop and deliver a detailed and actionable plan to guide a successful capital campaign.

Below are six summary observations that emerged from the stakeholder interview process, and that inform the preliminary strategy recommendations:

- 1. What are donors' perceptions of Kennett Library's purpose and role?** Supporters of every type – high net worth individuals, former and current Board members, library users, and community representatives – highlight the library's services for the region's Hispanic and lower-income populations as a key function of the library. Most are cognizant of the library's other services, especially for young children and seniors, but the vast majority report that they do not use the library personally, and see it largely as a charitable institution providing a social service to a vulnerable population. In other words, most of the stakeholders interviewed do not see the library as something for themselves, but they highly value the perceived "social good" the library provides for the community. Some prospect groups, particularly high capacity prospects, may be willing to support the campaign for that purpose without expecting to personally benefit from the new building. Other prospect groups, and likely the broader public, will need to understand how the new building will personally benefit them and how it will better serve the region before they are willing to get involved. Kennett Library will need to distinguish between these two prospect groups, and design engagement strategies tailored to the specific audience.
- 2. What does the community think about libraries in general?** Community members have divergent opinions about libraries. For some, libraries are pillar institutions, upholding core values of democracy, for others, though they may have appreciated libraries in their youth or when their children were small, the contemporary function of a community library is not clear. While many sense that libraries are (or should be) changing to adapt to the 21<sup>st</sup> century, stakeholders are not deeply familiar with the specifics or scope of the changing nature of libraries. It will be necessary for Kennett Library to educate donor audiences and the

general public about the changing role of libraries in the context of how it is adapting and preparing for the future. It will be important to position the new building as a community asset that is evolving and relevant to the broader community's needs in much the same way other pillar institutions (e.g., schools, healthcare institutions) evolve.

- 3. Why do current supporters give to the Kennett Library?** Not all stakeholders who were interviewed currently support the library. Of those that do, most largely give in response to direct mail, annual campaign solicitations. They indicated that they donate to the library because it is their practice to support nonprofits in the region. However, the Kennett Library was not seen as a philanthropic priority for anyone. Few could recall being asked for support in person, and most reported that, if they were currently contributing to the library, they were doing so at modest levels relative to their capacity.

Some interviewees described the library's stewardship and donor relationship management as uneven. Several respondents reported that they, or their friends, had made significant gifts towards the campaign in the past 20 years, and were unsure of what happened to funds. Some stated that acknowledgements felt impersonal, although allowed that form "thank you" letters were to be expected at modest giving levels. These observations need to be considered in the context of a highly competitive philanthropic market, in which selective, warm touch stewardship can be rewarded with higher level gifts over time. There are other capital campaigns underway by other worthy institutions and causes vying for donors' attention. Adopting a strong relationship-based approach to fundraising and donor stewardship will help Kennett Library broaden its base of supporters and effectively engage savvy, high capacity individuals, for whom personalized outreach is seen as the standard.

- 4. What excites the public about a new library?** The public largely understands the limitations of the current facility, and thus the need for better and more space. Most respondents were enthusiastic about the prospect of a new auditorium, and were pleased to hear solutions for parking are part of the design. While the vast majority of stakeholders don't personally use the library, many expressed optimism around the potential for the new building to enhance Kennett Square and the region by adding a high quality, high visibility amenity that may contribute to attracting new residents, and could serve as public gathering space in a community where the options for public gathering spaces are limited. In other words, stakeholders believe the library is an important institution for the community, even if they don't expect to make much use of it personally.

That said respondents' optimism was couched with concerns around feasibility. Stakeholders understand and accept the "why" of the project, but question the "how" and the "what." Many prospective donors are business savvy and have personal experience with capital campaigns. They need assurance that the library's plan has been thoroughly vetted and that the operating and business model is sound. Moreover, because the library receives public funding from the municipalities and townships, community members feel entitled to a full understanding of the project's fiscal implications. The library will need to clearly convey the rationale behind design decisions, and maintain ongoing transparency about the business model.

5. **What do supporters want to know about the campaign?** All prospects for any campaign want to be confident that campaign funds will be well-managed and will have meaningful impact. Kennett Library’s prospective donors and current stakeholders are no different. In addition to wanting to understand the economics of the campaign, they want to understand the quantifiable impact beyond the facility upgrade. They are interested in how the library is making (and will continue to make) a difference in the lives of individuals and communities.

Moreover, the price tag seems high for many, and the process for which the total cost was determined seems hazy. The library needs to clearly convey the value of the investment in terms of amenities, impact, and longevity. Prospects want to be confident that this will be a lasting and smart investment grounded in a well-conceived vision to build an institution that will benefit the community for generations to come. For many, trust in the library has been frayed from years of starts and stops. Because of this, the bar to establish credibility is higher for the library than it might be for other organizations. Prospects need to both believe in the value of the vision, and believe in the institution’s ability to “get it done.” To signal readiness and convey credibility, it will be critically important for the library to recruit high-profile, philanthropically-active community leaders to help re-shape the public narrative about the library, and to serve on a Campaign Committee.

