

Historic Structure Report

Fall 2025

Boston Carnegie Library
250 South Main Street
Boston, Thomas County, Georgia



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Contents

PROJECT PURPOSE AND NEED	4
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF CONDITIONS AND TREATMENTS RECOMMENDATIONS	5
METHODOLOGY	7
NAMING AND LABELING CONVENTIONS	8
SECTION I: DEVELOPMENTAL HISTORY	9
HISTORY OF LAND AND COMMUNITY	9
CHRONOLOGY OF DEVELOPMENT AND USE	14
SETTING, SITE AND LANDSCAPE FEATURES.....	28
ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION	31
MODIFICATIONS.....	33
CHARACTER-DEFINING FEATURES	35
HISTORIC INTEGRITY ANALYSIS	35
SECTION II: CONDITIONS ASSESSMENT	38
FOUNDATION	38
<i>Condition of Foundation</i>	39
EXTERIOR WALLS	40
<i>Condition of Exterior Walls</i>	47
FLOOR SYSTEM.....	49
<i>Condition of Floor Systems</i>	51
ROOFING SYSTEM	52
<i>Condition of Roof</i>	56
DRAINAGE.....	57
<i>Condition of Drainage</i>	59
INTERIOR WALLS.....	62
<i>Condition of Interior Walls</i>	64
INTERIOR ROOMS.....	67
TRIM & DECORATIVE ELEMENTS	70
<i>Condition of Trim and Fixtures</i>	76
CEILINGS.....	77
<i>Condition of Ceilings</i>	78
DOORS.....	78
<i>Condition of Doors</i>	83
WINDOWS.....	84
<i>Condition of Windows</i>	88
FLOORING.....	90
<i>Condition of Floors</i>	93
STAIRS	93
Condition of Stairs	95
ELECTRICAL	95
Condition of Electric	98
HVAC	98
PLUMBING.....	101
SECTION III: TREATMENT AND USE	102
SELECTING A TREATMENT APPROACH	103
ALTERATIONS AND CODE COMPLIANCE.....	105
TREATMENT RECOMMENDATIONS MATRIX	106
SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS - DETAILS	109
Reroute ground drains on east elevation.	109

Repair Front Entry Leak	109
Remove softscape elements (foliage) that threaten or obscure the building.	109
Repoint the historic exterior brick walls.	110
Restore the building's historic windows.	110
Replace plexiglass storm windows with low profile storm windows on basement windows.	111
Remove fences	111
North Basement Wall Window Leak	112
Fix/Refinish entry door	112
Patch Foundation Holes.....	112
Replace downspout elbow	113
Secure electrical panel housing	113
Properly close light fixture junction boxes.....	113
Suggested: Install K gutters on drip edge roofs.....	113
Suggested: Extend condensate drain line on HVAC units	114
Clean the fireplaces.....	114
Clean exterior brick walls	115
IMPROVEMENT CONSIDERATIONS	116
SECTION IV: DRAWINGS	119
FLOOR PLAN	120
FOUNDATION PLAN	121
FLOOR SYSTEM FRAMING PLAN	122
EAST ELEVATION	123
SITE PLAN.....	124
SOURCES	125
APPENDIX.....	129
WINDOW EVALUATION – 1 ST FLOOR.....	130
WINDOW EVALUATION – BASEMENT	131
WINDOW SURVEY DATA	132
EXTERIOR WALL EVALUATION – EAST ELEVATION.....	134
EXTERIOR WALL EVALUATION - SOUTH ELEVATION.....	135
EXTERIOR WALL EVALUATION - NORTH ELEVATION	136
TECHNICAL DRAWINGS.....	137

Project Purpose and Need

The purpose of this report is to document, evaluate, and recommend preservation treatments for the historic Boston Carnegie Library, located at 250 South Main Street in Boston, Thomas County, Georgia. The Thomas County Library System, in partnership with The City of Boston, seeks to preserve and extend the life of this century-old civic landmark for continued community use, education, and heritage interpretation.



The findings and recommendations presented in this Historic Structure Report are intended to guide decision-making and long-term stewardship consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.

Completed in 1914, the Boston's Library is one of the few Carnegie funded libraries still serving the public in Georgia. Designed by two well-known Georgia architects, Charles Edward Choate and Ernest Daniel Ivey, the building is a fine example of Classical Revival design, featuring a symmetrical brick façade, a pedimented portico with paired columns, and high multi-light sash windows—hallmarks of the national Carnegie program. The building is a tangible manifestation of a pivotal chapter in the development of public libraries and civic improvement in early-20th-century Georgia.

The library has undergone several changes since its construction, but it retains a high degree of historic integrity in its form, materials, and workmanship. However, the structure now exhibits deterioration in several critical areas. Deferred maintenance, moisture intrusion at foundation and basement window openings, localized masonry cracking, and outdated building systems all pose threats to the building's long-term stability and usability. These conditions underscore the immediate need for professional preservation planning and phased rehabilitation.

This report provides a detailed historical narrative of the library's creation, its social and architectural context within the Carnegie movement, and its significance to the community of Boston. It also assesses the condition of each major building system—foundation, walls, windows, roof, and interior finishes—and identifies character-defining features that must be preserved. The goal of this document is to ensure that the Boston Carnegie Library continues to serve as both a functional public resource and a tangible expression of the civic ideals that inspired its construction more than a century ago.

Executive Summary of Conditions and Treatments Recommendations

The Boston Carnegie Library (1914) remains a remarkably intact and well-preserved example of a small-town Classical Revival Carnegie library. Overall, the building is in fair to good condition, with no evidence of structural failure or active settlement, and it retains a high degree of integrity in location, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. The original masonry walls, foundation system, windows, doors, and interior spatial organization largely survive, and a visitor from the early twentieth century would readily recognize the building today.

Despite this strong baseline condition, the building is experiencing a set of interrelated maintenance and moisture-related issues that, if left unaddressed, threaten long-term preservation of the historic fabric. These conditions are primarily the result of deferred maintenance rather than inappropriate past alterations.

Primary Condition Issues

The most significant concerns documented in the Conditions Assessment relate to water management and enclosure performance. Moisture intrusion is occurring at the foundation walls, basement window openings, and the front entry, resulting in localized staining, efflorescence, and areas of soft or deteriorated masonry. Exterior drainage on the east elevation is inadequate, allowing water to collect near the foundation and exacerbate these conditions.

The historic buff-colored brick exterior walls are generally sound but show mortar loss, spalling, fractures and biological soiling. Without corrective action, continued mortar erosion and moisture migration may accelerate brick deterioration.

The building's historic wood windows are largely intact and serviceable, but exhibit peeling paint, failing glazing compound, localized wood decay, and non-historic plexiglass storm panels at basement openings. These issues compromise both weather resistance and long-term material durability. Repair not replacement is strongly recommended for these windows.

Additional issues include minor foundation penetrations and holes, deteriorated downspout components, unsecured electrical junction boxes, and deferred maintenance to doors, fireplaces, and site features.

Most Pressing Treatment Recommendations

Based on the Treatment Recommendations Matrix (Section III), the highest priority actions include:

1. Correct exterior drainage deficiencies, particularly along the east elevation, to divert water away from the foundation and reduce ongoing moisture intrusion.
2. Repair leaks at the front entry and basement window openings, addressing flashing, sealants, and adjacent masonry to prevent continued staining and deterioration of foundation walls.
3. Repoint historic exterior brick walls using a compatible lime-based mortar to restore mortar joints while protecting the softer historic brick.
4. Restore the historic wood windows, including paint removal, glazing repair, selective wood consolidation, and installation of low-profile storm windows in lieu of existing plexiglass panels (on basement windows).
5. Patch and stabilize holes and penetrations in the historic foundation, preventing pest access, moisture entry, and further masonry loss.

Secondary but important recommendations include cleaning exterior brick and limestone using gentle, non-abrasive methods; removing or trimming softscape elements that trap moisture against the building; repairing downspouts and condensate lines; and addressing deferred electrical and lighting safety issues.

Conclusion

The Boston Carnegie Library does not require major reconstruction or invasive intervention. Instead, it calls for a coordinated program of preservation-based maintenance and targeted repair, guided by the Secretary of the Interior's Standards. Addressing moisture management and masonry and window preservation in the near term will significantly extend the life of the building, protect its character-defining features, and ensure its continued use as a functional and symbolic civic landmark for the community of Boston.

Methodology

The methodology for the *Boston Carnegie Library Historic Structure Report* follows National Park Service best practices for historic preservation documentation and evaluation. The approach integrates archival research, on-site field assessment, and materials analysis to produce a comprehensive understanding of the building's physical condition, construction history, and preservation needs.

Research began with a review of primary and secondary source materials available through numerous archives including The Georgia Department of Community Affairs, the Georgia State Historic Preservation Office, and The Georgia State Archives in Morrow, Georgia, The Carnegie Corporation Archives at the Rare Book & Manuscript Library of Columbia University as well as The Thomasville History Center. These sources were combined with online access to historic newspapers, census records, and noted works of scholarship to establish the library's construction chronology, its place in larger national trends, and to identify alterations over time.

Field investigation consisted of four detailed site visits conducted between August 2025 and December 2025. Each visit included systematic observation of the building's exterior and interior elements, photographic documentation, and measurement of key architectural features. Conditions were evaluated using the guidelines set forth in the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and relevant NPS Preservation Briefs (notably Briefs 9, 13, 15, and 47). Structural and material assessments were made visually, without invasive testing, but with attention to indicators of moisture infiltration, settlement, deterioration, and finish failure.

The resulting documentation provides a comparative baseline for future monitoring and preservation planning. Each observed feature of the building was analyzed for both condition and preservation priority. The findings from this work directly inform the treatment recommendations presented in the report's subsequent sections, ensuring that proposed interventions are compatible with the building's character-defining features and historic fabric.

This report was possible through the generous support and guidance of numerous people; Thomas County Library System Director Derek Klob, Nancy Tinker with Thomasville Landmarks, Ephraim Rotter with Thomasville History Center and Boston librarians Susanne Moore and Judy Warmack.

This Historic Structure Report, including drawings, has been produced for The Thomas County Library System and its partners. It is not intended for use by any other person or group. Permission to use any portion of this report must be granted by The Thomas County Library System or its representative. Any inaccuracies or mistakes in this report are entirely the responsibility of the author. If additional information pertaining to the history or condition of The Boston Carnegie Library should arise after the publication of this report, please do not hesitate to contact the author at ericmenninger@gmail.com.

Naming and labeling Conventions

This report includes numerous references to dimensions, particularly for lumber. To properly document the actual dimensions found at this site, dimensions provided in this report which are followed by the word “*actual*,” or the letter “a” in parentheses, indicate a precise measurement. In other cases, when the dimensions are less precise, the word “*nominal*,” or the letter “n” in parentheses, is provided after the dimension.

In the following report, the cardinal directions of north, south, east and west are used frequently to describe different parts of the structure. While this report treats the front of the buildings along South Main Street as facing east for the sake of brevity and clarity, the actual orientation of the building’s front facades is along a northeast/southwest axis deviating approximately 9 degrees from True North. All the architectural drawings show the true north orientation.

Throughout the Conditions Assessment section of this report (Section II), a series of small colored icons are used to indicate the importance of a given issue being examined in that paragraph. These colored numbers represent the following prioritized ratings. They are summarized and listed in the Treatment Matrix in [Section III \(page 103\)](#)

❶ Priority 1 – Critical (Immediate or as soon as possible) Items in this category require immediate action recommended within two years.

❷ Priority 2 – Necessary (Two -five years) Items in this category are not yet critical but require prompt attention.

❸ Priority 3 – Recommended (Five+ years) Items in this category represent a necessary but longer-term improvement to restore original conditions.

❹ Priority 4 – Identifies an item, condition or material important to future preservation or maintenance tasks.

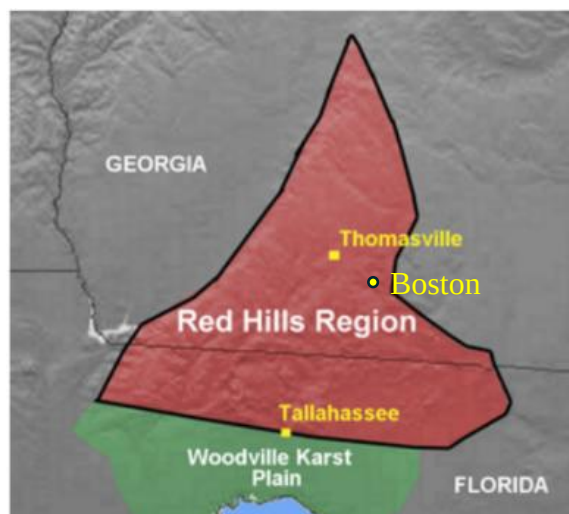
All photographs in this Report, unless otherwise noted, were taken by the author.

Section I: Developmental History

History of Land and Community

The history of Boston, Georgia and the land upon which the Carnegie Library sits is a saga of economic opportunism, civic pride and dogged determination.

Generations before the Spanish conquistador Hernando De Soto first explored the American Southeast in 1540, the area around Boston was the home and hunting grounds of the Apalachee Indians. Known for their advanced agricultural and hunting skills as well as their organized villages, the Apalachee were primarily concentrated around Tallahassee, but their influence stretched northward into what would become Thomas County.¹ Today this area is known as The Red Hills Region and is characterized by its rolling hills, long leaf pine and extensive agriculture².



Sec. I/ Fig. 1 Boston is located along the eastern border of the Red Hills Regions, once the hunting ground of the Apalachee Indians

¹ <https://dos.fl.gov/florida-facts/florida-history/16th-century-settlements>

² <https://bplant.org/region/864#>

As the European presence in the region grew during the 17th and 18th centuries, pressure on the Native Americans intensified leading to displacement, increased resistance, and eventually open warfare. A climatic battle in 1814 at Horseshoe Bend in Alabama began the collapse of all Native American resistance in the Southeast. The resulting Treaty of Fort Jackson ceded 22 million acres of Indian land to The United States including the future site of Boston Carnegie Library.

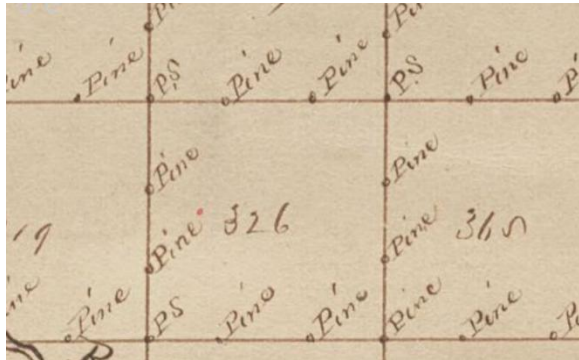


Sec. I/ Fig. 2 Land ceded by Treaty of Fort Jackson, 1814 included future Thomas County. Image Wiki public domain.

To distribute these and other former Native lands, the State of Georgia conducted a series of land lotteries across the State between 1805 and 1833. The 1820 Land Lottery auctioned off a vast swath of land covering Southwest Georgia. A portion of that lottery encompassed an area then known as Irwin County. This vast area was partitioned into Districts and subdivided into lots. District 13 of that lottery would ultimately become Thomas County and Lot #326 in that district, a 490-acre parcel, that would eventually become the town of Boston.³ The 1866 Survey Map of the area makes only one notation about Lot #326, and it is identical to all the other lots in District 13: the landscape was

³ Georgia Landlots and Militia Districts, Photo Science, Inc. Owner: Natalie Lee, 2024

blanketed with pine trees.⁴ Thomas Adams Jr., one of Boston's earliest settlers recalled in an 1886 interview that the forested landscape back then was "entirely destitute of small growth, and the range of vision was only limited by the rise of the hills."



Sec. 1/Fig. 3 Enlargement Lot#326 – Irwin County, District 13, 1866 – RG 3-3-24, Georgia Archives

Records at the Georgia State Archives indicates the winning draw for Lot #326, the future site for Boston, was Thomas Gribbins of Chatham County. It has not yet been determined when Gribbins or his descendants sold the property to Thomas Adams, Sr., who purchased some of the land in 1865.⁵

In 1825, a sparsely settled Thomas County was created by the Georgia Legislature with the City of Thomasville named as its County Seat. At roughly the same time (1826), a contingent of Scots from the Carolinas established a small settlement seven miles southeast of Thomasville in a broad area they named "the Glasgow District."⁶ By 1831, the community had become a stagecoach stop known as "Boston." This was the community's first iteration, but its precise location is unclear. "Maps of Thomas County from 1855 through

1865 show Boston in several different locations and on an 1864 topographical map, the town is shown in two locations."⁷ Also unclear are the origins of the community's name. According to the 1906 account by A.Q. Moody in the *Boston Edition*, (as recounted in the National Register Nomination) there were three competing narratives; it was either intended to honor Saint Botolph, a 17th century English educator, or named in honor of Captain Thomas Boston, a northern traveler who frequently visited Thomas County and discovered a curative spring nearby or, finally, it was named in honor of Boston, Massachusetts by two men from Massachusetts, Joel Spencer and Eli Graves, the latter of whom was the first pastor of Boston's original Presbyterian Church.⁸

These cloudy origins aside, it was the arrival of the railroad to Southwest Georgia in 1860 that put Boston on the map to stay. In a play to capitalize on the newly proposed Savannah, Albany & Gulf railroad (later renamed The Atlantic and Gulf), the community of Boston was moved to its present location where it would become the 18th stop on the line between Savannah and Thomasville.

