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ERIE COUNTY LEGISLATURE

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Office of the Supervisor
CARL J. CALABRESE

January 18, 1999

Ms. Diane Chrisman
Buffalo & Erie County Public Library
1 Lafayette Square
Buffalo, NY 14203-1887

Dear Diane:

I want to thank you and Becky for taking time to meet with members of our Town Board and myself to discuss the recently released consultants report on the future of our library system in Erie County. The exchange of opinions and perspectives was interesting and productive.

I have had the opportunity to discuss, in more detail, some of the ideas that were generated at our meeting, which I believe hold promise for markedly improving library service in our town.

As you know we have serious reservations about the part of the plan that calls for closing three libraries (Kenilworth, Brighton and Sheridan Parkside) and replacing them with a "Hub" library. It is our belief that such a plan would be very disruptive and counterproductive to library users and potentially very costly to taxpayers.

Based on the unique nature of our neighborhoods, the importance of libraries to these neighborhoods, the difficulty and expense of building a "Hub" library in the Sheridan Dr./Parker Blvd. area and the strategic location of the Brighton Library, the Town Board would like to offer the following alternative proposal for your consideration:

1. The Kenilworth, Sheridan - Parkside and Greenhaven libraries should be designated "Specialty Libraries". Each one of these neighborhoods is distinctive in its economic, demographic and cultural makeup and would be perfectly suited for a Specialty Library with a collection tailor made for its residents.

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Diane Chrisman
Page two

2. The Kenmore Library, should become a "Community Library", as designated in the consultant report.
3. The Brighton Rd. library should be expanded and converted into a "Community Library". Such a designation would take advantage of the fact that the library is located on a heavily traveled county road, surrounded by densely populated neighborhoods and is adjacent to Kenmore East Senior High School. Expansion could be accomplished through a number of methods (a second floor, obtaining property on Parker Blvd. or obtaining land on school property) and at a fraction of the cost of constructing a new "Hub Library".
4. Following the above recommendations would preclude the need for the construction of a "Hub Library".
5. We would urge that consideration be given to forging a working relationship with the Ken-ton and Sweet Home School Districts. Both Districts possess and maintain extensive library collections that, with coordidnation, would result in the expansion of service to the public and the avoidance of duplication of services.

It was obvious from our meeting that we all seek to make our library system better and stronger and that many ideas in the consultant report will produce just such a result. We appreciate your openness to different ideas and suggestions to accomplishing these goals and look forward to working with you to continue the tradition of excellence in libraries that our residents have become accustomed to. We are open to further discussions with you, at any time, to discuss these ideas in greater detail. Thank you.

Sincerely;

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Carl J. Calabrese', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Carl J. Calabrese
Town of Tonawanda Supervisor

CJC:rm