6. **Is the philanthropic community ready to support the library’s \$15 Million capital campaign?** Recognizing that much of giving by high net-worth individuals is influenced by social factors, interviewees spoke of a *quid pro quo* approach to giving, i.e., individuals support friends’ causes knowing they can then ask those friends to support their causes. That said, Kennett Library is not yet seen as a philanthropic priority for most leading philanthropic people in the region. The vast majority of stakeholders interviewed volunteered that they would make a campaign gift if asked, but few indicated a willingness to participate on a campaign committee or expected to give a gift at the upper end of their capacity. Hence, if Kennett Library began campaign solicitations now, it would likely secure gifts below the capacity of donors, resulting in an aggregate raise insufficient to achieve the \$15 Million goal.

**Fairmount Ventures believes that the library can ultimately achieve its goal provided that the first phase of the campaign is spent building the needed social capital to change the community narrative about the library and thus the campaign.**

The next sections expand on the purpose and goals of this work, outline the initial steps to be taken during the first 12 months (approximate) of the campaign to build support prior to asking for money, and present more detail from the stakeholder interviews to provide context for the summary observations above.

## II. PURPOSE

Nestled in the heart of Southern Chester County, Kennett Library (the library) has served families and communities living in the surrounding municipalities and townships for over 122 years. During that time, the function, purpose and role of libraries has changed substantially amidst profound advances in digital information and technology. In the past, when books and newspapers held most of the world's information, public libraries solved a critical challenge for society: they offered the public a place where anyone could have access to information. Today, in our globally-connected world, almost everyone has near constant access to vast amounts of information at their fingertips, begging the question – *where do libraries fit in?*

Libraries across the country are working to answer this question by reconsidering their respective roles and redefining their purpose in the face of multiple societal changes. In 2016, the Knight Foundation awarded \$1.6 million in grants to organizations trying to answer the question: *“how might libraries serve 21<sup>st</sup> century information needs?”* Supported initiatives included the Brooklyn Public library for their free TeleStory program which connects incarcerated individuals to their loved ones through use of teleconferencing equipment in the public library. Another grant funded the Online Computer Library Center (OCLC), a global library cooperative, to develop a training module connecting Wikipedia editors to library resources to improve the accuracy of entries. Libraries across the country are evolving to meet 21<sup>st</sup> century needs, and reposition themselves as welcoming communal spaces, dynamic virtual spaces, and tech-rich learning labs that offer everyone access to modern tools for building knowledge, solving problems, and connecting to the world.

For Kennett Library, keeping pace with local and global changes has translated into programs along many dimensions, e.g., developing an Adult Literacy Program that includes classes and tutoring in English as a Second Language; investing in computer technologies; launching a comprehensive new online community calendar; hosting and facilitating myriad children's programs, book clubs, and other gatherings; etc. At the same time, the library has outgrown its outdated, 1962-built facility. Hence, the Library is finalizing plans to build a new home in the heart of Kennett Square. A project that has been in the works for nearly two decades under several generations of Board leadership, the current Board of Trustees is energized, motivated, and eager to raise the necessary capital to see the project through to completion. While the design process is still underway, it is expected that the facility will cost approximately \$15 million, requiring Kennett Library to raise a minimum of \$12 million when combined with an estimated \$3 million in reserves earmarked for the project.

Fairmount Ventures was retained to: evaluate the interest and capacity of the area's philanthropic community to support the campaign; identify barriers to success and how to overcome them; determine how the campaign should be organized; identify who needs to be involved to maximize success; and create a practical action plan and timetable. Fulfilling this mandate is a two-phase process; this report is the culmination of the first phase in which Fairmount:

- Reviewed the Library's organizational information, along with campaign planning materials;
- Analyzed individual giving records and prospect lists to include individual wealth screening;
- Conducted in-person and phone meetings with Board leadership to better understand context, background, and vision; and
- Contacted 58 prospective interviewees, and was invited by 34 of these people to have discussions regarding the library and the campaign. These individuals included current and

former Board members, donors, campaign prospects, and community leaders (see full list on page 20).

This document presents Fairmount's findings from its research, outlines the implications for fundraising, and presents *preliminary* recommendations for the library's consideration. It will inform our September 7, 2018 discussion and is a critical step towards delivering a detailed and actionable plan to guide a successful capital campaign. The resulting action plan will include:

- An outline of a case statement accompanied by recommendations for how to adapt its overarching messaging to specific funding audiences;
- Recommendations for the optimal organizational infrastructure for the campaign, including the role of the Board, Campaign Committee, and staff;
- Fundraising projections for different phases of the campaign;
- A preliminary campaign budget detailing potential fundraising expenses;
- Recommendations for how to cultivate and communicate with various donor audiences throughout the campaign term; and
- Recommendations for realistic fundraising goals, objectives, and strategies for the campaign including a detailed action plan with suggested timelines for implementation.