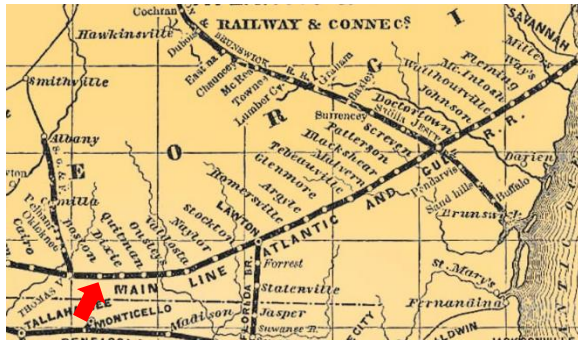
⁴ **District Plats of Survey.** *Survey Records*, Surveyor General, Record Group 3-3-24. Georgia Archives, Irwin County, Georgia

⁵ *The Thomasville (Georgia) Daily Times-Enterprise*, April 17, 1890, 1.

⁶ Irwin W. MacIntyre, *History of Thomas County, Georgia, from the Time of De Soto to the Civil War*, 1923, 7.

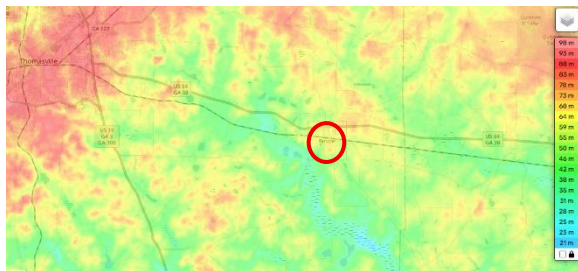
⁷ National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, Sec. 8 - *State of Significance, Developmental History*, 2007, 14.

⁸ Boston town origins, email summary by Ephraim Rotter, Thomasville History Center 2025



Sec. I/ Fig. 4 Map of Atlantic & Gulf RR Main Line, 1870. Boston was the 18th stop, located near end of line. Image: From Official Guide of the Railways 1870, Steve Storey.

Located 213 feet above sea level (65 meters) on a southern portion of the Tifton Uplands, the Boston stop crested the midpoint between Quitman and Thomasville; a sensible place in the age of steam locomotives to take on water and fuel.



Sec. I/ Fig. 5 Located on a southern finger of the Tifton Uplands, Boston is a high point between Quitman and Thomasville.

The station officially opened on January 28, 1861.⁹ The trip from Savannah was 189 miles and took 11 hours. The fare was \$8.50.¹⁰

⁹ Savannah Morning News, Jan. 28, 1861

59

SAVANNAH, ALBANY & GULF ROAD.
MAJ. JOHN SCRIVEN, Pres't, Savannah, Ga.
G. J. FULTON, Superintendent, Savannah, Ga.

Savannah to Thomasville. 30 October — 1861

Pass	Fr't	Fare	Mls.	STATIONS.	Mls.	Fare	Fr't	Pass
a. m.	a. m.			Leave Savannah	200	9 00	5 05	6 00
7 09	6 00			Arrive Thomasville				
7 44		50	9	Miller's	191	8 60		5 20
8 25		1 00	16	Way's	184	8 10		4 43
8 55		1 25	24	Fleming	176	7 85		4 16
9 25		1 50	32	McIntosh	168	7 60		3 49
9 55		2 00	40	Walthourville	160	7 10		3 22
10 20		2 30	46	Johnsont	154	6 80		3 01
11 05		2 50	53	Doctortown	147	6 50		2 28
11 39		2 55	58	Drady's	142	6 15		2 09
12 20		3 25	68	Satilla	132	5 75		1 53
1 00		3 55	77	Patterson	123	5 35		1 02
1 28		4 00	86	Blackshear	114	5 00		12 28
2 30		4 50	96	Tebeauville	104	4 50		11 50
3 11		5 00	108	Glenmore	92	4 00		10 45
4 03		5 75	122	Homerillet	78	3 25		9 54
4 35		6 25	131	Lawton	69	2 75		9 22
5 03		6 75	139	Stockton	61	2 25		8 54
5 22		7 00	144	Naylor	56	2 00		8 35
6 06		7 50	157	Valdosta	43	1 50		7 52
7 30		8 00	174	Quitman	26	1 00		6 52
7 56				Boston	19	7 05		6 04
8 25		8 50	189	Thomasville	11	50		5 36
9 00	1 00			Arrive Savannah			7 00	5 00
p. m.	a. m.			Leave Savannah				

CONNECTIONS.—At Savannah with Georgia Central (p56), and Charleston & Savannah Rail-Roads (p60). At Thomasville with stages for Bainbridge, Chattahoochee and Tallahassee, Florida. The eventual terminus of this road is designed to be at some point on the Chattahoochee river. Bainbridge is on its route.

Stations indicated by an asterisk (*) is where the train stops for Breakfast. Those by a dagger (†) for Dinner.

WARTHOURVILLE, a post-town in Liberty county, Georgia, forty miles South-west of Savannah, is the largest place in the county. It contains two flourishing academies, and about 400 inhabitants.

BOSTON, a post-town in Thomas county, Georgia, eleven miles south-east of Thomasville.

THOMASVILLE, a post-town, and capital of Thomas county, Georgia, two hundred miles from Savannah, and at present the terminus of the Savannah, Albany & Gulf rail-road. It contains a court-house which is creditable to the county, and a school called the Fletcher Institute, under the direction of the Methodists. Population about 600.

Sec. I/ Fig. 6 Train Schedule for the Savannah, Albany & Gulf "Main Trunk" Railroad. Image: University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.

The Savannah, Albany & Gulf line was finished through to Thomasville in April of 1861, the same month The Civil War began. During the war, the area provided much needed food, fodder and men to the Confederacy.

In 1865 when the war ended, economic hardship followed. Although Boston and Thomas County did not experience any fighting during the conflict, the local and regional economies were fractured in its wake. The abolition of an enslaved workforce, financial collapse, damaged infrastructure and competition from northern markets were all factors. Historian William Irwin MacIntyre notes it took nearly 50 years after the war for Thomas County to match the tax returns it

¹⁰ Ray City History Blog: Savannah, Albany & Gulf Railroad. Accessed November 21, 2025.

Boston Carnegie Library HSR

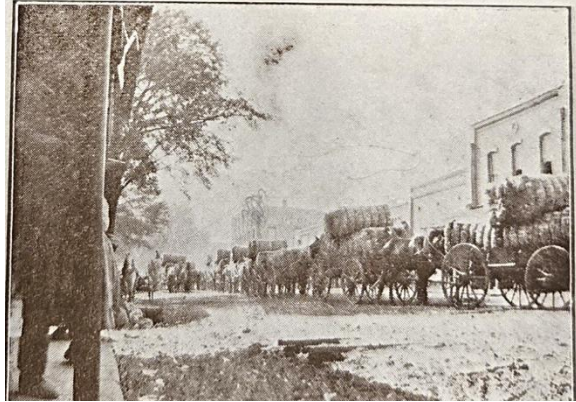
recorded in 1860 – the year before the war began.¹¹

The Georgia General Assembly incorporated Boston on October 24, 1870. A tabulation of US Census returns shows the community had a relatively stable population until 1900, after which it spiked upward nearly 70%.

YEAR	THOMAS COUNTY	BOSTON
1870	14,523	2,750
1880	20,597	3,591 (366 in town)
1890	26,154	3,375 (646 in town)
1900	31,076	3,663 (728 in town)
1910	29,071	5,616 (1,130 in town)
1920	33,044	5,710 (1,640 in town)

One of the forces driving this growth was expanded rail service. The Georgia Northern Railroad connected a spur line to the community in 1905 which provided freight and express service to northern markets.¹² This improved capacity made Boston a busy trans-shipping destination. A promotional brochure¹³ published by the town in the early 1900's notes Boston's oversized role.

At the turn of the century when it (Boston) loaded more tonnage of grain and cotton and produce on the then Atlantic and Gulf Rail Road Co. than any other city between Montgomery and Savannah." – Boston promotional pamphlet



Sec. I/ Fig. 6 Boston was a busy shipping hub. Wagons lined up on Jefferson Street, circa early 1900s. From Boston, GA, "A beautiful and attractive place to live." Boston Carnegie Library Collection, Reference

Boston's role as a transportation center is reflected in its physical layout. It is a quintessential railroad strip town - the most common form of rail town found in Georgia.¹⁴ The community's main thoroughfare, Jefferson Street, is laid out parallel with the tracks. The cross streets are perpendicular and only one (Green Street) was intended as a planned crossing to the north side of town (indicated with red circle below).

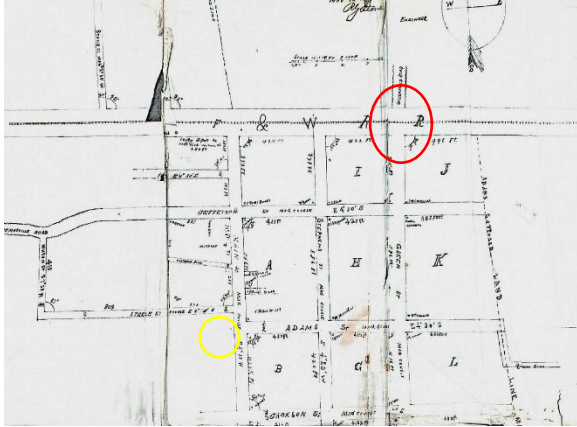
¹¹ MacIntyre, William I., *History of Thomas County Georgia*, 1923, 28.

¹² Hawkinsrails.net: Georgia Northern Railway. Accessed December 11, 2025

¹³ Front matter, undated Community Promotional pamphlet held by Boston Carnegie Library Reference

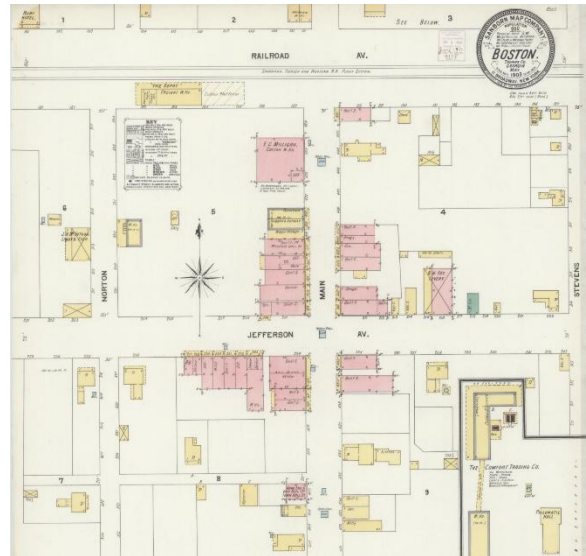
¹⁴ Darlene Roth, *Georgia Community Development and Morphology of Community Types*, 1989. Georgia Historic Preservation Section. 114.

Boston Carnegie Library HSR



Sec. I/ Fig. 7 Boston Plat circa 1880s. Only one street crossed to north side of town. (red circle) Future site of Carnegie library (yellow circle) Image: Boston Folder, Thomasville History Center.

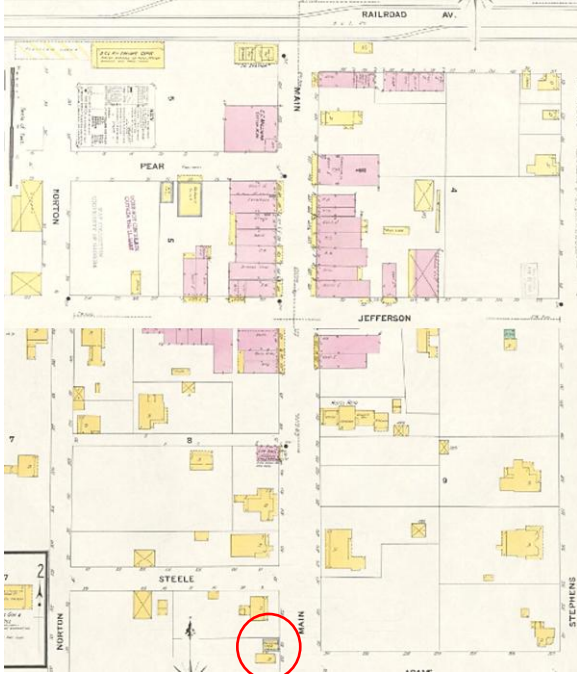
Boston's layout does differ from other Georgia Railroad Strip towns with the orientation of its commercial block. In many, these commercial clusters are oriented toward the tracks but in Boston, the main commercial corridor developed on either side of Main Street stretching away from the railroad. The community's first Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, which provided detailed information for insurance companies about the types and materials of insured properties in a community, illustrates the extent of the development along Main Street by 1898.



Sec. I/ Fig. 8 Note north/south orientation of commercial block. Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from Boston, Thomas County, Georgia. Sanborn Map Company, May, 1903.

Over the decade years, Boston's commercial district continued to expand with numerous businesses adding brick buildings along Main Street. This southward orientation of the community would significantly influence the placement of the town's Carnegie library. Its future site is just visible at the bottom of the next Sanborn Fire Insurance map dated 1909. At that time, the ground was occupied by "The Pressing Club" and a domestic residence, thought be the home and business of Dr. Stacey, a pharmacist.¹⁵

¹⁵ Harman, Carolyn, *History of the Boston Carnegie Library and Twentieth Century Club*, (1928) Boston Carnegie Library Collection.



Sec. I/ Fig. 9 Future site of library (red circle) was originally a drug store operated by a "Dr. Stacey." Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from Boston, Thomas County, Georgia. Sanborn Map Company, Jan. 1909. (Plate 1 & 2 composite)

Chronology of Development and Use

Public libraries are a common feature of many communities today but that is a relatively recent development given their long history. For centuries before and after the development of Guttenberg's movable type in the 1440s, libraries were primarily the domain of scholars and clergy, not the public. The "stacks," where books were stored, were almost always inaccessible to patrons.

Much of the evolution of libraries is a European tale but a young America made several important contributions. Benjamin Franklin, with friends, is credited, in 1731, with

creating the world's first subscription library known as the Library Company of Philadelphia.¹⁶ By pooling their books and distributing them on request to paying members, who would then return the books when completed, the subscription library "gave customers for the first-time real control over the books available to them."¹⁷

The world's first, tax-supported free public library was also an American invention. It opened in tiny Peterborough, New Hampshire in 1833. Boston followed suit in 1854, with the nation's first large community funded library before eventually building it's grand and influential "palace to the people" in 1895.¹⁸ Boston's (and New York's) classical, temple-like civic exterior, with its refined proportions and monumental scale, would have lasting impact on the design of many Carnegie libraries, large and small, across the country.¹⁹



Sec. I/ Fig. 10 A photo of the Boston Public Library, 1896. Courtesy of the Boston Public Library via Digital Commonwealth

Despite these "firsts", public libraries remained generally rare in The United States in the mid to late 19th century. A pair of scholars

¹⁶ Andrew Pettegree and Arthur der Weduwen, *The Library: A Fragile History*. New York: Basic Books, 2021. 245.

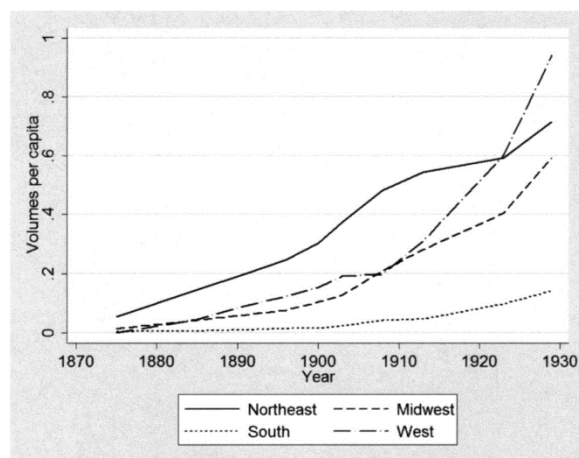
¹⁷ Ibid p. 248

¹⁸ Boston Public Library History
<https://www.bpl.org/bpl-history/>

¹⁹ Abigail A. Van Slyck, *Free to All: Carnegie Libraries & American Culture, 1890-1920* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 67.

counted only 484 nationwide in 1876, with the majority, 253, located in New England.²⁰

By the turn of the century, however, it was an entirely different story. This transformative era witnessed over 4,300 libraries march “across the landscape” appearing in villages, towns, cities, and counties nationwide.²¹ Scholars Michael Kevane, and William A. Sundstrom charted this growth by region based on the number of books (volumes) available per capita. It is noteworthy that the South trended well below the national average. This illustrates how unique the efforts were in Boston, compared to the surrounding regions, to build and support a public library.



Sec. I/fig. 11 Graphic representation of library books per capita by region. Source: *The Development of Public Libraries in the United States, 1870-1930: A Quantitative Assessment*.

Many factors drove this national explosion of public libraries; expanding populations, climbing levels of literacy, the creation of State library associations and supportive legislation.²² The social activism of local

Women’s organizations was also instrumental. One 1930s scholar claimed, although some dispute its veracity, that “75 percent of the public libraries in this country owed their origins to women’s clubs.”²³

Boston is one of those communities and there is no disputing the role played by two of its women’s organizations. Their advocacy and fund raising stretched across nearly 30 years and, remarkable for such a small town particularly in the American south, their efforts resulted not just in the construction of the Carnegie Library 1914 but also its predecessor the town’s first library, Philomathic Hall.

Philomathic Hall opened in 1881 and was the result of efforts by Mrs. J.J. Harman and her Philomathic Club. Their goal was to create a place to serve the cultural needs of the community’s youth.²⁴ The Hall provided exposure to music, drama, art and literature with access to a library.²⁵ A fund raiser in April of 1886 noted the planned program was “for the benefit of the Boston Library.”

