

Library Location Unknown

This past spring, the Village held a non-binding referendum on whether the Village Board should borrow \$1 million to support construction of the library, and where to build the library. The Village Board set the referenda questions on November 6, 2013 (Resolution 13-31). The questions were presented at the April 1, 2014 election. The sites were the west side site, bought by the Library Board with Village Board approval in 2011, and the Glarner Park site, selected by a joint village and library committee as a “downtown” alternative.

The vote was 231 to 191 in favor of borrowing up to \$1,000,000, plus \$40,000 in undesignated reserve funds to build a new library building. By 125 to 118, voters favored the Glarner Park site. The Library Board pledged its willingness to work with the Village Board to make either site successful.

The question of site was not acted upon until the June 3, 2014 Village Board meeting, where Trustee Thoemke distributed his own plans for locating the Library at the former Fifth Avenue Shops at 19 Fifth Avenue. This site was not included as an option on the spring referendum.

At the July 15, 2014 Village Board meeting, President Truttman moved to follow the referendum results by locating the new library at Glarner Park. His motion was defeated with Trustees Thoemke, Kruse, Gobeli and Bainbridge voting against, and Trustees Truttman, Janowiak and Streiff voting in favor. No motion was brought forward on the west side site or the Fifth Avenue site proposed by Trustee Thoemke. Instead, Trustee Thoemke moved to consider expanding the library within the Village Hall. That motion passed with Trustees Thoemke, Kruse, Gobeli and Bainbridge in favor, and Trustees Truttman, Janowiak and Streiff opposed.

Since July 15, the Village Board has rejected both the Glarner Park and the west side sites for the library, the options offered on the referendum, and chose to expand the library within the Village Hall, which would displace village administrative offices, meeting rooms, and New Glarus Utility offices – an option that had not been discussed since 2004. The Library Board building committee is working with village staff to determine if this is a practical solution.

We encourage all citizens and library users to inform themselves by reviewing Village Board meeting videos, and Village Trustee document packets, all are posted on the Village website.