### III. PRELIMINARY RECOMMENDATIONS

The current Board of Trustees has made tremendous strides towards ushering in a new era for the Kennett Library. Under current leadership, the library has retained a new director, launched a new community calendar feature, secured additional public support through the New Garden Township Referendum, and, most notably, more than doubled annual giving from individuals in the last fiscal year, to name just a few achievements. The work of righting the proverbial ship is well underway. However, skepticism persists amongst community stakeholders and campaign prospects despite impressive efforts of current library leadership. Philanthropic leaders are wary about involving themselves in what has been seen as a troubled initiative over the preceding decade. To be successful, the Kennett Library will need to shift the public and private narrative across key stakeholder groups and opinion shapers. This will require a longer preparatory time than the library's board may currently expect. We cannot stress enough the importance of building greater goodwill for the vision of the new library and confidence in the board's leadership as the first stage in the capital campaign. Financial capital will follow human capital.

Below are *preliminary* recommendations for how to implement an effective preparatory campaign phase that will set the stage for the campaign's success. These are presented for discussion at the upcoming meeting with the board's leadership and then the full board. Note: this is not intended to be the complete list of steps or the plan for the campaign. At this point, Fairmount Ventures is seeking feedback from the library's leadership regarding the overall findings and suggested direction.

#### **Step 1. Identify 3-4 “community influencers” to help shift the narrative (3-4 months)<sup>1</sup>**

Critical to the success of the campaign will be initially engaging a small group of well-respected community leaders willing to let others in the philanthropic community know that they: endorse the project; deem \$15 million a significant, but worthwhile investment for the public good; and have confidence in the library's leadership. Given what was learned through interviews as well as notable absences and declinations to be interviewed, the library should undertake a highly targeted engagement campaign to reach a handful of key community influencers who can then help a more positive message permeate to others.

The purpose of this first step is not ask for money. Rather, it is to engage influencers in candid, private conversations about the challenges the library has faced, what has been done to correct past missteps, and the need to move forward. While the library leadership may feel that this has been done already, interviews suggest a need for continued dialog. Interviewees did not question the need for a new library; they expressed concern about the process to date and therefore their confidence in the process moving forward. They need to come to the same realization to which the library's leadership arrived already: it is time to look and move forward for the good of the community.

These conversations may unfold over several individual meetings, the substance of which would be to forthrightly address concerns about the project, and to then ask for advice and then support to shift the narrative in their networks. While a sub-set of this group may ultimately be cultivated and recruited for the campaign committee, the primary purpose of this outreach would be to solicit their input and their influence, not their financial support (yet).

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<sup>1</sup> All timeframes in this section are approximate and intended to convey level of effort.

## **Step 2. Recruit the Campaign Committee Co-Chairs (2-3 months)**

Identify a group of perhaps six (6) people to be able to secure two (2) people willing to serve as committee co-chairs (Some of the others will hopefully serve on the Committee.). This third party validation (i.e., people not on the library board) will be critical given that much of giving in Southern Chester County is socially motivated. Multiple prospective donors are reassured by Tom Swett's leadership at the library. He is viewed as capable, well-connected, and savvy. His involvement has helped steer public opinion towards the library from largely negative to cautiously optimistic.

## **Step 3. Recruit the Campaign Committee (3-5 months)**

Leverage the prestige of the Co-Chairs, Tom, and other key influencer's networks to identify and approach prospective campaign committee members. Be prepared to have similar conversations to those described in the first two steps, i.e., acknowledging missteps, pointing to successes, and getting people to look and move forward. The goal would be to build a committee of 15-20 people.

The library should consider the following as it prepares for the capital campaign as the process described above unfolds.

- Clarify the library's purpose and target population for donors. Determine whether to embrace many donors' perceptions that the library is a worthy institution to be used by community members other than themselves, or whether the case should be made that there are programming and resources they would enjoy and from which they would derive benefit. The answer is likely "both/and", and a compelling case can be made for both options. Whatever the answer, the communications materials, physical design, and description of the programs should be clearly stated to align with the position.
- Provide a sneak preview of what will be possible in a new building. Depending upon the position the library chooses to adopt, continue to offer energizing programs that reinforce the mission and brand. If the goal is to broaden public perception of the library's value to all segments of the community, consider partnerships with other organizations to host, facilitate, or sponsor events, programs or other public gatherings. These would need to occur off-site since the current library building cannot accommodate them. Use these events and partnerships to create a distinction between the library as a facility and the library as a facilitator and host of high quality, unique, and relevant programs. Use these opportunities to provide updates about the new building project in order to demonstrate progress and address the perception of stagnation.
- Educate key stakeholder groups why a \$15-20 Million public facility is a good value and worthwhile civic investment. Most people do not have a frame of reference to evaluate the price tag, and could benefit from understanding costs, and the ROI in economic and social terms.

## IV. SUMMARY OF INTERVIEW FINDINGS

Fairmount Ventures conducted 35 confidential interviews with community members, former and current Board members, former and current donors, and prospective campaign supporters. To better isolate high capacity prospects, and identify patterns among stakeholder groups findings were segmented into three sub-groups: 1) High Capacity Prospects; 2) Insiders; and 3) Community Members. The subgroup “High Capacity Prospects” were defined as individuals whose estimated net worth exceeded \$10 million, per WealthEngine, and/or who were identified by the client as a major donor prospect. “Insiders” were defined as former or current Board members with estimated net worth less than \$10 million. The subgroup “Community Members” encompassed interviewees with more distant relationships to the Library, as well as those with estimated net worth less than \$10 million. This group was primarily made up of elected officials, local business leaders, and modest donors or volunteers for the Library.