²⁰ Kevane, Michael, and William A. Sundstrom. “The Development of Public Libraries in the United States, 1870-1930: A Quantitative Assessment.” *Information & Culture*, vol. 49, no. 2, 2014, pp. 117–44. *JSTOR*, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/43737483>. Accessed 14 Feb. 2024. P.121

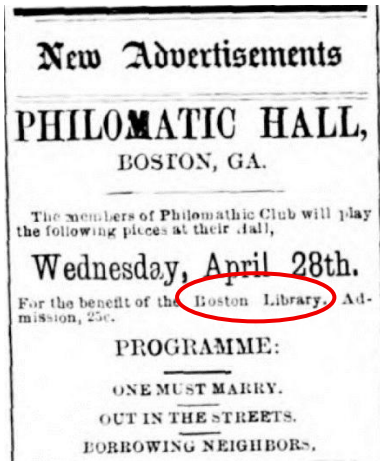
²¹ Ibid p. 124

²² Ibid p. 128

²³ Paula Watson, “Carnegie Ladies, Lady Carnegies: Women and the Building of Libraries,” *Libraries & Culture* 31, no. 1 (1996): 159-96.

²⁴ Carolyn Harman, *Origins of The Boston, Georgia Carnegie Library*, 1928. 1. From Boston Folder: Thomasville History Center.

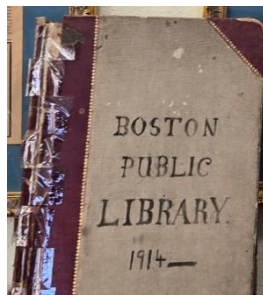
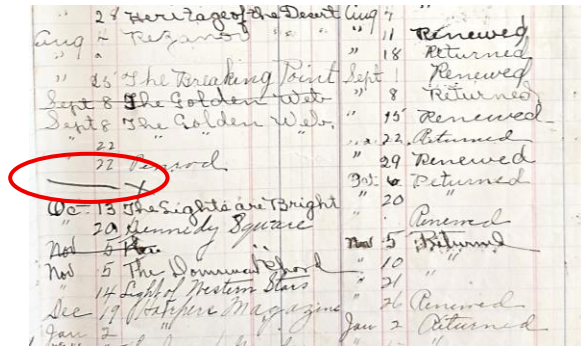
²⁵ *Thomasville (Ga) Times-Enterprise*, Sept. 8, 1972, 11.



Sec. I/ Fig. 12 Concert announcement to benefit the Boston Library at Philomathic Hall. *Thomasville Times* April 24, 1886. 3.

Although the Philomathic Hall appears to have been short lived (the building was leased to a drama company in the late 1880s), the books were moved to a rented room in the nearby Parramore Building where lending continued.²⁶ In 1911, the collection was moved again to the Club's new home, in Dr. Stacey old pharmacy, where distribution appears to have continued until the Carnegie Library was constructed.

Numerous entries in a surviving circulation log for 1914 indicate that books were being checked out for months prior to the formal opening of building. Note the horizontal line, repeated on many pages just above entries for October. This may indicate when the collection was moved to the new building.



Sec. I/ Fig. 13 A typical entry from the 1914 circulation logbook showing a horizontal line above October - an indication of when the new library opened. *Courtesy of The Boston Library Collection*

In 1911, the Philomathic Club merged with another women's organization in Boston, "The 42 Club," to form "The Twentieth Century Club." This new women's group would become the leading proponent for the Carnegie Library in Boston holding a meeting on February 14, 1911, where, according to a Library history written in 1928, "they discussed the advisability of accepting Mr. Carnegie's offer."²⁷

Although it is unlikely Mr. Carnegie or The Carnegie Corporation made an unsolicited offer to the Town of Boston, the phenomenon of Carnegie Libraries was well known throughout Georgia and the Nation by the early 20th century. Twenty had already been authorized or constructed in Georgia alone. When the library grant program was terminated in 1917, The Carnegie Corporation had funded 1,679 libraries in 1,412 communities across 49 states.²⁸ This tremendous burst of philanthropy (equivalent to \$1.4 billion in 2024) is often cited as the most significant factor in the growth of free public libraries across the United States.²⁹

The first, formal application for a Carnegie Library was submitted by Boston's Mayor S. B. Blanton in January of 1911.

²⁶ Harman, *Origins of The Boston, Georgia Carnegie Library*. 3.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 3.

²⁸ Van Slyck Abigail A., *Free to All*, 1995. 23.

²⁹ George Bobinski, *Carnegie Libraries: Their History and Impact on American Public Library Development*, American Library Association, 1969

Boston Carnegie Library HSR

(Note: All of the correspondence between officials of Boston and The Carnegie Corporation related to the library both before and after its construction are available on line [here](#).)

Sec. I/Fig.14 Town of Boston Application to Carnegie Corporation, Jan. 20, 1911. Curtesy of Carnegie Corporation of New York Records, 1867–2015, Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Columbia University Libraries

An accompanying letter on the same date signed by Louis Moore, a local attorney, unscored the towns interest in acquiring a library and “requesting aid in the building of such an institution here.”

Sec. I/Fig.15 Moore, Louis (1911, January 20), Letter to Andrew Carnegie. Carnegie Corporation of New York Records, 1867–2015, Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Columbia University Libraries

This original application confirmed the existence of a prior library in Boston and provided some interesting details. There were 260 books at that time, with a circulation of 180 in the preceding year (1910). The library was housed in a rented room that measured

20' x 20' for \$4 per month. This was likely in the Parramore Building.

Sec. I/Fig. 16 Enlargement: Boston's Initial Application lists details about their existing library.

Sec. I/Fig.17 Blanton, Mayor S.B. (1912, February 6), letter to Andrew Carnegie.

There is no record that the Carnegie Corporation ever responded to this initial application or cover letter. Over a year passed before an additional handwritten letter of inquiry was sent by Mayor Blanton in February of 1912 asking about next “steps.”

Carnegie Funds were abundant, but they came with strings attached. All applicants were responsible for acquiring a building site, a commitment from the municipality for an annual donation equal to 10% of the Carnegie gift, and the promise of free services to the public.³⁰ Some communities may have found these terms too onerous or had other objections. Offers to Augusta, Macon, Bainbridge, Quitman and six other communities in Georgia were never accepted.³¹ A news item from January 25, 1912, in the *Macon Telegraph*, recounts that city's debate. A Professor Kyle Alfriend, the Atheneum Committee chair, stated libraries were necessary to “minister to the higher side of life,” while another participant questioned

³⁰ Digital Public Library of America, Exhibit: A History of US Public Libraries <https://dp.la/exhibitions/history-us-public-libraries/carnegie-libraries/funding-carnegie-libraries?item=1427>

³¹ Walker, Robert Burke, *Georgia's Carnegie Libraries*, 1994, Master's Thesis, On file with Georgia Department of Historic Preservation.

taking “Carnegie’s tainted money.”³² “Tainted Money” had become a well-known battle cry of opposition to Carnegie gifts following an 1896 editorial by Washington Gladden in *The Outlook*.³³ A Harper’s Weekly cover from that period captures some of this tension with an illustration entitled “Building a Very Solid Temple of Fame.” The depiction seems to suggest that something monumental and enduring, the libraries, have been assembled from something dark and ominous, the steel mills behind.



Sec. I/ Fig.18 March 30, 1901, HARPER'S WEEKLY, Vol. XLV, No. 2310, Building a Very Solid Temple of Fame, cartoon by W.A. Rogers, front cover.

Although no record of Boston’s motives for seeking Carnegie funding has yet been discovered, or whether there was any local opposition to the gift, in examining the growth of public libraries in New England, Library science educator and historian Jesse Shera, identified several influential factors at the local level.

- A rising number of small communities had local, wealthy individuals who could financially support a library.
- There were individuals with a motivating interest in preserving the past and scholarly research, the services a local library could provide.
- A new library was a badge of civic pride and cultural ascendancy, which scored points in the unstated competition between neighboring cities.
- Support for universal public education and an accompanying recognition of the library’s potential to promote popular participation in culture and politics was on the rise nationally and especially in the south, where publicly funded education was increasingly mandated.
- The beginning of the 20th century was also a time of self-improvement and the dawn of the Progressive Era. What is now called “lifelong learning” was being celebrated.³⁴



One of the biggest proponents of a Carnegie Library in Boston was the leader of the Twentieth Century Club, Mrs. O. T. (Mariam C.) Hopper. Mrs. Hopper had been born in Scotland, emigrated to

the U.S. from Nova Scotia, widowed, and then re-married Oliver Hopper in 1878, a Union army veteran who moved south from New Jersey and became a farmer. The couple resided on North Green Street.³⁵

³² *The Macon (Georgia) Telegraph* 25 Jan 1912, 5.

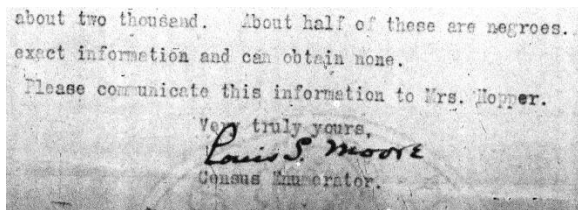
³³ Van Slyck, *Free to All*, 1995, 19.

³⁴ Jesse H. Shera, *Foundations of the Public Library: The Origins of the Public Library*

Movement in New England, 1629–1855 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1949), 200–237.

³⁵ 13th Census of the United States, 754 Georgia Militia District, Boston town, April 19th 1910, Sheet #5

A 1972 article in the *Thomasville Times-Enterprise* claims Boston got its library because Mrs. Hopper personally knew Andrew Carnegie.³⁶ There is no evidence yet for that claim, but there is considerable evidence that Mrs. Hopper played a pivotal role in getting the library constructed and operating. She may have posted the first letter of inquiry to Carnegie, but this has not been found. A footnote on an October 18, 1912, letter from Edward Durand at the U.S. Department of Commerce to Louis Moore, the Boston attorney and legal advisor to Mrs. Hopper's The Twentieth Century Club, instructs a Miss Fay Belle to "communicate this information to Mrs. Hopper."



Sec. I/Fig.19 Durand, Edward (1912, October 18) letter to Louis Moore about lack of numbers for population breakdown by race in Boston. Small post-script at bottom mentions Mrs. Hopper.

The "information" Mrs. Hopper needed to know pertained to one of the obstacles Boston encountered while trying to secure its final approval for funding. It also reflects a strange twist in how a northern philanthropy positioned its gifts for "free, public libraries" in the face of a discriminatory Jim Crow south.

Mayor Blanton's original application noted a 1910 population for Boston of 1,130 making no distinction between white and "colored" residents. The Carnegie Corporation deemed this reporting unacceptable and curtly corrected Mayor Blanton in a September 25, 1912, letter.



Sec. I/Fig.20 Boston Mayor S.B. Blanton circa 1910. Image: Boston Carnegie Library Collection

(Note: typos below reflect a method of writing used by Andrew Carnegie and his trusted Secretary James Bertram called "Simplified Spelling" where phonetics and brevity were the rule.)

"Dear Sir: Yours of September 9th receivd stating enclosd blank properly filld out. The blank is not properly filld out. You are askt the population, white and colored as at the 1910 census and you giv the two together in one figure instead of separately. Very truly yours. Secretary."

Historian Cheryl Knott explains in *Not Free, Not for All: Public Libraries in the Age of Jim Crow* (2015) that by 1911, Carnegie's Secretary and supervisor of all library projects, James Bertram, "had learned to routinely challenge his southern correspondents who tended to give optimistic projections." Knott suggests that Bertram was aware some southern communities used black population tallies to bolster their overall numbers.³⁷ While the corporation took no formal stance on the Southern practice of segregation, and did not require its libraries to be integrated, it did adhere to a strict funding equation based on an accurate population count. Bertram's insistence on separate numbers indicates he would not allow black residents to be counted toward the whole. He decreased the grant to Knoxville, Tennessee, for example, by \$15,000 when the true size of its white population was revealed.³⁸

³⁶ *Thomasville (Ga) Times-Enterprise*, September 28, 1972. 6.

³⁷ Cheryl Knott, *Not Free, Not for All: Public Libraries in the Age of Jim Crow* (Amherst: U of Massachusetts P, 2015), 75.

³⁸ Knott, *Not Free, Not for all*, 76.

Boston Carnegie Library HSR

Mayor Blanton took steps to address Bertram's request by writing the Census Bureau in Washington. Edward Durand's letter of October 1912, the one citing Mrs. Hopper's name, informed the Mayor that the Bureau did not tabulate such statistics for communities of less 2,500 inhabitants stating such a tabulation would be "impractical."³⁹ It is interesting to note that according to the Department of Commerce Reports on State and County Populations from the 13th Census published in 1913, Thomas County had an overall population of approximately 29,000 of which roughly 22,000 or nearly 76% were African Americans.⁴⁰

As historian Cheryl Knott points out, few Carnegie Libraries in the South permitted black patrons. While there were a few exceptions and Carnegie did fund 12 public libraries explicitly for African Americans across the county, most public libraries in the south did not welcome or allow black tax-paying citizens to enter or use the facility.⁴¹

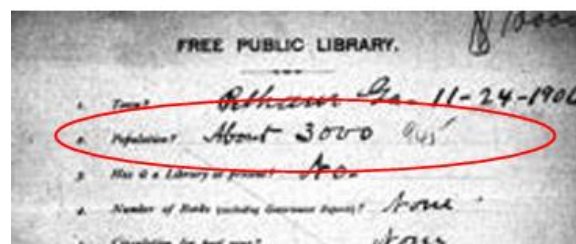
A 2004 history of the Thomas County Library System by Robert L. Crawford notes;

"No blacks were ever allowed to use the library, despite their paying county and city taxes that supported and housed it. Blacks made up 41% of the Thomas County population in 1960 but were excluded from 100% of the library."

Further research could determine when The Boston Carnegie Library allowed African Americans to use the facility. The 2004 report noted above indicates neighboring Thomasville integrated their facilities in 1964.⁴²

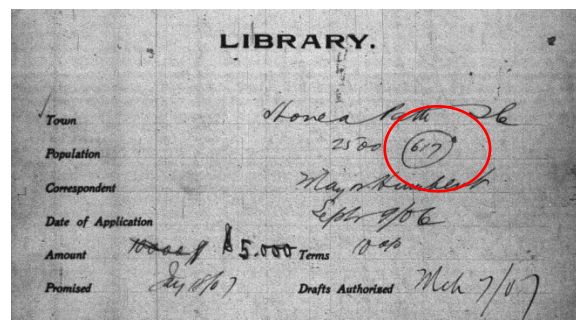
The Carnegie Corporation's push for accurate population numbers reflects their practice of funding communities with a population

greater than 1000. Boston just qualified with a 1910 population of 1,130. But there were other, smaller recipients in Georgia. Eatonton, for example, received a Carnegie grant in 1914 with a population of 1,005. Pelham secured a library in 1906 with an official population of only 945 although the city claimed to have 3000 residents.



Sec. I/ Fig. 21: City of Pelham, GA, claimed 3000 residents but Secretary Bertram noted their exaggeration with a pencil notation of "945" on their November 24, 1906, application.

Many communities have made the claim to be the smallest recipient of Carnegie library funding. Avon-by-the-Sea, New Jersey (pop. 707) and Alden, Iowa (pop. 699) are two. Based on notations in their application, Honea Path, South Carolina maybe the smallest with a population of 617 residents.



Sec. I/ Fig. 22 The smallest community to receive a Carnegie Grant may be Honea Path, South Carolina whose original application shows a corrected population number of 617.

In early December of 1912, Mayor Blanton received confirmation from Secretary Bertram that pending approval of a town resolution to

³⁹ Durand letter to Moore, Carnegie Library Archives

⁴⁰ Department of Commerce Reports on State and County Populations from the 13th Census

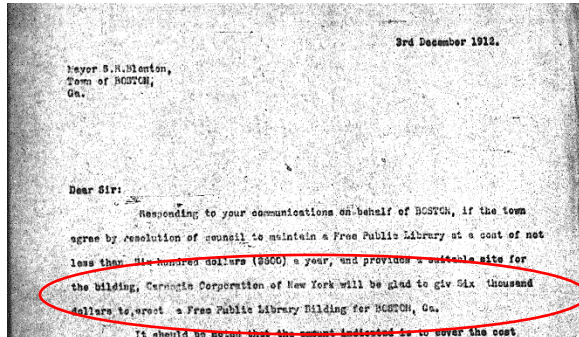
⁴¹ Knott, Cheryl, *Not Free, Not for all: public libraries in the age of Jim Crow.*, 2015. 50, 75.

⁴² Robert Crawford, *A History of the Thomas County, Georgia, Library System: 1860-2004*, 2004, 16. (Boston Library Reference Collection)

Boston Carnegie Library HSR

provide annual support to the library of no less than 10% of the gift (\$600),

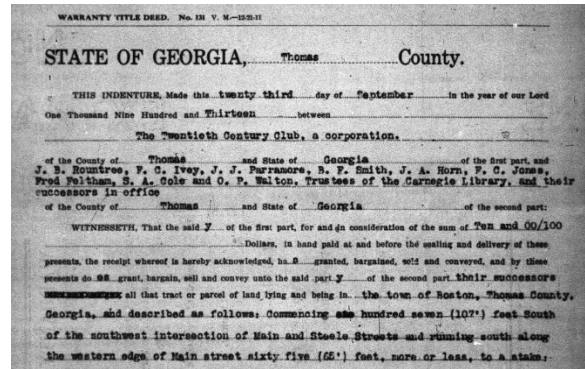
“Carnegie Corporation of New York will be glad to give Six thousand dollars to erect a free Public Library Building for BOSTON, Ga.”



Sec. I/ Fig. 23 Formal letter of approval from Sec. James Bertram to Boston Mayor S.B. Blanton, 1912, December 3.

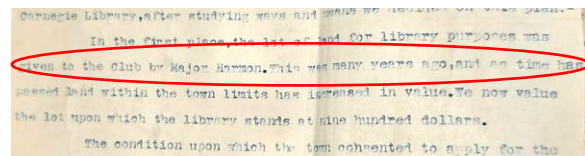
Since Boston had already passed the required funding ordinance in June of that year (1912), the first order of business was securing a site for the new library. Mrs. Hopper's Twentieth Century Club would be central to this task.

A copy of a warranty title deed contained in the Carnegie Corporation archives indicates that on the 23rd of September 1913, The Twentieth Century Club of Boston sold a plot of land south of the intersection of Main and Steele Streets to the Carnegie Library Board of Trustees for \$10.00. Mrs. O.T. Hopper and Mrs. S.A. Cole are the named representatives for The Twentieth Century Club. The deed was formally registered with the County on December 1, 1913, and can be found in Book 3-F, page 151 at the Thomas County Deed Office.



Sec. I/ Fig. 24 The warranty deed transferring ownership of the land from The Twentieth Century Club to Library Trustees on September 23, 1913, for a fee of \$10.00.

That The Twentieth Century Club owned this piece of land, prior to the sale, is further documented in a Finance Report written by Mrs. Hopper in December of 1914. In the report, Mrs. Hopper indicates the land “was given to the club by Major Harman” many years prior.

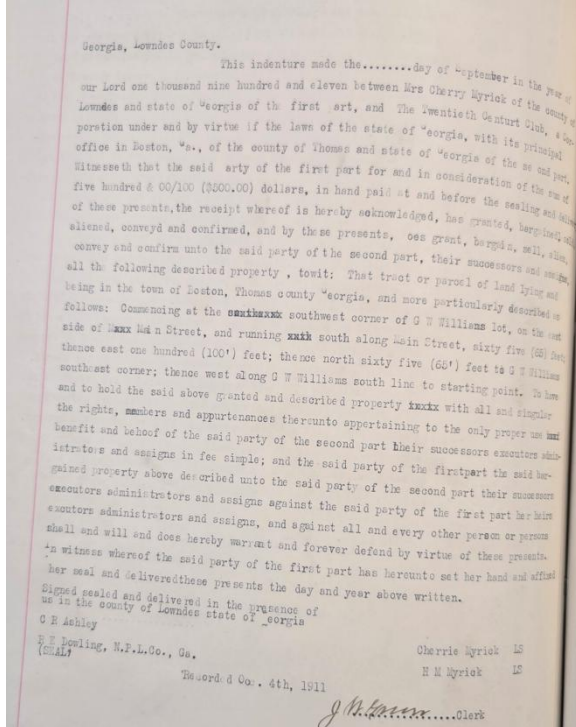


Contradicting this chain of ownership, however, is a 1928 account of the library's history written by its long-time librarian, Carolyn Harman who was, incidentally, the daughter of Major Harman. In that account, she indicates the original property belonging to the Philomathic Club was sold for \$800 which “bought the present site of our Carnegie Library.”⁴³ This suggests the current site was purchased rather than bequeathed by her father which contradicts Mrs. Hopper's description.

A deed search did reveal that the Twentieth Century Club purchased a plot of land on Main Street from a Mrs. Cherry Myrick for \$500 in September of 1911. The lot description closely mirrors the library plot in terms of dimensions but there is one significant difference, the text

⁴³ Harman, *Origins*, 1928, 3.

description puts the plot on the “east” side of Main Street but the library is on the west side.



Sec. I/ Fig. 25 Registered warranty deed (Book 3-A, p.268) recording purchase of land by Twentieth Century Club along “East” side of Main Street for \$500.

If a recording error was made, switching east for west⁴⁴, then this transaction is proof that Boston’s Twentieth Century club made a significant contribution toward the library by donating a \$500 piece of land to the community for \$10.

If true, that makes a lower section of Mrs. Hoppers Finance Report (noted above) even more meaningful because it strongly suggests the club was also charged with paying for the operation of the library after it opened. She notes;

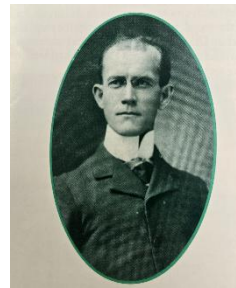
“the condition upon which the town consented to apply for this library was that the Twentieth Century Club should sustain the library for two years. On the first of October we took charge of the new building with the understanding

⁴⁴ According to Thomasville History Center archivist Ephraim Rotter, this type of mistake is not uncommon in his experience, particularly for deeds recorded by James Groover who recorded this one.

that we should be responsible for the required support – namely six hundred dollars per year.”

Six hundred dollars was the exact level of funding the Town had committed to when it passed its funding ordinance, a requirement of the Carnegie gift. Mrs. Hopper’s report strongly implies the Town deferred this commitment for at least two years. The final line of her report tilts toward frustration and explicitly requests support for their efforts.

“We claim from the town now, chairs for our reading rooms, as per contract and ask for recognition and help in our work.”



Sec. I/ Fig. 26 Charles Edward Choate. Image from promotional brochure for Sandersville & Tennille Historic District (State Historic Preservation Dept Public Files)

As ownership of the land was being secured, the Library Board retained Charles Edward Choate as the building’s architect. A respected name across the southeast in the early 20th century, Choate designed a score of residences, churches and commercial buildings in Georgia, Florida, Alabama and the Carolinas. He had graduated from the

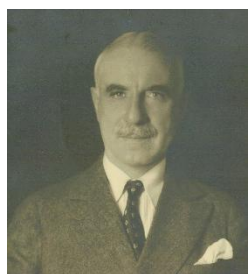
University of Georgia and spent a 10-year internship learning his craft. Choate was also a Methodist minister. The largest concentration of surviving Choate buildings is in Sandersville and Tennille, Georgia which were listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1994. Choate designed three Carnegie library projects in Georgia. Boston was his first in 1913, followed by Eatonton (1914) and Fitzgerald (1915).⁴⁵

⁴⁵ Historic Georgia Architects Folder: C.E. Choate. Georgia State Historic Preservation Department Public Files. Accessed November 2025.

Boston Carnegie Library HSR

Choate's first design for the library was submitted to Secretary Bertram in April of 1913. It was not well received. Bertram's remarks were typically direct and cutting.

"Please take the cloak room out of the plan and increase the width of the rooms flanking the entrance to the library. You evidently have not read the notes on library building sent with the promiss."



Sec. I/Fig. 27 James Bertram, Carnegie's secretary and supervisor of all library projects. Image: Carnegie Mellon University Archives & Special Collections

*"almost every community which received a donation from Mr. Carnegie in years gone by to erect a library building, came back with the plea that they had used the money in the building and had no money left to purchase bookstacks or furniture."*⁴⁷

Bertram's "Notes," published in 1911, were an attempt to codify his instructions with suggestions, requirements, and schematic layouts. Architectural historian Abigail Van Slyck suggests in her study of Carnegie libraries entitled *"Free to All"* (2016) that Bertram believed excessive design "was apt to get in the way of effective library planning."⁴⁸

Bertram's focus on library planning had an ally in The American Library Association which, since 1876, had become increasingly vocal about what constituted a functional library building. The debate was less about appearance and more about how the interior was configured. Mrs. Percival Sneed, the

librarian of the Carnegie Library in Atlanta, articulated the frustration many librarians felt toward architects to *The Ocala (Florida) Banner* in 1915 stating;

"there are almost no architects who are competent to draw the interior of a library so that its administration will be easy and economical."

Based on library designs of the late 19th century, Mrs. Sneed had a point. Prior to the explosion of public funded facilities, many libraries had been funded by wealthy benefactors who reveled in their role as cultural patriarchs. This led to grand, celebratory, high style buildings on the model of noted American architect Henry Hobson Richardson.



Sec. I/Fig. 28 The Romanesque Woburn Public Library designed by Henry Hobson Richardson, 1881. Courtesy of The Woburn Public Library.

Inside these Romanesque buildings, however, were a maze of partitioned rooms, low ceilings, reading nooks, alcoves and, perhaps most puzzling, limited natural sunlight.⁴⁹ For the emerging field of professional librarians, a field increasingly open to women, managing this kind of environment and serving their patrons efficiently, was challenging.

⁴⁶ Bobinski, Carnegie Libraries, 57.

⁴⁷ Van Slyck, 34

⁴⁸ Van Slyck, 34

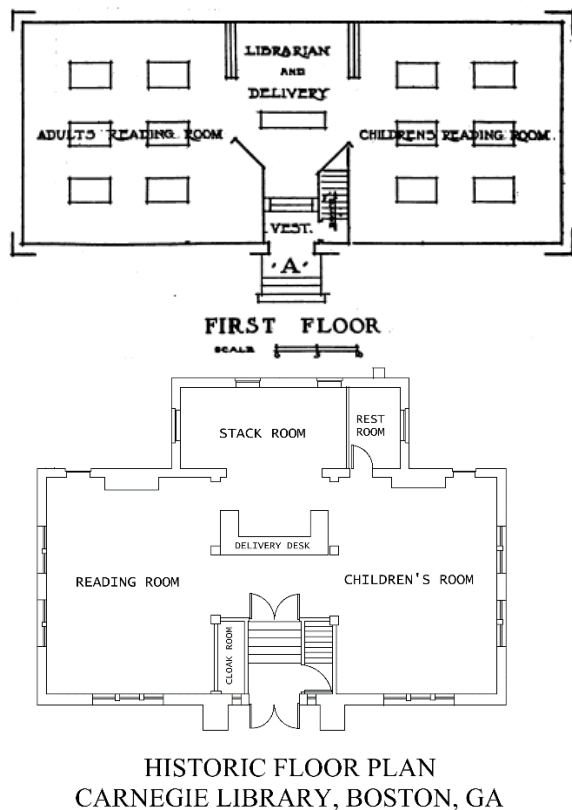
⁴⁹ Theodore Jones, Carnegie Libraries Across America: A Public Legacy (John Wiley & Sons, 1997). 56.

Boston Carnegie Library HSR

A librarian for the Denver Public Library, John Cotton Dana, as well as the American Library Association became leading national voices for reform. Dana strongly advocated an open floor plan and most radically, opening the stacks to the public.

"Let the shelves be open, and the public admitted to them, and let the open shelves strike the keynote of the whole administration. The whole library should be permeated with a cheerful and accommodating atmosphere."⁵⁰

C.E. Choate's plan for Boston incorporated many of these reforms and does strongly suggest that Choate was aware of Bertram's "Notes" prior to drafting his design. Contrast Bertram's suggested "First floor" plan (from his "Notes" guidelines) with a reconstruction of Boston's original floorplan. The similarities are striking.



Choate's design fundamentally reflected Bertram's guidelines for an open floorplan. Windows were also abundant, and they were large, nearly six feet in height. The books, however, were still isolated from the public behind the delivery desk. This was ultimately changed because observations during site evaluation indicates there were, at one time, bookshelves flush against the walls on either side of the fireplaces. The ghost outlines of these shelves are still visible under close inspection.



Sec. I/ Fig. 29 Ghost lines of wall bookshelves (red arrows) along chimney side.

The Carnegie Corporation Archives at Columbia University indicate Bertram and Choate had an active and somewhat salty series of exchanges about the Boston library design. Bertram objected to a kitchenette, a cloak room and a bathroom, all proposed for the main floor. When Choate made it clear he would cut the kitchenette and cloak room but that the bathroom could not be moved to the basement due to the need for adequate downward flow to a septic tank, Bertram suddenly pulled rank and terminated his discourse with Choate writing he prefers "to deal with the library authorities." His note of October 27, 1913, was typically terse.

⁵⁰ Murray, Stuart A.P. The library: An illustrated History. Skyhorse Pub. New York, NY: 2009, 187.

Boston Carnegie Library HSR

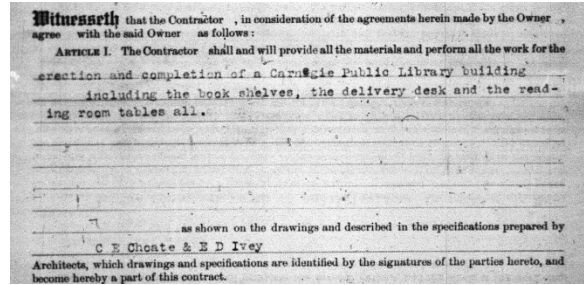
Charles Edward Choate,
629 Chandler Building,
Atlanta, Georgia.
Dear Sir:-
Yours of October 15th received. We prefer, however to deal
with the Library authorities.
Very truly yours,
Secretary.

Most of the evidence of Choate's original floorplan has been altered by subsequent modifications, however, the plumbing stack for the original bathroom, now disconnected, survives in the back corner of the rear basement - a silent testament to Choate's defense of his design.



Sec. I/ Fig. 31 The original plumbing stack below the building's first bathroom survives in the basement.

As the site and plans were formalized, the Building Committee contracted A.C. Knight of Albany, Georgia as general contractor. The July 29, 1913, contract stipulates Knight would provide all materials and work for "the erection and completion of a Carnegie Public Library building including the bookshelves, the delivery desk and the reading room tables." The agreed upon fee was \$5,650.



Sec. I/ Fig. 32 Enlargement of page 1 of The "Uniform Contract" between Mr. A C Knight and Agents City of Boston for construction of the Carnegie Library.

At the bottom of this document is the mention of another architect on the project, a young Boston man by the name of E.D. Ivey.

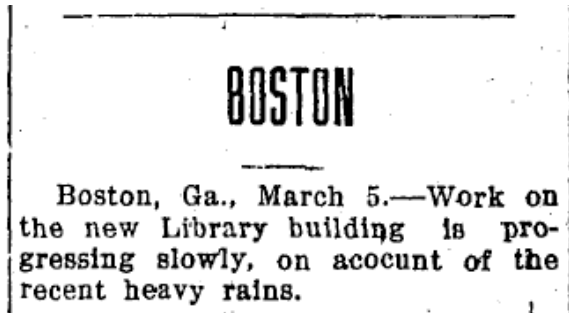


Sec. I/ Fig. 30 Ernest Daniels "Ed" Ivey, son of a well-known Boston merchant. Date unknown. Image: Find a Grave

Ernest Daniels "Ed" Ivey was the son of a well-known Boston merchant, Furney Ivey, and had been born in Florida but raised in Boston on Haynes Street. In his mid-20s in 1914, Ivey had graduated

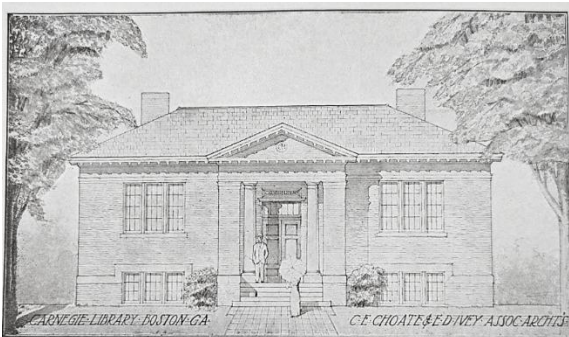
from the relatively new Georgia State School of Technology in 1910. During his time at Georgia Tech, Ivey had been instrumental in helping establish an architectural degree program at the university. He was barely out of his teens when he signed up several classmates interested in architecture which helped convince the administration to begin the program in 1909. By 1913, Ivey was working as a draftsman at Atlanta's most prestigious firm Hentz, Reid, Adler.⁵¹ It is unknown what kind of working relationship Choate and Ivey had during the Boston project, but it is possible Ivey was present when construction began in the Spring of 1914.

⁵¹ <https://dekalbhistory.org/programs/hops-at-the-history-center-ivey-and-crook-masters-of-southern-neo-classicism/>



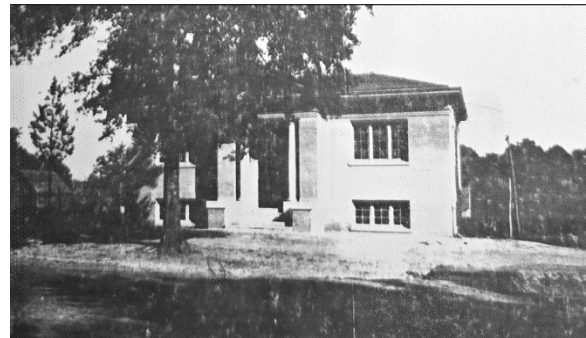
Sec. I/Fig. 33 Early construction was slowed by heavy rains in the Spring of 1914. *The Thomasville (Ga) Semi-Weekly Times-Enterprise* March 6, 1914, page 2.

All the earliest images of the building are undated. The oldest may be a rendering of the east elevation done by the architects for their original plans. A notation in the lower right corner credits it the drawing to “Choate and Ivey Assoc.”



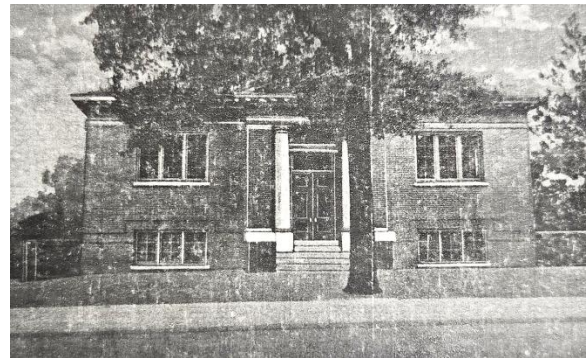
Sec. I/Fig. 34 East elevation rendering by Choate & Ivey from front piece of promotional Town of Boston brochure. Image: Boston Carnegie Library Collections.

One of the earliest photographs shows a site bare of landscaping save a lone mid-canopy tree in front. The presence of grass suggests it is, at a minimum, several months after construction was completed. Notice there is no masonry walkway as Choate/Ivey had envisioned in their rendering. Finally, note the original slope on the north (right) side of the building. This suggests the building was originally more elevated from the surrounding grade.