### High Capacity Prospects

#### **A. Background and Association**

- The majority of High Capacity Prospects have a long history in the Kennett Square region; they are actively involved in the community, *“I’m a ‘support Kennett’ kind of person”* and they are cognizant of how their region is transforming, *“Kennett Square has changed fairly dramatically, it’s become gentrified. It used to be a back water town, now has corporate headquarters, and affluent suburbs, and a healthy downtown life in the evening. So it’s a diverse community.”*
- They are philanthropically engaged in their charities of choice, a selection of which include the Kennett YMCA, the Chester County Hospital, Habitat for Humanity, La Comunidad Hispana, The Kennett Food Bank, and the Garage. Many also reported that they are philanthropically involved with their church or alma mater, and several noted that they had family foundations.
- While one individual had served on the Library’s Board of Trustees in the 1980s, most individuals in this group were only tangentially connected to the library. They may have participated in the Library as Home and Garden Tour hosts or attendees, served as literacy or ESL tutors, or they serve on municipal boards or other civic organizations that have been engaged with the Library over the years.
- The vast majority of High Capacity Prospects do not use the library personally, *“the last time I was in the library, my kids were in high school; they are now in the 40s. Haven’t used the library in years myself.”*

#### **B. Kennett Library’s Leadership**

- Almost uniformly, all High Capacity Prospects cite Tom Swett as their main connection to the library, and see him as trusted, well-connected, and capable leader.
- Many expressed confidence in the library - its leadership and vision for the future - through their confidence in Tom, *“he’s a great community asset”* and *“it’s a great comfort to know that Tom’s hand is on the tiller”*
- Nearly all respondents indicated that beyond Tom, they weren’t connected to others at the Library. Common responses were variations on the following: *“I don’t even know who is on the Board anymore.”*

### C. On the Value of Libraries

- This stakeholder group was split in their response to questions about the value of libraries, generally, in today's society, and into the future.
- Approximately half expressed positive sentiments about the value of libraries, noting that they may be more relevant than ever, *"libraries are for everybody. They are more important today. We can't just live our lives on social media. We have to get out and interact and read books,"* and that they encourage human interaction at a time when people are becoming increasingly insolated, *"first of all it's a repository of our culture, and that goes beyond the iPhone and saying 'google it,' secondly it's a community function, a gathering place"*
- Many respondents indicated that libraries are of particular value to young children and the elderly.
- The other half expressed ambivalence about the role of libraries, describing them as potential outdated, and musing about how difficult is it to answer the questions, *"that's the sort of question we get from the general population at the township level, what do libraries do anymore?"*

### D. Kennett Library's History

- The general sentiment about Kennett Library's history was summed up in this comment: *"obviously, Kennett Library has had more drama than a reality TV show."*
- That said, High Capacity Prospects, are cautiously optimistic about the library's new direction. They are aware of the library's tumultuous past, and for many, it doesn't feel too distant, *"it's been a confusing 10-15 years, they are struggling with how they are going to expand and shift their mission,"*
- Comments were at times, emotionally charged, *"boy, was it agony watching that process unfold, the ill will that was created..."* or bluntly negative, *"they were rather heavy handed and arrogant, didn't leave a lot of people feeling particularly warm and fuzzy about it."*
- Several respondents recounted specific episodes that stayed with them, for instance in regard to former leadership seeking government funding, *"they were less than transparent about the management of the library and the financial situation...rather than come to a meeting and be sympathetic, there was a feeling of: you owe it to us"*
- That said, several respondents were attuned to efforts the library has made to improve the visitor experience, *"I think the changes they've made are terrific. It opens it all up, they've gotten more computer space, more user friendly. I used to spend lots of time in children's department, but the upstairs looks terrific. I know there's a continuing parking problem, but the library looks great and the new library will be even more exciting."*
- Despite the negative comments, most respondents were hopeful that the library was moving in the *"right direction."*

### E. Kennett Library's Role in the Community

- Nearly all respondents referenced the region's Hispanic population in reference to the role of the library in the Kennett region, *"I always thought it served mainly to develop the relationship with the Hispanic community"* and *"my instinct is that the library serves those who need resources, who many not have multiple computers at home for themselves, our Latino folks who need information"* or simply *"the library supports those who are less fortunate."*
- Others included senior citizens and young children in their thoughts about who the library is for, saying the library serves *"a very broad cross section of the local population ...there are young kids,*

*adults who speak little English, senior citizens...it's comforting, reassuring, and inspiring to see that the library isn't a place just for very comfortable middle class."*

- Respondents talked about the library's broader value to the community, *"it adds to the vibe of Kennett Borough as being a vibrant, growing...neat place-to-go town"* and reflected on the evolution of libraries, *"more than a place to look at books,"* as well as the principles libraries represent, *"the library stands for literacy, education, equal access."*
- Many sensed that positioning the new building as a community space was core to the vision for the future, *"my impression is the Library is viewing itself as a community center, a place to gather, get together, have public meetings, classes for ESL,"* and *"I think the term Community Center is more appropriate term for the vision Tom's described to me."*