Sec. I/Fig. 35 Boston Carnegie Library circa 1914-15. Image: Carnegie Library Folder at Historic Preservation Department, public files.

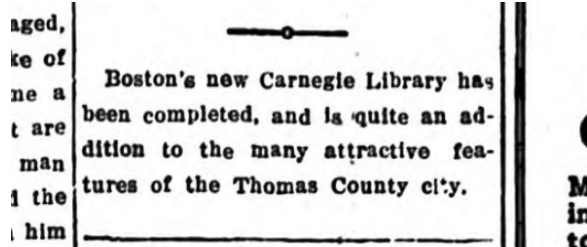
Another early, though slightly later photograph shows the tree in front is older and the foliage behind the building has crept forward. The building still lacks a walkway, but a sidewalk along Main Street appears to have been added.



Sec. I/Fig. 36 Boston Carnegie Library circa 1915-16. Image: Carnegie Library Folder at Historic Preservation Department, public files.

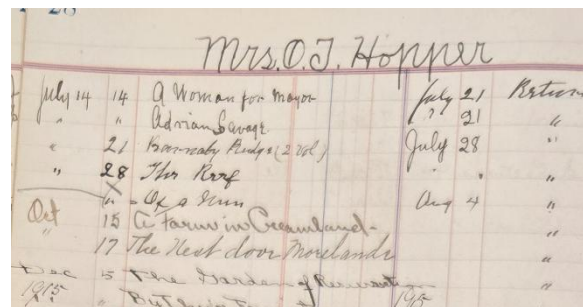
Both early photographs demonstrate that much of the original structure’s exterior appearance has been preserved and maintained. A visitor from 1914 would almost certainly recognize their library in 2025.

No exact date for the library opening has been identified. Mrs. Hopper’s Finance Report, noted above, indicated the Club took possession of the completed building in October of 1914 while a small news item in *The Thomasville Times-Enterprises* from September 28, 1914, suggest it may have opened several days earlier.



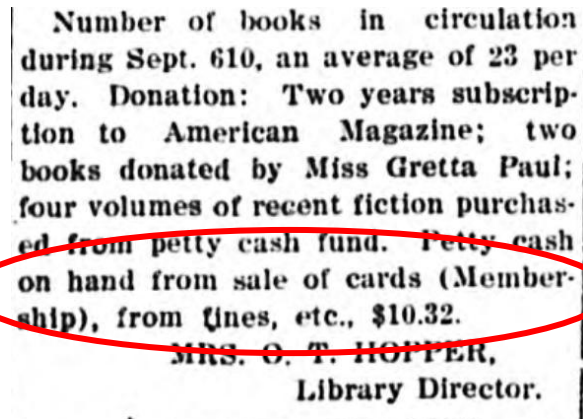
Sec. I/ Fig.37 Thomasville (Ga) Daily Times-Enterprise, September 28, 1914, 2.

Circulation records from 1914 indicate that book withdrawal started sometime in mid-October. Mrs. Hopper, for example, borrowed a volume called *A Farm in Greenland* on October 15.



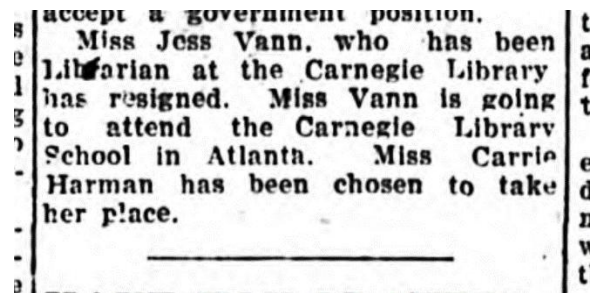
Sec. I/ Fig.38 Enlargement page 28, Mrs. O.T. Hopper's books in 1914. From historic Circulation Log, Boston Library Collection

While the library was technically "free to the public" a newspaper item from 1919 strongly suggests there was, in fact, a membership fee. The amount of this fee is unknown.

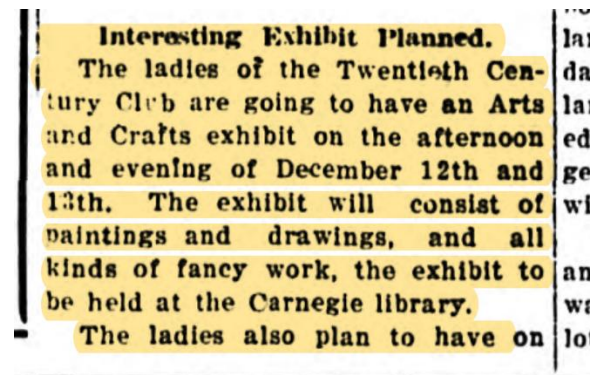


⁵² The Thomasville (Ga) Times-Enterprise, February 23, 1932. 5.

The first librarian was Miss Jess Vann who resigned in 1918 to attend The Carnegie Library School in Atlanta. Her replacement was Miss Carolyn "Carrie" Harman who, starting at age 57, would serve as librarian until her passing in 1949 at the age of 88.



While much of the focus of this reporting is on the library and its functions, several historic newspaper items over the years indicates the room in the basement served a range of community members, particularly the Twentieth Century Club.



A George Washington bi-centennial celebration was hosted by the library in February of 1932⁵² and the hours of the building were extended during the hardship of the Great Depression, by funds from the WPA (Work Progress Administration).⁵³

Other newspaper accounts make note of a regular children's book club in the summer, community meetings in the basement, turkey dinners during the holidays and the comings

⁵³ The Thomasville (Ga) Times-Enterprise, June 16, 1937. 5.

and goings of several librarians. By 1951, the library had a circulation of 15,000 books.⁵⁴ Based on these and other news accounts, there is significant evidence that the Boston Carnegie Library was a central and vital piece of this community's cultural fabric for decades.

Setting, Site and Landscape Features

The Boston Carnegie Library is located at 250 South Main Street in Boston, Thomas County, Georgia. The DMS coordinates are N 30° 47' 25.495" W 83° 47' 25.383". The building is situated in the middle of a 6,534 square foot lot (0.15 acre) identified as Parcel ID# - BN 004114 by the Thomas County Tax Assessor. The owner of record as of December 2025 was The City Boston and the assessed value is \$40,087.

The plot is bordered by South Main Street to the east, the United Methodist Church to the south and a residential property belonging to Lucille E. Carson which wraps around the library on the north and west sides.



Sec. I/ Fig. 39 View of site looking west. United Methodist borders on left, Carson property on right and rear.

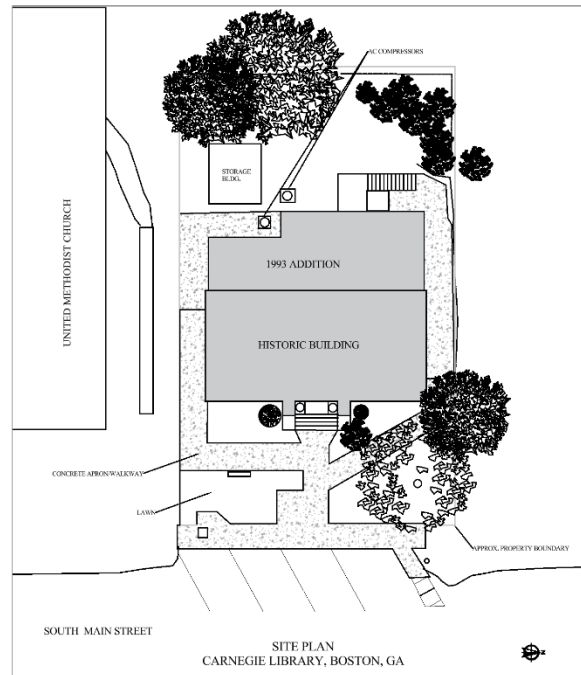
When the library was constructed, a smaller, wood version of the Methodist church, on the south, was already present. It was destroyed by fire in 1945 but rebuilt in its present form the following year. Across the street, the classically inspired Boston Baptist Church was finished the year before the library in fall of 1913.

⁵⁴ Ibid. February 1, 1952. 4.



Sec. I/ Fig. 40 The Boston Baptist church was completed a year before the Carnegie Library in 1913.

Figure Sec. I/ Fig. 42 below provides a site map of the Carnegie Library property.



Sec. I/ Fig. 41 Boston Carnegie Library site plan.

Much of the building is surrounded by an apron of hardscape. The front of the building is marked by broad poured concrete sidewalk which serves a four-bay parking area along South Main Street.

Boston Carnegie Library HSR



Sec. I/Fig. 42 Eastern edge of property along South Main Street looking south.

An angular extension of this main entry sidewalk passes through a gate at the northeast corner of the building and stretches to the back of the property along the base of the northern elevation. This walkway accesses a rear stairway and mechanical lift.



Sec. I/Fig. 43 Northside walkway looking east, toward Main Street.

A heavy timbered wood fence appears to roughly mark the property line on this side of the lot.



Sec. I/Fig. 44 Wood fence marks the northern property line.

On the south side, a descending wrap-around ADA ramp leads to a non-historic doorway located midway along the basement wall.



Sec. I/Fig. 45 ADA ramp and doorway added to southside of building.

Beyond this ramp, a poured concrete apron extends around the southwest corner of the building.



Sec. I/Fig. 46 Concrete walkway/apron wraps around southwest corner of building.

The median between the library and the adjacent United Methodist Church (21'5") is

split with an old concrete drain gutter. This gutter is likely not on church property.



Sec. I/ Fig. 47 Concrete drainage apron between buildings likely not on library property.

The rear of the property is bordered by a deep bank of shrubbery and the remnants of a wooden slat fence. This deteriorated fence likely marks the western border of the property. It has not been determined if this fence is on library property.



A large tangle of undergrowth and two large canopy trees crowd the extreme southwest corner of the lot.



Sec. I/ Fig. 48 Extreme southwest corner of property is overgrown and bordered by deteriorated fence line.

At the rear of the lot, a 11'4" x 9'4" CMU (concrete material unit) block structure is situated eight feet off the southwest exterior wall of the library. This windowless building has one entry and appears to have been added in the last 20 (+/-) years. The building was not evaluated for this report.



Sec. I/ Fig. 49 CMU storage structure in rear of library. Not evaluated for this report.

The soil on the property is classified as Tifton Loamy Sand or "TfB" by the US Department of Agriculture. This is a sand/clay mixture common to slopes of 2-5 percent in many parts of Thomas and Brooks County. It is considered "well drained" meaning water is removed from the soil readily but not rapidly.⁵⁵

The softscape or vegetation on the property consists of several elements. On the front

⁵⁵ <https://websoilsurvey.sc.egov.usda.gov/>

elevation, two decorative shrubs and a crepe myrtle flank tree flank the portico. The shrubs are likely Yaupon Holly, a popular landscaping choice in mid- to late-20th c.



Sec. I/Fig. 50 Ornamental plantings of Yaupon Holly and Crepe Myrtle flank the main entryway.

These plantings are relatively small, compared to an undated historic photograph which indicates larger bushes of a different species once dominated the entry.



Sec. I/Fig. 51 Undated photograph shows extensive front plantings. Image: Historic Preservation Division, Carnegie Libraries Folder.

There are also two trees located near the northeast corner of the building. The smaller one (yellow circle below) is a Magnolia. The larger one (red circle) is a Glossy Privet, a common decorative planting from the mid-20th c. The Glossy Privet is now classified as an invasive species because it outcompetes native understory trees, reduces native plant diversity and alters soil chemistry. Georgia's

invasive species councils strongly discourage its retention or replanting.



Sec. I/Fig. 52 Two mid-canopy trees shade the northeast corner. The larger one (red circle), a Glossy Privet, is now considered an invasive species.

At the rear of the property, two high-canopy hardwood trees, species currently underdetermined, loom over the structure. One appears to be dead and is threatening the building should it fall.



Sec. I/Fig. 53 Two trees in the building rear are threatening the structure.

Architectural Description

The Boston Carnegie Library embodies Classical Revival style with Beaux-Arts influence. This combination is characterized by the symmetrical façade, temple-front portico with paired columns, entablature and denticulated cornice.

The building's refined proportions, symmetrical windows, and restrained ornamentation make it a textbook example of

the Carnegie-era civic ideal—a small but dignified “temple of learning” built to inspire public uplift and convey architectural permanence.⁵⁶

The rectangular mass of the historic building is topped with a cross-hip roof finished in galvanized metal panels. A broad stairway accesses the main double door entry above which rests a fixed transom window and an embossed terra cotta nameplate announcing the building’s origins and function.

The east elevation is the focal point of the design. The thrusting front gabled portico is styled with a monumental entablature and two Tuscan inspired columns *in antis* which define the portico’s height. The lines of the engaged pilaster extend outward toward the street through matching cheek walls which flank the entry stairs. The tops of these cheek walls, as well as the columns, bases and capitals are smooth limestone which is also employed for the windowsills.

The building’s rectangular mass and portico are unified with a continuous architrave and cornice, embracing classical proportions, which features regularly spaced modillions below the soffit and up the gabled rake of the entablature. These elements collaborate to economically communicate the building’s classically inspired design.

The walls are composed of buff-colored decorative bricks laid in a running bond pattern. Skirting the bottom of the wall several feet above grade is a water table composed of vertically oriented stretcher bricks. This detail is slightly extruded from the wall plane which gives the façade an added element of definition particularly when bathed in late afternoon sun. The water table also serves to accentuate the basement windows by

mirroring their openings in a right-angle pattern.

Glazing is a key expression in the building’s design and a critical aspect of the building’s functionality in the early 20th century. Flanking the portico on the first floor are an array of large eight light casement windows. This layout is mirrored at the basement level, but the sash size is reduced to a six-light configuration. The windows are set back in their openings which creates a depth that emphasizes the limestone sills.

The building’s north and south elevations feature the same cornice, architrave and water table elements as the front. The window openings are also symmetrical across the elevations, but sash sizes are reduced on the first floor to a six light pattern which is mirrored on the basement windows. The basement level of the south elevation has been significantly modified and altered by the addition of the ADA ramp and doorway which converted the rear window opening to the doorway.

The rear of the building as well as portions of the north and south elevations were added in 1993 and are void of the historic building’s decorative elements. The smooth exterior walls are composed of an admirably matched buff colored brick laid in running bond pattern. The massing of the addition is an extension of the historic structure with a thrusting rear porch that accommodates the exterior stairway and mechanical lift. The roof line is a series of descending hips with one section flattened into a low slope shed.

The north and south portions of the addition have a double sash casement window centered in each elevation. The rear of the building has a mixed array of windows that serve the interior room configurations. A

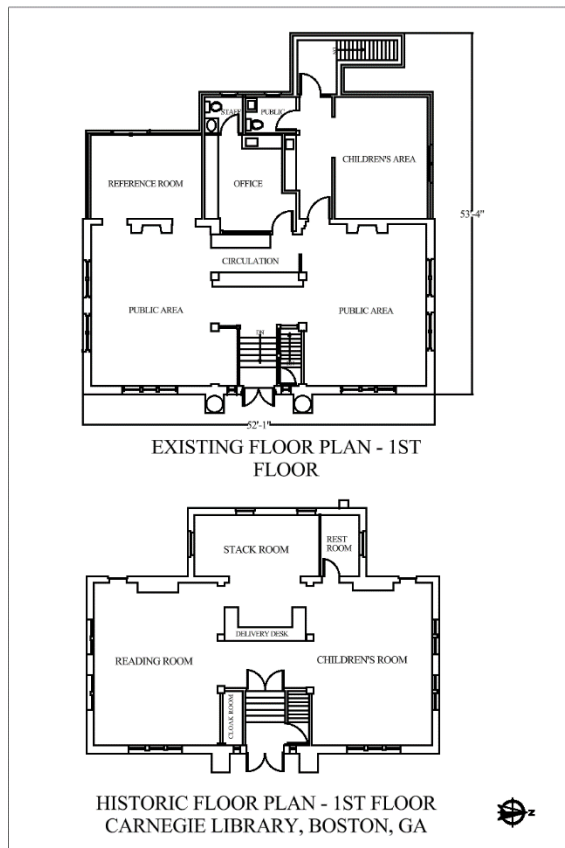
⁵⁶ Bucher, Carroll, Letter to Andrew Carnegie, June 4, 1909, Muskogee file, Carnegie Corporation

Archives, Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University, New York

double sash casement is located on the upper section of the first floor while single sash awning windows are centered on the back.

Modifications

The library has undergone numerous renovations since opening 1914. Not all the dates are known but the most significant modifications occurred in 1993 and the early 2000s. Figure Sec. I/ Fig. 54 shows how these major projects altered the interior of the building's first floor.



Sec. I/ Fig. 54 Comparison of historic and modified floor plans.

Prior to the 1993 Addition, the main interior stairway was enclosed on three sides with a double door at the top of the stairs. This arrangement would have served to separate the library space from the community traffic accessing the event room in the basement.

The outline of these old walls is still visible in the flooring despite tightly executed patching.



Sec. I/ Fig. 55 Discoloration of flooring shows original wall location.

The original building also had a bathroom in the rear, roughly where the hallway and kitchenette are now located on the first floor.



Sec. I/ Fig. 56 The building's original bathroom was located on the left.

The wall separating the circulation desk from the office was originally open which would have allowed the staff to easily access the books stored behind. The edges of this prior opening (red arrows) are still discernible directly below the overhead beams.



Sec. I/ Fig. 57 Outline of original "stacks" area still visible below the beams.

In the basement, the original design always included a function room on the south side, what some historic accounts referred to as "the club room."⁵⁷ At some point in the last fifteen or twenty years (based on the materials used), the ADA ramp was constructed, one of the southside windows was converted into the ADA doorway and the room itself received a cosmetic makeover. It is not confirmed but the kitchenette and basement bathroom may have also been added during this renovation. An undated photograph taken during the project indicates parts of the floor beneath the 1993 addition, specifically where the kitchen and bathroom are now located, were excavated - perhaps to accommodate a new plumbing waste line.