#### **F. Philanthropic Relationship to Kennett Library**

- Nearly all High Capacity Prospects indicated that, if they were currently supporting Kennett Library, they were doing so at low levels and in response to standard annual appeal letters, *"I don't think we've been approached, other than by mass mailing"*
- For this stakeholder group, the library ranked low among the charities they support.
- When asked about why the library isn't included on their list of preferred charities, many pointed to a lack of responsiveness and limited stewardship, *"you never get what you don't ask for,"* and *"my wife even offered to hold a small, more upscale reception/party for the leaders, for the Board, the big givers, we offered to do that and never heard back from anyone"* and *"I've never been asked to give. Even when I gave, I've never heard a word from them"*
- A few respondents raised questions about funds donated to previous iterations of the capital campaign. One respondent reported that they had given \$25,000 ten or fifteen years ago and *"nothing really happened"*

#### **G. Purpose and Scope of the Campaign**

- Respondents were largely positive about the new building project, *"coming up that hill in Kennett and seeing that new and exciting building, with all that sparkly glass, it's going to make you feel that Kennett is up and coming and current"* and *"it's been back and forth, and it feels to me that it's finally on a good trajectory,"* and *"it's great that people want to do this, I think it would enhance the community. I applaud the people involved and the other Board members for hanging in there."*
- Those familiar with the facility, agreed that a new building was a necessity, *"my wonderful Kennett Library is getting a little long in the tooth"* and *"right now, the current building is very tired, therefore it's hard for them to not have image of being tired institution,"* and *"it sounds like they are on the right track in a lot of ways, I know parking would be an issue."*
- Several felt that the new building would excite the community and add value to Kennett Square, *"whenever you build a new public building, whether it's a library, a church, people just come. It will reignite interest in the library"* and *"...it's equivalent to a town without an art gallery. Do you need an art gallery? Technically you don't, but it's really raising the value of creativity, raising the value of beauty in your community."*
- While noting the fundraising goal is ambitious, most were not surprised at the cost, *"I wasn't aware of estimated costs, but not surprised by that. Nothing is inexpensive these days"* and *"I am a little shocked at the number, but not really shocked, when I think about it,"* others noted that it would be a steep climb from a fundraising standpoint, *"that's a long way to go between \$1 million and \$15 million"*

- While positive about the project, several respondents expressed cautious optimism about whether this time would be different, reflecting again on the rocky history of the planning process over the years “...it’s been back and forth so much, I think a lot of people put it out of their minds because it was constant bickering...who knows what’s going to happen”

## H. Questions and Advice

- When asked what questions they would have if approached for a gift, respondents’ questions ran the gamut from use and visitation (“who’s using these spaces and what are they using them for? I don’t know anyone who has ever had a meeting at the Kennett Library”), to the role of the Board (“how much is the Board giving? 20%? 50%?”), to the fate of the old building (“what will happen to the building they are in? Can they make some money selling that?”).
- That said, most questions focused on how the funds would be raised and spent, noting that “there are so many institutions trying to raise money. It’s a battle for that money,” questions on the topic included:
  - *Can you point to any fundraising efforts in Kennett Square that are larger in magnitude than this?”*
  - *What is the current gap between anticipated construction costs, and \$15 million? What has to be given up to get from where the current cost is coming in to \$15 million? What are we giving up to get to \$15 million?*
  - *It’s one thing to raise the funds; it’s another thing to have funding to support it over the next 20-30 years. That would be my primary question.”*
  - *Who are the players? Who has already stepped up?*
  - *What will the space be used for? What kind of programs will be offered? What are the long-term plans? Will they collaborate with other community organizations?*
  - *What is the timeline for completing the project?*
  - *I would love to see and have in my hand, a design, a rendering, a handout.*

## I. Campaign Fundraising

- The vast majority of High Capacity Prospects did not feel comfortable naming specific individuals as possible campaign prospects or campaign committee leaders. However, a few names came up including Cecilia Ross, Morris Stroud, the duPont family, leaders in the mushroom industry, Chatham Finance, Mike Pia or the Pia family, and campaign supporters for the YMCA’s capital campaign.
- When asked what it would take to ensure that Kennett Library is successful in their fundraising campaign, respondents emphasized the importance of having leadership support from known community philanthropists, saying “it’s going to take a lot of work and big gifts” and “there needs to be 6-12 people who are as committed as Tom, and represent leadership in the project, I don’t know who those people are, but they need to be generous and public about their generosity.”
- Others cited the importance of getting people involved and keeping them informed, “it’s important to get people involved, when people are involved they get more invested and are more likely to give more. Also keep people updated”

## J. Personal Involvement

- Few High Capacity Prospects expressed interest in becoming more deeply involved in the campaign efforts, citing other philanthropic commitments “I just helped finish a \$36M campaign, all my funds are committed to that,” or scheduling conflicts.