Sec. I/ Fig. 59 Construction photograph from 1993 Addition indicates floor was dug up, perhaps for plumbing, then raised to match doorway height.

It also appears the entire southside basement floor, in the function room, was raised several inches – perhaps to bring it level with the bottom of the ADA ramp and doorway on the exterior. The narrow width of the

bottom rails on the historic closet doors strongly suggests – although it does not prove, this elevation was altered from its historic height.



Sec. I/ Fig. 58 Narrow width of bottom door rail strongly suggests floor height was raised during the remodeling.

The northside room was likely always a storage area as was the rear basement room which still shows the ghost markings of unpainted brick where shelves or a table were once installed.



Sec. I/ Fig. 60 Unpainted brick indicates shelves or tables were once located here.

When the 1993 Addition was constructed, a new basement egress was added in the southwest corner. This replaced the historic basement exit in the northwest corner. When the ADA Ramp and Doorway were added in the

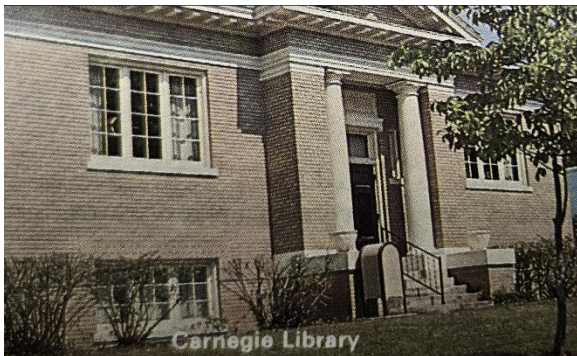
⁵⁷ *Semi-weekly (Thomasville) Times-Enterprise*, January 27, 1920, 6.

early 2000s, this rear basement exit was infilled.



Sec. I/ Fig. 61 The 1993 rear exit was in-filled during the ADA ramp addition.

Several other small modifications have been noted. A commemorative postcard (undated) shows the main entry stairway once had a handrail in the middle as opposed to its current location which is one on each side of the stairway.



Sec. I/ Fig. 62 Note the center stairway handrail, now removed. Image: undated Historic Postcard Historic Preservation Department, Georgia Carnegie Library file.

Character-Defining Features

Character-defining features are the visible, tangible, and spatial elements that together convey a property's historic identity and significance. They are the specific materials, forms, spaces, craftsmanship, and details that express why the building is important and what makes it distinctive. In other words, they

are the physical features that, if altered or removed, would diminish the property's ability to convey its historic significance.

Exterior

- The thrusting portico, entablature and columns in antis.
- The front gabled pediment.
- The wrap around architrave and cornice with modillions.
- The symmetrical window placement on the North, South and East elevations.
- The buff-colored speckled brick exterior walls.
- The limestone window sills and limestone caps on the cheek walls which flank the main entry stairs.

Interior

- The open plan reading rooms on either side of the first floor
- The Craftsman styled box beams and pillars which bifurcate the space.
- The six and eight light wood casement windows located on both the first floor and in the basement.
- The quarter sawn yellow pine decking on the first floor.
- The ornate fireplaces in both reading rooms.

Historic Integrity Analysis

The Boston Carnegie Library retains a high degree of historic integrity as defined by the principles of the National Register of Historic Places. Integrity is the ability of a property to convey its significance through the survival of physical characteristics that date from its period of significance. Evaluation of integrity is based on seven aspects: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. Taken together, these aspects demonstrate that the Boston Carnegie Library clearly conveys its historic and architectural significance as an early twentieth-century

Boston Carnegie Library HSR

Carnegie-funded public library and a Classical Revival civic building.

Location

The library remains on its original site at 250 South Main Street, where it was constructed in 1914. There has been no relocation of the building or alteration of its footprint that would diminish its ability to convey significance related to civic development, public education, or the Carnegie library movement. Integrity of location is fully intact.

Design

The building retains its essential historic design, including its symmetrical façade, pedimented portico, Classical Revival massing, and original spatial hierarchy. While some alterations have occurred over time—most notably accessibility-related changes and basement-level modifications—the primary design intent remains legible. The overall form, scale, and architectural expression envisioned by architects Charles Edward Choate and Ernest Daniel Ivey survive and continue to reflect nationally recognizable Carnegie library design principles. Integrity of design is strong.

Setting

Although the immediate surroundings have evolved over time, including changes to adjacent properties, paving, fence construction and landscaping, the library continues to occupy a civic setting along South Main Street consistent with its historic role. The presence of other institutional and historic resources nearby reinforces the library's original context as a public building. While some loss of historic landscape features has occurred, integrity of setting remains sufficient.

Materials

A substantial portion of the building's original materials survives, including exterior buff-colored brick masonry, limestone trim, wood sash windows, doors, interior plaster,

fireplaces, and significant wood trim. Where deterioration is present, it is largely the result of age and deferred maintenance rather than wholesale replacement. Non-historic materials introduced over time, such as plexiglass storm panels and select modern fixtures, are limited in scope and reversible. Integrity of materials is good.

Workmanship

The library continues to display evidence of early twentieth-century workmanship in its masonry construction, classical detailing, window assemblies, interior finishes, and joinery. Craftsmanship associated with the original construction is readily observable, particularly in the brickwork, window proportions, and interior trim. Integrity of workmanship is well preserved.

Feeling

The Boston Carnegie Library retains the feeling of a small-town early twentieth-century civic institution. Its architectural character, scale, and spatial organization continue to evoke the era of its construction and its role as a symbol of civic pride, education, and cultural aspiration. A visitor today would readily recognize the building as a historic Carnegie library. Integrity of feeling is intact.

Association

The building maintains a direct association with the historical themes for which it is significant, including the national Carnegie library movement, the development of public libraries in Georgia, and the civic history of Boston. The library continues to serve a public function closely aligned with its original purpose, reinforcing this association. Integrity of association is strong.

Conclusion.

Viewed holistically, the Boston Carnegie Library retains integrity across all seven National Register criteria. While modest alterations and material deterioration exist,

they do not compromise the building's ability to convey its historical and architectural significance. The property clearly meets National Register integrity thresholds and remains a highly intact and meaningful example of a Carnegie-funded public library in Georgia. Preservation efforts should therefore prioritize retention and repair of existing historic fabric rather than replacement, ensuring continued integrity for future generations.

Section II: Conditions Assessment

Foundation

The historic portion of the Boston Carnegie Library is a mass masonry structure meaning all the load bearing walls are multiple widths (wythes) of brick. These walls rest on a masonry strip foundation that distributes the weight laterally below grade. Figure II.1 provides a sectional view of this construction typology.

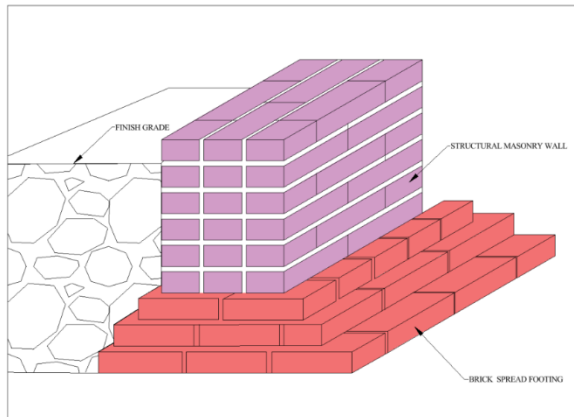


Fig.II.1 Sectional view of typical masonry spread footer in batter configuration.

Site excavations indicate the strip foundation for this building is composed of at least three brick courses arranged in a batter configuration (each course steps outward as it descends). It is possible additional courses maybe found with more excavation.



Fig.II.2 Excavation shows spread footer has three foundational courses below wall plane (green arrow).

The foundation is located at varying depths below grade due to the slope of the overall site. At the rear of the historic building in the middle of the western wall, (now contained beneath the addition), the footing starts approximately 12" below grade.



Fig.II.3 The building's spread footer is at varying depths below grade. At rear, footer is 12" deep.

There is some indication that the masons constructed a skirt wall as a component of the foundation before erecting the full height walls upon it. Note the slight ledge

approximately 45" above the floor. This may represent the top of the skirt they erected and could be characterized as a foundational element.

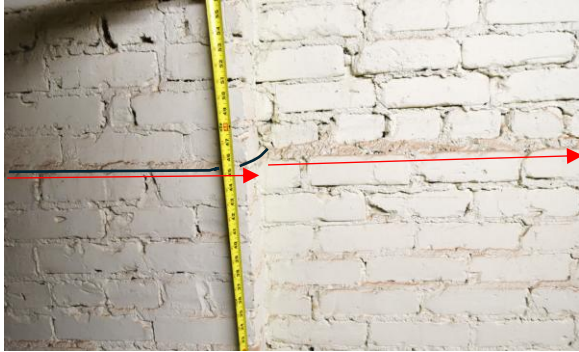


Fig.II.4 Note the slight shelf in the foundation wall. May represent the top of a skirt wall.

On the interior basement walls, this same lower portion is covered with a scratch coat of stucco perhaps to form a moisture barrier or to stabilize these lower elements before building the full height walls.



Fig.II.5 Lower portion of interior basement walls covered with skim coat of concrete.

For the 1993 Addition, the foundation appears to be (based on surviving construction drawings) a continuous pour strip footing with reinforced steel.

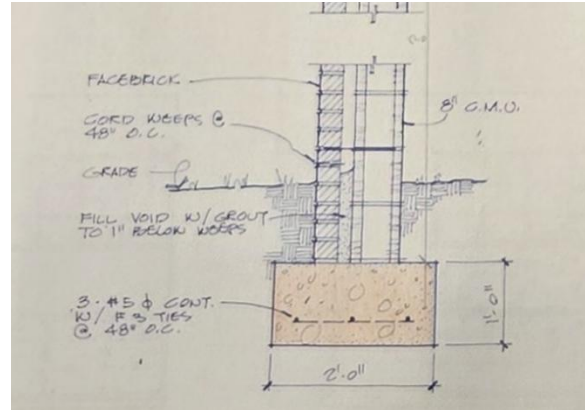


Fig.II.6 Foundation detail drawing from 1990s Addition project. Image: Construction Set dated June 23, 1992, by Jinright, Ryan & Lynn.

Condition of Foundation

A full evaluation of the historic foundation was impractical given its depth and the finished walls in the basement. In one area where access was possible, however, a crack was noted above the rear window along the northern basement wall.



② The failure of mortar and the vertical fissure in the brick here suggests a shift in the load dynamics of the wall which could indicate a failure in the foundation. It is also possible the crack was caused by stress to the window opening and movement of the window header due to moisture invasion from the exterior. Examination of the wall below grade could answer this.

② Another crack was observed on the lower portion of the wall below the same window.

This appears to have been caused by water entering below the wooden sill and gradually degrading the condition of the stucco coating on the interior. It could not be determined if the masonry wall behind has been impacted by this water invasion. At present, this does not appear to be an active leak as the site was dry during evaluation.



Fig.II.7 Failure in concrete skim coat below window may indicate foundational damage but likely caused by water invasion below sill.

A laser level test was conducted on the exterior water table of the building. Although this is not a precise measurement, the consistent reveal of the red laser line against the line of bricks strongly suggests the building is still remarkably level. From these observations, one can conclude that the spread foundation of the historic building is generally in sound condition.



Fig.II.8 Laser suggests building is still remarkably level.

Exterior Walls

The exterior walls of this building are three wythes (width) thick. The inner two wythes are common red brick (discussed below) and

outer wythe is buff colored ornamental face brick laid in a running bond pattern.



Fig.II.9 Exterior walls are single wythe of buff colored brick laid in a running bond pattern.

This buff brick finish runs the full elevation of the building but is proportionally segmented with two horizontal elements. The lower element is a slightly extruded 12" water table of vertically arranged stretchers bricks positioned approximately three feet above grade.



Fig.II.10 The lower horizontal belt element is a 12" Water table composed of vertically arranged stretcher bricks.

The upper belt element is a classically proportioned architrave constructed of five wood elements. This character defining feature encircles three sides of the historic building.



Fig.II.11 Upper horizontal component is a classically proportioned wood architrave composed of five separate elements.

At the top of the historic exterior walls is a Tuscan inspired entablature. This multi-piece wood construction is 10" in height and projects off the wall plane 20". The entablature encircles the building on three sides.



Fig.II.12 Tuscan inspired entablature crowns the exterior walls and pediment.

The underside of the cornice is embellished with 5 1/2" modillions (square brackets) spaced approximately 16" (+/-) on center. Three-inch crown molding closes the bottom edge of the modillion board as well as the top edge of the fascia.



Fig.II.13 Modillions and crown molding detail the underside of the cornice.

This cornice originally encircled the entire building (all four sides), but when the 1993 modifications were made, the rear or west wall was encased under a new roof line. The entablature on this west side was not removed and can still be seen above the acoustic ceiling in the Young Adult Reading room. Its clear lines and original white paint are a silent and enduring element of Choate's original design.



Fig.II.14 Original cornice on west wall was encased above the acoustic ceiling by 1993 Addition.

The building's grand portico adds stature and monumentality through both form and materials. Combined with the building's symmetrical proportions, this entrance conveys the civic importance of this structure.



Fig.II.15 Monumental entry combines form and materials to convey civic importance.

The gable pediment crowns the entry and defines the width. Its cornice is a continuation of the upper wall elements. At ground level, a pair of low-profile cheek walls flank the stairway and project the engaged pilasters. These low walls are capped with limestone which is also used for the two Tuscan inspired columns as well as their capital and base elements.



Fig.II.16 Limestone is used for the wall caps and columns as well as the base and capital elements.

The ornate lentil above the transom window is limestone but the engraved plaque is terra-cotta.



Fig.II.17 Limestone elements like the lentil above door are combined with terra cotta name panel.

A dimensional drawing of the east elevation is provided below and in the Drawings section of this report.

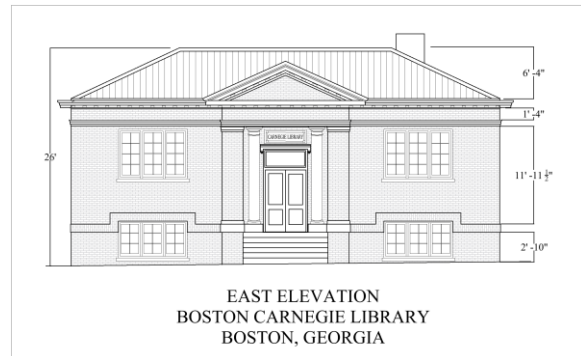


Fig.II.18 East elevation dimensional drawing.

The face bricks on the historic building exhibit several characteristics consistent with their early 20th c. manufacture. They are slightly larger than contemporary bricks (8" x 3 3/4" x 2 1/2") and their smooth finish indicates they were box formed which differs from the modern manufacturing technique of wire cutting which typically produces a rougher finish and sharper edges.



Fig.II.19 Face bricks reflect their box formed, early 20th c. manufacture.

These ornamental face bricks differ from common red bricks in several ways. Common red bricks are typically kiln dried without any special treatment to their surface or color. Face bricks are typically fired at a much higher temperature, increasing their resistance to moisture, and they often have carefully monitored color treatments as well as finished and smoother sides. For all these reasons, face bricks are more expensive than common construction bricks, making their use carefully monitored. This is evidenced at several places on the historic building where the masons shifted to common red brick for non-visible or non-public facing facades such as the building's back exterior walls, below grade or behind the architrave trim.

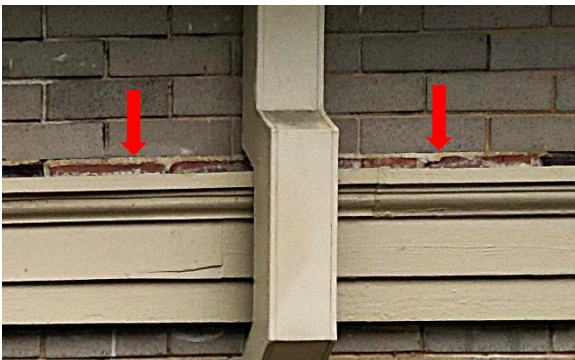


Fig.II.20 Face brick use was tightly monitored. Note the shift to common red bricks behind architrave molding.

Another feature of the historic ornamental face bricks is their speckled finish. The dark particles may indicate the presence of manganese which was carefully added early in the manufacturing processing before the bricks are fired. According to a 1922 trade article in *The Brick and Clay Record* “remarkable and unusual speckled effects can be produced” with manganese which presents as a blackish/brown substance.⁵⁸



Fig.II.21 The black specks may be manganese added during manufacturing.

④ The mortar joints on the historic walls are approximately $\frac{1}{4}$ " to $\frac{3}{8}$ " thick and are finished with a Vee and raked profile. Tests indicate this mortar is a lime base mixture which is important information for any future repair/repointing projects.



Fig.II.22 Mortar exhibit both Vee and raked profiles.

⁵⁸ “Manganese for Improving Quality,” *The Brick and Clay Record*, Vol. 61, No.1, July 11, 1922. 32-33.

The bricks used for the walls of the 1993 Addition are also an ornamental face brick, nicely matched to the historic original, but slightly smaller in dimension and with a larger mortar joint. Tests indicate the mortar on these walls is a Portland cement-based mixture.



Fig.II. 23 Exterior bricks on Addition are nicely matched face bricks with a Portland cement mortar joint.

Inner Wall Construction: Behind the brick veneers, the construction typology of the exterior walls differs greatly between the modern addition and the historic building.