- Those who did express interest in deeper involvement were waiting for additional information *“not currently very involved but will be more motivated as the future plans are more clearly articulated,”* or couched their interest with caveats *“I do not ask anyone for money, but I love creating programs. Give me a call when it’s time to create programs.”*
- Others indicated that they would support the campaign financially *“I’m very much in favor, we’ll do anything we can help,”* even if they weren’t involved, but maybe at more modest levels, *“we’re willing to make a gift, I wouldn’t call it transformative”* and *“I would not be an early contributor, and not in the amount they would expect of me.”*

## **Insiders**

### **A. Background and Association**

- Insiders included both current and former Board members, as well as staff and others close to the Library, including former Board Presidents.
- A few former Board members indicated a willingness to get involved again, while others felt frustrated by their experiences, *“it wasn’t always smooth sailing.”*

### **B. Kennett Library’s Leadership**

- Like the High Capacity Prospects, most respondents cited Tom Swett as their main point of contact and connection to the library. However, this group also included other members of the Board: Jeff Yetter, Bill McLachlan, Karen Aamon, and former Board Members such as Jerry Brown or Jim Nelson.
- Several indicated that if they had questions about the Library they would reach out to their township representatives.
- Most respondents felt positively about the new leadership of the library, *“I think they are doing a good job of building credibility, trying to mend that”*

### **C. On the Value of Libraries**

- Insiders felt that libraries are core institutions that reinforce and foster important societal values, *“they structure the society and culture of the town”* and *“libraries represent education. The best society has to offer.”*
- Like High Capacity Prospects, they also emphasized that libraries help the *“less fortunate,”* *“libraries are places where people who might not normally have access, have access to information, services and technology”* and *“libraries are an important access point to books for children and technology for those who are disadvantaged”*

### **D. Kennett Library’s History**

- Unsurprisingly, this group’s collective understanding and reflections on the library’s history were complex, and, often, charged with emotion, *“it pitted friends against friends,”* *“they were deceitful, arrogant, they insulted people,”* *“everyone looks at it as a joke”*
- Respondents were conflicted about the decision to build the new library in the Borough, some maintained that the out-of-town location would have been a better fit and generally felt dismayed by the stop/start nature of the enterprise, *“whenever there is a new administration and a new set ideas, they start over again, kept repeating things, changing things, going back to things they’ve done before”* and *“what has really hurt the library is the indecision and inability to make decisions”*
- Most acknowledged the somewhat recent shift in leadership, and expressed optimism about the current direction, *“I did not like the library’s leadership until 3-4 years ago.”*

## E. Role in the Community

- Insiders emphasized the library's support of the region's Hispanic population *"we have made great strides for our Spanish-speaking population, younger people, others who don't have the socio-economic means or access to books"*
- And many framed the value of the library within the context of the region's economic development and population shifts *"there is economic inequality in Chester County. People are hungry and housing is expensive..." "...we are making it a better place to live," "Kennett is an unusual place, we are now 52% Hispanic, 35% 7 years ago. Real estate developers shy away from the region due to the Hispanic population. Property values have dropped significantly, people don't want to buy homes. Having a viable downtown with a library is an asset and increases home values...it makes people want to live here."*
- Respondents talked about dynamic programming for young children, and efforts for the library to be more than just a place for books, but a place where *"you can learn more about what is happening in the community."*
- Others talked about the concept of the third place, and the potential for the Library to bring people together, *"we're a safe environment, we're a third place,"* and *"the library is for the greater community, it is a beacon of enlightenment and a central spot where people can gather information."*

## F. Philanthropic Relationship to Kennett Library

- Most Insiders indicated that they supported the Library through annual giving, mostly in response to direct mail solicitations.
- One person suggested that the Board should have a suggested donation amount, *"the library should be sterner with the Board about getting them to give"* and others felt the Board needed training and supports to effectively fundraise on behalf of the library.
- One respondent indicated that they had given a substantial gift twenty years ago and *"nothing happened"*

## G. Purpose and Scope of the Campaign

- Insiders' responses to the Campaign overview and estimated costs were largely conflicted and contradictory even from the same respondent, *"I feel strongly that there's a library needed, but I think the history has too much baggage."*
- Many felt there was an urgent need for a new building, *"the current library is on its last legs, it could go anytime, the roof, the boiler, major repairs, space is way past its serviceability"..."it's hanging on by a thread,"* and talked about the long-overdue improvements to accessibility in the new design, *"everything inside the building will be equally accessible to anyone who wants it. It's an equalizer."*
- Parking continues to be a concern, with some respondents prioritizing that issue, and others discounting the issue: *"40 spaces is an improvement, but if you're building an auditorium and having programs, lectures, and you invite 100 people, you have a problem"* and *"I'm bothered by the parking argument; the borough has reasonable parking spaces within walking distance."*
- But most respondents expressed concern, even alarm, at the scope of the fundraising goal, *"to raise \$14 million in this day and age is a huge project. Where the support is coming from, I don't know,"* and *"I think we were looking for \$9 million back then, we couldn't raise it,"* and *"I am sorry to hear that the project has grown to \$15 million, nearly double what had been discussed earlier. That surprises me some, I wonder if the architect is off on a joy ride expedition."*

- When asked what questions they would have if approached for a gift, questions were around better understanding the cost and how to pay for it. Insiders were also curious about community partnerships and who the prospective donors would be, one person wondered about a strategic plan and another wanted to understand if any of the funds would be allocated to establish an endowment

## H. Campaign Fundraising

- Like High Capacity Prospects, Insiders emphasized the competitive market for charitable dollars in the region, *“everybody hits everybody. I’m \$13k into this community. No sooner then I write the check, 5 other people are coming to me for dollars”* and *“I will tell you that right now there is a huge number of organizations of capital campaigns going on”*
- Respondents talked about the need to be creative in *“monetizing”* the new building project, saying the library needs a *“broad marketing campaign, emphasizing naming rights and corporate donations”*
- Insiders felt that there was great capacity in the region, but didn’t feel connected to individuals with high giving capacity, *“I used to know people, but I don’t really now. I don’t know the Board members. I just don’t know who’s supporting in the community,”* or couldn’t identify people who would be inclined to support the cause, *“there’s a lot of quite money in this community, a lot of people with a lot of money. but in terms of people that I know, I wouldn’t say that they are chomping at the bit to make a big gift,*
- Specific names that were mentioned include the campaign donors for the YMCA, Mike Bontrager, Susan Philips from Philips Mushroom Company, and Morris Stroud.

## I. Personal Involvement

- Insiders were mixed about their willingness to get involved some. Approximately half were interested in helping with the campaign, *“would be glad to help with the campaign, in terms of networking or facilitating some groups,”* and *“I grew up with libraries, I believe in libraries, I’ve never known a book I’ve wanted to let go of. Could see myself having a role.”* Others indicated that due to other commitments, lack of interest or health issues, would not be available to get involved.

## Community Members

### A. Background and Association

- Community Members included a broad swath of respondents from members of the press to elected officials to other civically-engaged individuals. Some were connected to the library as volunteers, or had participated in the Home and Garden Tour, others had engaged with the library more formally as representatives of municipalities or the borough.
- The vast majority of respondents indicated that they do not personally use the library, *“I don’t go into the library, I use the online system and download books onto my computers,”* with a few high-use exceptions, and several who reported that they had made use of the library when their children were small, or that their grandchildren made use of the library now.

### B. Kennett Library’s Leadership

- Like the other stakeholder groups, Community Members most frequently cited Tom Swett as their main connection at the Library. But, like Insiders, there were others they felt connected to: Jeff Yetter, Bill McLachlan, Jim DiLuzio, Karen Aamon and Brenda Mercomes.

- Respondents largely felt optimistic about the current leadership, *“my perception is that the current leadership has its act together, really thoughtful, has a compelling basis for expansion and development the library,”* though some wondered if capacity was still limited, *“I see them making good efforts. I am not fully convinced that they have the capacity to lead this in the future.”*

### C. On the Value of Libraries

- Community Members view the role of libraries as important and meaningful to communities, they are *“great for youth and activities, bringing people together to share experiences,”* and *“a strong community needs a strong library – most strong libraries exist in strong communities,”* and *“we need it now more than ever”* and libraries are for *“important to children, underserved populations, job seekers”*
- Many recognized that libraries are not just about books anymore *“libraries are still a place for books, but also a place for information more widely; need to provide new updated services, which vary from library to library”*

### D. Kennett Library’s History

- Community Members are aware of the library’s controversial past, *“I see it as very troubled”* and recognized that there are efforts underway to course-correct, *“they are trying to do a reset, that’s good.”*
- Moreover, this stakeholder group was largely pleased that the library would remain in the borough.

### E. Role in the Community

- Again and again, respondents emphasized the library’s work supporting the region’s Hispanic community:
  - i. *“the library provides access to technology for underprivileged groups – specifically for the kids in Kennett community”*
  - ii. *“Good resource for the diverse population in Kennett”*
  - iii. *“I love that they do ESL”*
  - iv. *“Library is very important to children and families of migrant workers for access to literacy programs and resources”*
- Some respondents were enthusiastic about the potential for the library to be seen as a community space, *“there’s a real need for that, if they embraced a strong hybrid vision of a community center along with flex space and co-working space”* and *“their e-newsletter has interesting events, gatherings. It feels more modern.”*
- *“The library has gotten better at being for the entire family. Before it used to be mainly for kids and senior citizens, and Latinos without community.”*
- One respondent reflected on the economic and class disparity between regional populations, *“You have a community that talks a lot about wanting to make sure Latinos have access and chance. But there’s a big huge divide between Anglo and Latino communities, very separate for the most part.”*

### F. Philanthropic Relationship to Kennett Library

- A few Community Members had a history of supporting Kennett Library. For those that did, respondents were not impressed with stewardship efforts, *“it has been in the past sloppy, there has been an unevenness to how the asks have been done”*
- At least one respondent did not recall ever being asked for a gift.