The walls of the historic building are composed of two wythes (widths) of brick behind the face brick veneer. The modern addition has just one wythe of CMU block (Concrete Masonry Unit) behind the face brick. *Figure II.24* provides a plan view of the building showing the location of these different exterior wall systems.

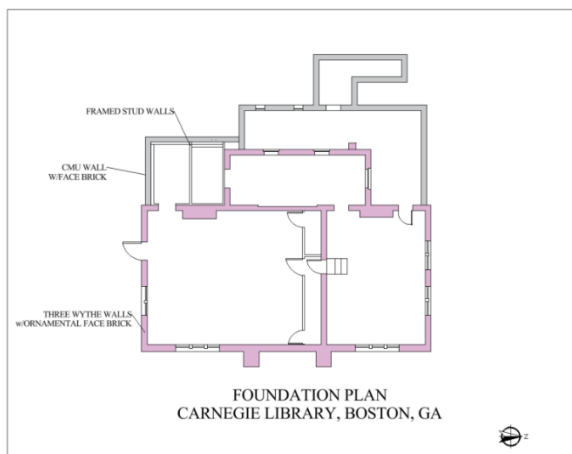


Fig.II.24 Plan view of different exterior wall typology on historic structure and modern addition.

The walls of the historic building utilize two interlocking widths of red common brick laid in an American or Common bond pattern.



Fig.II.25 Inner load bearing walls in the historic structure are two wythes of common red brick run in a American bond pattern.

This bond pattern rotates the bricks every 6th or 7th course perpendicular to the wall plane, so the end of the brick (called the header) faces out. This pattern is faster and less expensive to build than other techniques, and it provides stability by tying the wythes together. It also reflects an era of mass masonry construction that was common in the United States through the early decades of the 20th century.



Fig.II.26 The American bond pattern rotates every 6th or 7th course (red arrows) perpendicular to the wall plane.

This American Bond pattern is not visible on the exterior so how the veneer of ornamental bricks is attached to the inner wythes is uncertain. A pin hole camera inserted into a

gap between the speckled veneer bricks and interior wythes shows a deep bed of mortar separating the layers. There may also be metal anchors, but these were not observed and seem unlikely given the era of construction.⁵⁹

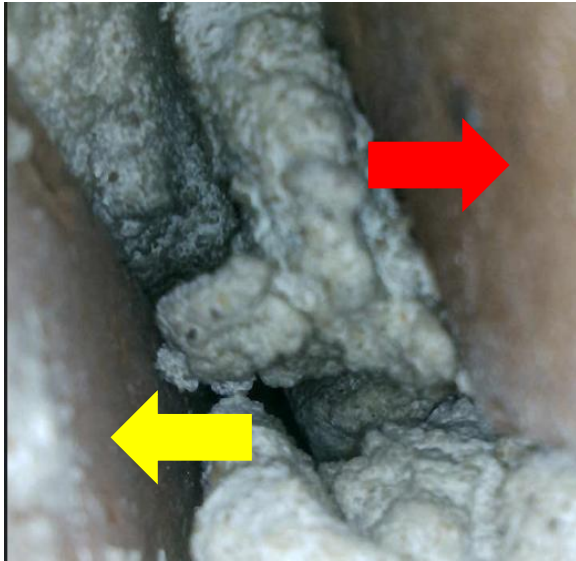


Fig.II.27 Interior wall image shows deep bed of mortar between back of face bricks (red arrow) and inner wall red bricks (yellow arrow).

On the modern addition, the exterior walls are CMU (Concrete Masonry Unit) laid in a running bond pattern. The blocks measure 15 5/8" x 7 5/8" x 7 5/8" and the mortar joints measure 3/8" to 1/2".



Fig.II. 28 Modern addition walls are CMU laid in running bond pattern.

Building plans from the 1993 Addition suggest the CMU walls are attached every other course to the brick veneer with steel ties anchored into the mortar joints.

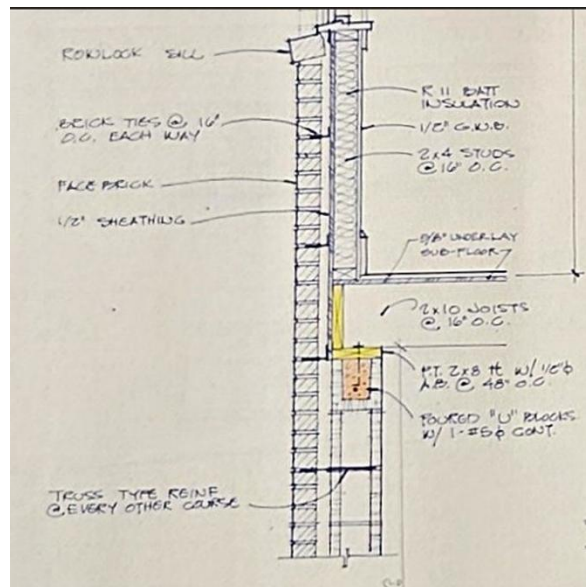


Fig.II.29 Exterior Wall detail from 1990s Addition project. Image: Construction Set dated June 23, 1992, by Jinright, Ryan & Lynn, Architects.

Modifications: The exterior walls of the historic structure are largely intact with one significant exception. When the ADA Ramp and doorway were added, a window bay was converted and in-filled. The historic water

59

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table and a portion of the limestone windowsill were preserved.

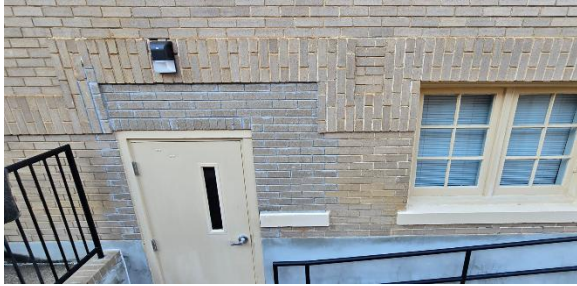


Fig.II.30 An historic basement window on the south elevation was converted into an ADA compliant doorway.

As a part of this modification, a section of the water table was repointed (repaired) with a Portland cement mixture. Modern Portland based cement mortar is brittle, has low permeability and is harder than the historic brick which makes it is very difficult to remove without causing damage. A lime-based mortar with color matching would have been the sympathetic repair.



Fig.II. 31 Patching (repointing) to the water table brick above the ADA doorway used unsympathetic Portland based cement mortar.

Another component of this ADA ramp project was the application of a concrete rendering (coating) on the lower portion of the exposed exterior wall.



Fig.II.32 Lower portion of wall covered with skim coat of concrete.

This was likely done to provide some protection again rising moisture splashing up off the ramp but also to mask the common red bricks which the original builders used for the exterior walls below grade. The use of red brick at grade is still visible just above the sidewalk on the north side of the building.



Fig.II.33 Another example of how red common bricks were used on exterior below grade or in non-visible areas.

Another more recent modification was the closing of a ground level doorway on the west side. This was done sometime after 1993 when this portion of the building was constructed. Note the different color bricks used for infill.



Fig.II. 34 In-fill of basement doorway on west elevation. Exact date unknown.

One further modification is the apparent patching of the weep holes in the historic foundation. Weep holes are small openings intentionally left or created in the bottom course of masonry walls or foundation walls that allow trapped water to escape from behind or within the wall system. They serve as a controlled drainage point, relieving hydrostatic pressure and preventing moisture accumulation inside the wall. At some point before the 1993 Remodel, all the holes around the building were patched.



Fig.II.35 Weep holes in historic exterior walls patched.

Condition of Exterior Walls

The exterior walls of the historic building are structurally sound. There is no evidence of significant foundational settling or wall deflection - meaning the building is still relatively plumb (straight up and down) and the walls are not bulging inward or outward. Note how true the laser line runs on the southeast corner of the building. This indicates the corner is still plumb which would not be the case



Fig.II.36 Laser tests indicate exterior walls are still relatively level and plumb.

if the building had settled. Similar results were observed at the southwest and northeast corners of the building. Additional tests at the midpoints of the north and south walls indicate relatively insignificant wall deflection (bowing). A laser test on the north wall revealed a slight outward tilt at the top of the wall of $\frac{1}{4}$ " over 17'. A similar test on the south wall showed an inward tilt of $\frac{3}{4}$ ".

② While the structural integrity of the exterior walls is good, there are numerous places where long term moisture invasion has caused damage to the historic brick and mortar. The most widespread problem is mortar recession – meaning the retreat or disappearance of a sound mortar joint between the bricks.



Fig.II.37 Above architrave in southeast corner.



Fig.II.38 Southeast corner of northern cheek wall at entry

In some cases, the combination of this moisture exposure and the effects of the freeze/thaw cycle has dislocated individual bricks, caused fractures to others or degraded the brick in a condition known as spalling.



Fig.II.39 Dislocated brick on north elevation at grade due to water invasion and freeze/thaw cycle.



Fig.II.40 Fractured brick and iron jacking above basement window east elevation.



Fig.II.41 Spalling brick at grade on north elevation.



Fig.II.42 Failing mortar joints and material separation in water table on north elevation. Note: this may be related to the cracks on the interior walls along this same window.

3 On various section of the building there is significant evidence of organic staining due to rising moisture.



Fig.II.43 Lower wall staining due to moisture splashing back onto building during rain events.

This happens when rainfall splashes upward onto the masonry surface and then does not evaporate. This is limited to the lower two feet of the wall surface and is most prevalent on the northern and western walls – two areas with limited sunlight exposure and no drainage system on the roof above.

① There are two penetrations (holes) in the exterior wall. Both are located in the southwest corner of the Modern Addition Walls. These appear to have been punched through for various HVAC lines. While the holes appear small, they are more than big enough to allow small critters and reptiles to enter the basement cavity. Both of these should be properly sealed with a lime based mortar. **Do not use spray foam to patch these openings because its removal is nearly impossible.**

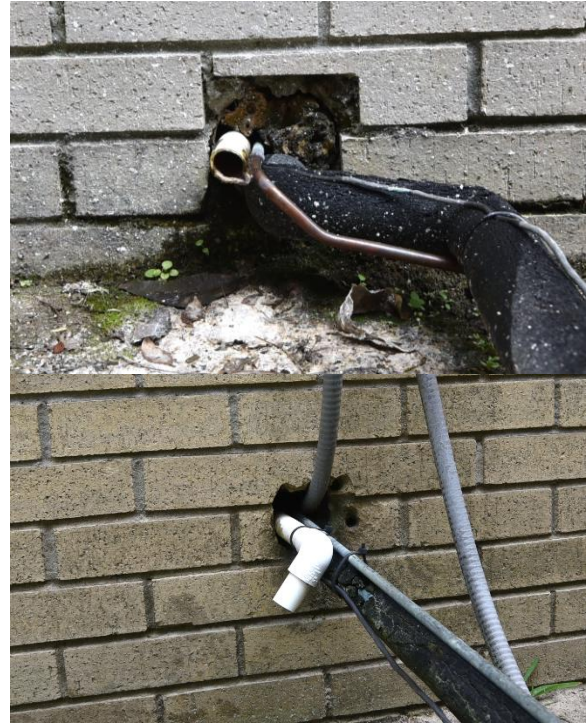


Fig.II.44 Holes in the foundation on southwest corner of the building.

Floor System

There are two types of floor systems in the building: a wood framed system on the first floor and poured concrete in the basement. There is also a section of unfinished dirt beneath the 1990s addition. *Figure II.45* shows the location of these systems. (Note: The concrete floors in the building are detailed in Floors section of this report.)

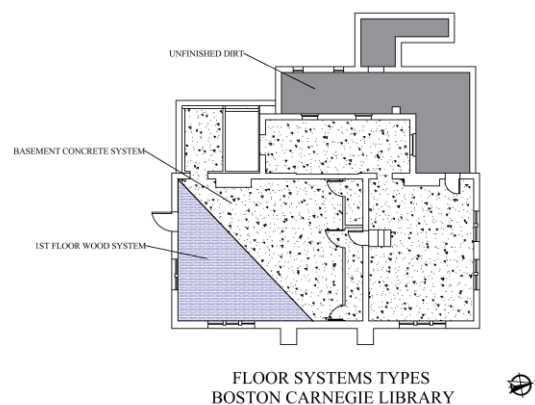


Fig.II.45 Plan view of floor system types.

The wood system is comprised of 2" x 12" (actual) joists on 16" centers. The joists run

north to south under the main mass of the historic structure but east to west beneath of old rear section. Each joist bay is braced mid-span with bridge blocking.



Fig.II.46 Floor joists are 2"x12" (a) on 16" centers with bridge blocking mid-span.

The joists are secured on the perimeter walls in masonry pockets. A floor nailing cleat spans each bay at the top of the joists.



Fig.II.47 Floor joists sit in masonry pockets along the perimeter.

The ends of the joists exhibit a sloped profile known as a "fire cut." This was a widespread technique builders used to protect the masonry walls in the event of a fire. This method cut the end of the joist on a diagonal, at the end, so that should the floor system collapse in the center due to fire, it would more easily fall downward without pivoting upward and damaging the masonry pocket or wall.



Fig.II.48 Floor joist exhibit an angular "fire cut" at end of timber. This was a common safety measure in the age of widespread structure fires.

The floor framing on the south side of the building was inaccessible due to the double ceilings in the basement. However, observations in the attic indicate a large carrying beam likely spans the building from east to west with the floor joists resting on a 2 x 4" (actual) ledger board fastened to this beam.



Fig.II.49 Ceiling construction on south side likely mirrors floor framing system below. Joists are notched over a ledger board fastened to carrying beam.

As will be detailed in the subsequent roof section of this report, the carrying beam on the first floor is attached via two long iron rods to the roof framing truss in the attic.



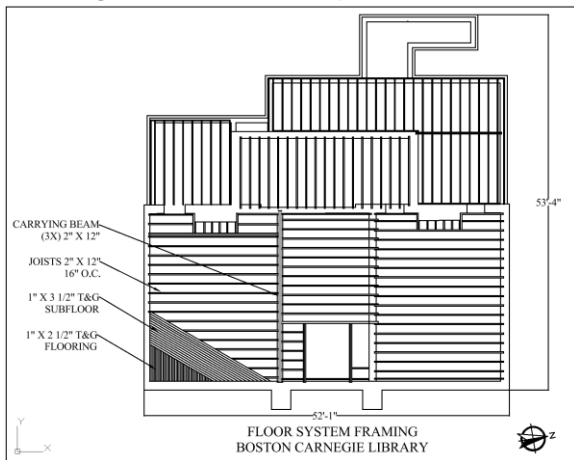
Fig.II.50 Iron tie rods link the first-floor framing system to the roof truss.

The floor joists are covered on the top side with 7/8" x 3 1/2" (actual) tongue and groove decking laid in a diagonal pattern running northeast to southwest.



Fig.II.51 Floor system is decked with 7/8" x 3 1/2" (a) diagonal T&G flooring.

A [floor framing system plan](#) is provided in the Drawings section of this report.



Condition of Floor Systems

The wood floor framing system is in good condition. The joists show no evidence of rolling (leaning) or checking (longitudinal cracks due to stress). The subfloor is still well attached to the joists although some separation of the tongue and groove seams was observed.



Fig.II.52 T&G subfloor still well fastened to joists.

Many of the observed joist pockets are still tight and well seated.



Fig.II.53 Joist pockets have good integrity.

A deflection test indicates the floor system on the south side of the building has sagged approximately 1" midspan while the north side has dropped approximately 3/4". These measurements are not alarming and are consistent with the normal behavior of long wood timbers. Keep in mind, the floor joists in this building are over 18' in length between supports so some reverse crowning (sagging) is to be expected.

Roofing System

The roof system of the Boston Carnegie Library is a combination of elements. The historic building has a ridged hip roof with a center gable over the pediment. The modern addition ties into this profile on the rear of the building with a series of descending hip roofs and a low slope shed roof. *Figure II.55* identifies the location of the various roofing systems.

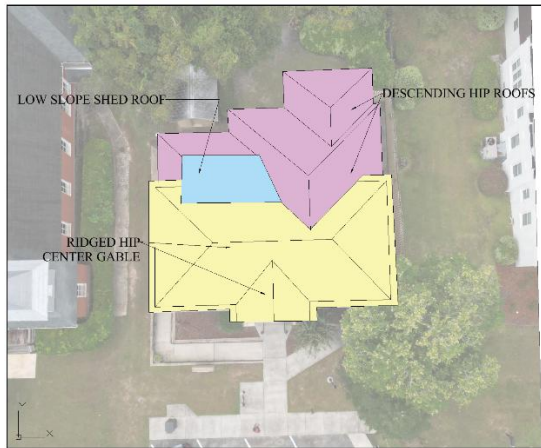


Fig.II.54 Plan view roof types.

The roof system over the historic building is constructed with stacked rafters meeting at a ridge beam. The common and jack rafters are 2" x 6" (actual) on 20" +/- centers. The hip rafters are 2" x 8" (actual) and the ridge is 2" x 6" (actual). The pitch of the roof is 12:5. Neither collar ties nor purlins were used in this design.



Fig.II.55 Roof framing is stacked rafters meeting at a ridge beam.

The roof system also includes a single braced timber truss located approximately 19' from the south end of the building.



Fig.II.56 A single large timber roof truss is located approximately 19' from the south end of the building.

The upper cords are hefty 6" x 8" (actual) timbers. The bottom cord is a sandwich of three 2" x 10"s timbers which also serves as a carrying beam for the ceiling joists. The web struts are 6" x 6".

There are several interesting features about the truss in this building. First, that there is only one in the roof system. Typically, it would be customary to see a minimum of two trusses for a building of this width and these would be crossed with purloins upon which the rafters would sit. Also interesting is how the heel of the top cord is double notched into the bottom cords. Modern builders might consider these notches too deep but there is no evidence the bottom cords are checking or failing in any way under the load.