## G. Purpose and Scope of the Campaign

- Community members recognized that the Library is need of a new facility, and were energized about the effort, *“it would be money well-spent, it’s something this community will use, something this community needs,”* and *“it will bring more people to town, will create more opportunities for community involvement”*
- There was particular enthusiasm for the auditorium idea, *“there’s nothing like that in Kennett”* and *“In Kennett we don’t have a lot of larger spaces where we can gather people. Elected officials can have public meetings. Organizations could have events in their rooms.”* Though, some respondents had specific concerns about the planned auditorium’s capacity and orientation, and the implications of those factors on potential renters or user interest.
- Like other stakeholder groups, many respondents balked at the price tag *“that’s a pretty steep campaign for Kennett”* and *“it strikes me as very ambitious,”* and *“I would be concerned about the increased cost of construction and materials, they are just skyrocketing,”* but others noted the relative wealth of the surrounding region *“Chester County is a very wealthy county, they should be able to raise the funds.”*

## H. Questions and Advice

- Like other stakeholder groups, when asked what questions they would have if approached for a gift, Community Members wanted to understand who the Library would be partnering with, how programs would change, the impact on operating costs, if there were plans for an endowment.
- One respondent conveyed a specific interest in understanding what funds that were previously raised went towards, and relayed knowledge of donors who made substantial gifts in the past, but never heard anything, saying *“I’m concerned past funders will not contribute again without a clear understanding of where the contributions went”*
- Another respondent wanted to see a plan that considered the *“far out future”* and focused on *“1) malleability of spaces for decades to come, and 2) endowments. Provisions for upkeep. Maintain the building, not just the mechanical end, but also things like more people cleaning the building if bigger,”* another wondered what would happen if they only raised \$8 Million.

## J. Campaign Fundraising

- In reference to the fundraising work ahead, one respondent said *“you don’t want to build a building, you want to build a constituency that wants to support a building”*
- Respondents shared a number of ideas for potential campaign prospects, and emphasized the importance of outreach to corporations, *“there are many strong local corporations that support our community really well. There are 32 nonprofits organizations that serve Kennett Square Borough.”*
- Specific individuals named included the duPont family, the Longwood Foundation, Morris Stroud, Mary Alice Malone, Michael Bontrager, Audrey Donahue, Bob Norris, Aaron Martin, the Huttons, Carol Ware, Chris Ross, Alison Moorehead, Peter Kjellerup and Mandy Cabot, the Musser family, as well as a number of corporations including Genesis Healthcare, Chatham Financial, and PECO.
- Like other stakeholder groups, Community Members felt that the campaign goal was ambitious, *“it’s going to be very tough to raise \$14 million. We’ve been involved for a number of campaigns for the Y, and a number of large donors who helped out. Last addition it was a struggle to get the money,”* and *“I know this area has enough super wealthy that if a few stepped up, it would not be a problem, but if they don’t step up, and you’re trying to do it with \$5k donations...”*

- Others emphasized the importance of securing philanthropic leadership to helm fundraising efforts *“if you’re going to ask for money, you better be one of the ones stepping up,”* and expressed concern that the library’s board doesn’t have the *“necessary rapport with older individuals with real name recognition.”*

#### **K. Personal Involvement**

- Most respondents were not interested in getting more involved, citing other commitments other nonprofit boards or conflicts of interest.
- The majority of Community Members reported that they would welcome the opportunity to support the effort, though not at transformational levels, *“we have to choose who we give to”*

## **IV. INTERVIEW LIST**

### **Interview Participants**

1. Earl Baker
2. Claire Birney
3. Mike Bontrager
4. Chris Britt
5. Barbara Cairns
6. Audrey Donohue
7. Priscilla Dugdale
8. Matt Fettick
9. Barbara Forney
10. Paul Frederic
11. Jock Hannum
12. Buzz Hannum
13. Jim Horn
14. Ann & Steve Hutton
15. Peter Kjellerup
16. Randy Leiberman
17. Lynn Majarian
18. Aaron Martin
19. Bruce McNew
20. Bonnie Musser
21. Susan Phillips
22. Nancy Pia
23. Don Robitzer
24. Cortney Walker Rohr
25. Michael Rotko
26. Dr. Bob Scott
27. Karen Simmons
28. Scudder Stevens
29. Morris Stroud
30. Dr. Barry Tomasetti
31. Anne Verplanck
32. Eve Verplanck
33. Megan Walters
34. Bill Wylie

### **Stakeholder who explicitly declined to participate**

35. Steve Allaband
36. Maria Basciani
37. Gretchen & Roy Jackson
38. Donnan Sharp Jones
39. Edna & Bud Pierce
40. William Rubin
41. Stephanie Speakman
42. John & Nancy Swayne
43. Denise & Robert Waters

### **Stakeholders who were contacted, but did not respond to multiple requests**

44. Chris Alonzo
45. Jerry Brown

46. Jonathan Jordan
47. Anthony Stancato
48. Cuyler Walker
49. Pat Bernardon
50. Wendell Fenton
51. Gale Ferranto
52. Bert Kertstetter
53. Katie Majarian
54. Bill McGovern
55. Michael & Ann Moran
56. Richard D. Richardson
57. Kathy Walker
58. Sandy & Pennock Yeatman