Fig.II.57 Top chord is double notched into lower chord.

Finally, the truss has been put into compression with three large threaded iron rods that run from the top cord through the bottom cord.

Boston Carnegie Library HSR



Fig.II.58 Two of the three threaded tie rods compressing the truss.

The truss bottom cords are further bound to the floor framing system nearly 12' below with two long iron tie rods that are secured with a nut and washer.



Fig.II. 59 One of the long tie rods (red arrows) that reach to the floor framing system 12' below.



Fig.II.60 Tie rods to first floor are anchored on top of carrying beam with washer and threaded nut.

On the 1st floor, these rods are hidden within the decorative columns which partition the public space below.



Fig.II.61 Long tie rods enclosed in decorative columns on first floor.

Figure II.63 provides a sectional view of these roofing elements.

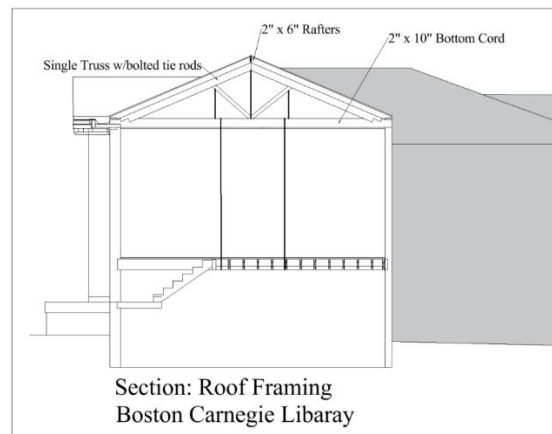


Fig.II.62 Section view of roof truss and tie rods.

At the exterior wall, the rafters have a bird's mouth notch that rests on a horizontal 2" x 8" plate fastened to the ceiling joists. Because of the box gutter design, there is no rafter tail.



Fig.II.63 Rafters sit on plate fastened to ceiling joists.

As a reminder of a time before standardized lumber dimensions and to create the right depth for the box gutter, the tops of many of the ceiling joists have been notched so the rafter plate lays flat. These marks are a reminder of the men who constructed this building and hand cut these notches while sitting high in the framing.



Fig.II.64 Many of the ceiling joists have hand cut notches to accommodate the rafter plate.

The roof is decked with 3 1/2" x 7/8" tongue and groove – the same stock used for the sub-floor. The number of visible nail or screw penetrations suggests there may be additional layers of sheet material or strapping applied to the top of the tongue and groove decking.



Fig.II.65 While some nail penetrations are visible, more would be expected given the multiple roofs the building has witnessed.

The roof framing over the modern addition reflects contemporary standards and codes. The common rafters are 2" x 6" (nominal) on 16" centers. The hip rafters are 2" x 8" and the

roof decking are sheets of 4' x 8' plywood. Some of hip rafters have knee bracing to the ceiling framing below.



Fig.II.66 Modern techniques and materials are used in the Addition roof system.

On the roof exterior, the weather surface is corrugated metal panels 36" in width. The raised ribs are 9" on center. The roofing appears to be 24-gauge galvanized steel, but this was not confirmed on site. The panels are fastened with gasketed metal roofing screws in a pattern that reflects best practice. The spacing of the screws up the roof rake strongly suggests a layer of strapping was installed beneath the metal roofing.



Fig.II. 67 36" ribbed metal panels are the roof finish.

The roof is topped with a trapezoidal ridge cap. It could not be determined if a layer of adhesive foam closure was used below the cap assembly.



Fig.II.68 Ridge cap tops the roof. Undetermined if foam closure was used below the cap assembly.

There is a small “eyelash” type roof element within the pediment that covers the lower section of the entablature. It is a seamed sheet metal surface that shows considerable age but appears intact and functioning.



Fig.II.69 A small roof section within the pediment covers the lower section of the entablature.

The roof has two penetrations. One is a plumbing vent on the west side which is well flashed with a rubber boot.

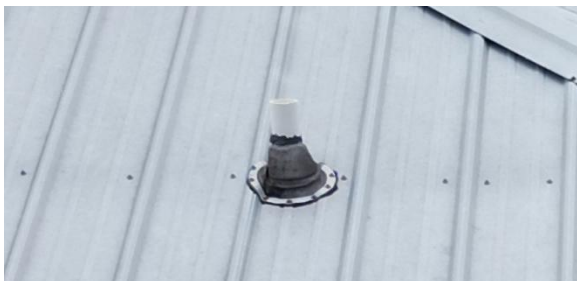


Fig.II.70 Plumbing vent penetration on west side is well flashed and sealed

The other penetration is the surviving chimney on the northwest side of the historic building. The southern chimney was likely demolished

to make way for the shed roof addition in the 1990s.

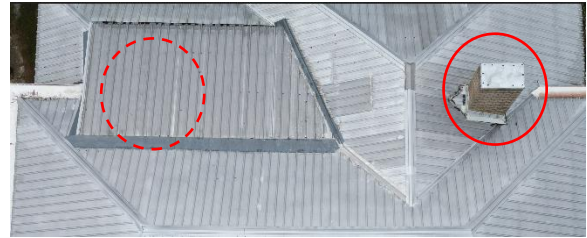


Fig.II.71 North side chimney survives. South side (red circle) was likely removed during 1990s addition project.

The apron flashing around the chimney appears sound but the high side cricket flashing may have leaked in the past as evidence of a subsequent patching is visible.



Fig.II.72 The cricket appears to have been patched several times after installation.

A visual inspection of the area below this cricket suggests that leaks were a problem in the past but are not currently active. No elevated moisture readings were noted here.



Fig.II. 73 Area below and adjacent to chimney cricket is currently dry but appears to have leaked in the past (red circle).

The existing metal roof is relatively new. It may be the building’s third or fourth roof covering. While historic photographs are inconclusive

about those earlier coverings, a small artifact discovered in the attic during inspection strongly suggests the building's original roof was likely slate.



Fig.II.74 Portion of an old slate roof shingle found in the attic below debris.

Slate was a popular roofing material in the United States from the late 19th century into the early decades of the 20th century. During this era, it was a common choice for fine homes and high style public buildings such as a library. Its use began to decline around 1915 when alternatives like asphalt shingles could be mass produced, transported and installed at a lower cost.⁶⁰

Condition of Roof

The roof system is in good condition although some questions are noted below. There is evidence of moisture stains on several rafters and some roof decking, but these appear be dormant. Spot checks indicate many areas are currently dry registering a comfortable 5% to 6% moisture content level.



Fig.II.75 Spot checks revealed acceptable moisture content readings throughout the attic.

The rafters/ridge beam joints show minimal separation.



Fig.II.76 Rafter/ridge beam joint show minimal separation.

More concerning is the separation of the webbing (cross braces) from the top chords of the truss. This was observed on both sides of the truss. While only a license structural engineer could fully explain this separation, it seems likely the cause is an overall settling of the truss.

⁶⁰ Levine, Jeffrey, Preservation Brief #29, US Dept. of Int., National Park Service, 1993, 2



Fig.II. 77 The truss webbing has pulled away from the upper chord on both sides.

The double stop notch at the heel appears to still be well seated but it was hard to access for a close inspection. It does appear to have shifted.



Fig.II. 78 The double notched heel joint appears well seated but may have shifted. Close inspection was difficult.

There was some evidence of critter infestation, but no live sightings were made during inspection. Several areas of HVAC insulation appear to have been chewed away as only a squirrel can do but no obvious entry points were observed on the exterior of the building so this may be a past problem.



Fig.II. 79 Damage from critters to HVAC duct insulation, probably squirrels, was observed in attic.

Drainage

Site Drainage: The building sits on a lot that slopes north to south and east to west. The slope along Main Street from north to south (right to left) is 11 ¼" though the actual slope along the building wall appears to be considerably less. The slope from the front of the lot to the rear (east to west) is approximately 17".

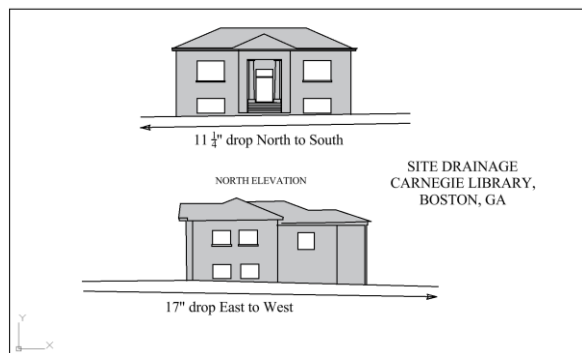


Fig.II.80 Site slope in elevation.

This drop in elevation is generally favorable for building drainage but several choices in how rainwater run-off is managed has negatively impacted the movement of water away from the building, particularly on the east elevation.

Roof drainage: The roof system utilizes three types of drainage - box gutters, "K" gutters and drip edge. *Figure II.82* shows the location of these types of drainage systems on the building.

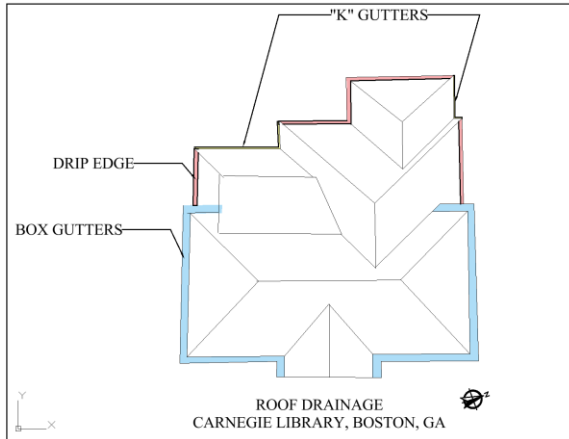


Fig.II.81 Plan of roof drainage types.

Box gutters are located on the perimeter of the historic roof sections. They are a common feature of elegant historic buildings because they provide a concealed method of roof drainage. Their hidden nature permits crisp cornice lines, uninterrupted entablatures, and proportionally correct classical detailing; all of which are present on Boston Carnegie Library.



Fig.II.82 Box gutters hide the gutter system within the cornice. Drainage path indicated by red arrow.

Nestled within the cornice, the box gutters are a channel that is 20" wide and approximately 6" deep. They are lined with a seamless non-porous fabric called EPDM (ethylene propylene, diene monomer); a plastic polymer widely used in roofing applications. This modification was an excellent improvement over the original lining which was likely either lead or seamed copper panels. When box gutters fail, which they regularly do, it is often the lining or a clogging of the drain that is the cause.



Fig.II.83 The box gutter has been modified with EPDM lining.

Each side of building's box gutters are sloped to direct rainwater runoff to drains and downspouts located at the corners.



Fig.II.84 Drop outlets located at the corners of the building drain the gutters.

The downspouts for the box gutters are sizeable 4 1/2" boxes of galvanized steel that are fastened to the exterior brick walls.

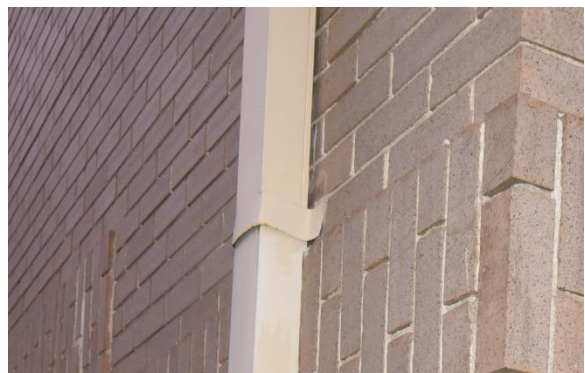


Fig.II.85 The downspouts are square configurations firmly attached to the brick veneer.

The rear downspouts on the building terminate in elbows that drain directly onto the hardscape apron.



Fig.II. 86 Rear downspouts have elbow termination just above the apron.

The downspouts serving the front corners have been configured to direct rainwater into the soil along the east elevation of the building. As will be noted below, this is having a detrimental effect on proper drainage and is rapidly damaging the building.



Fig.II.87 Front downspouts have been re-routed to direct water into ground on east elevation.

The “K” gutters are affixed to the fascia along several sections of the Modern Addition roofing. These are conventional 5” aluminum configurations with 4” downspouts at the corners.



Fig.II.88 K gutters and downspouts serve much of the modern addition roofing.

Multiple facets of the roof have no designed drainage system. In these areas, the lower edge of the metal roofing serves as a drip edge which allows the water to fall directly below to hardscape or yard. This drip edge drainage is the cause of much of the rising moisture staining on the lower walls noted earlier.



Fig.II.89 Several roof facets have no drainage system, only an overhanging drip-edge.

Condition of Drainage

① The upper elements of the drainage system are working well although several gutter sections need cleaning. There is significant accumulated organic debris in both the southwest side K gutter and the northeast corner box gutter.



Fig.II.90 Upper elements of the drainage system need cleaning but are otherwise sound and operational.

The bigger problem with the drainage system is in the lower elements where poorly planned drains are failing to move the water away from the building.

- 1 The elbow on the south side downspout is missing which is resulting in a concentration of water on the concrete apron and lower wall.



Fig.II. 91 Missing elbow and poor water drainage are undermining the concrete apron on the southwest corner of the building.

Water, both above and below the concrete, combined with another downspout 12' away, is working to erode the soil at this corner of the building and undermine the sidewalk. Note the two cracks which cross the entire concrete slab. At present, this erosion does not appear to be causing any damage to the foundation, only the apron, but this should be monitored.



Fig.II.92 Poor drainage has undermined the concrete apron resulting in two full failures (red arrows) of the concrete slab.

- 1 At the front of the building, on both the north and south ends, rainwater runoff is being deposited into the ground directly in front of the building but sidewalks and retaining walls are limiting the water's movement away from the structure.

On the north end, water from the downspout is emptied into a small patch of soil in front of the basement window.



Fig.II.93 At the northeast corner, the ground drain directs water into small yard area lacking effective drainage.

For light rainfall, this is probably adequate but for heavy storms which are increasingly frequent, the water is likely pooling in the far corner against the wall and seeping inward. The sidewalk and slope are preventing the water from moving away from the building.



Fig.II. 94 Rainwater runoff is flowing down the slope toward the main entry wall and becoming trapped against the building.

On the interior of the building adjacent to this area, several bricks show evidence of spalling which is caused by excessive moisture in the bricks. A digital reading of these bricks shows a high moisture percentage (17.9%) for an interior location and strongly suggests the water has worked its way inward and continues to do so.



Fig.II.95 Moisture readings on the interior are very high.

On the south end of the east elevation, the trapped water is damaging the integrity of the ADA ramp retaining wall. The drain line is clogged but it is also hemmed in by the retaining wall on the downhill sides.



Fig.II.96 Rain runoff on south end of east elevation is trapped by ADA ramp and wall.

The presence of the white calcification lines on the outside of the retaining wall, known as efflorescence, is caused by salts accumulating when moisture evaporates. This is clear proof that excessive exposure to water is straining this masonry element.



Fig.II.97 The white lines along the mortar are evidence of excessive moisture seeking a "way out."

The greatest damage on this wall is directly behind the handrail post where the new concrete wall joins the historic foundation wall. The slow push of water here has fractured the entire wall plane. If left unaddressed this leak will ultimately damage the ramp itself and loosen the handrail anchor pole. It also likely damaging the historic brick below grade at this corner.



Fig.II.98 Complete wall failure due to poor drainage is underway.

Recommended solutions for these situations are detailed in the Treatment Section of this report.

Interior Walls

The interior walls in the Boston library reflect both the historic character of the building and subsequent modifications to it. Although these changes have significantly altered how the building works and, to a degree, how the surfaces feel, there are still numerous historic elements intact. The interior wall separating the stairs from the function room on the south side of the basement is one example. The wall studs are vintage large dimension 2 x 4s and the surface is plaster on lath.

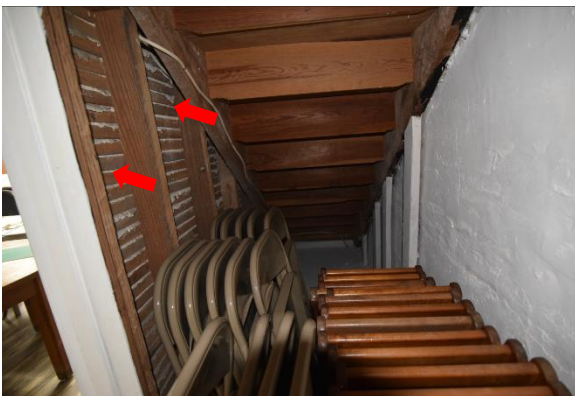


Fig.II.99 Plaster on wood lath (red arrows) is a historic interior wall finish still found in places in the building.

This basement wall was originally built with a broad arched opening to the stairwell which is still visible around the modern doorway. It is unknown when the opening was infilled.

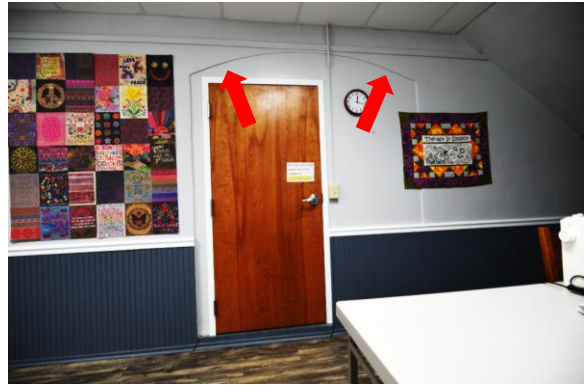


Fig.II.100 Note the outline of the original arched entry into this basement room from the stairway.

Many of perimeter walls in the historic building retrain their original plaster on brick finish.



Fig.II.101 Plaster applied directly on brick, rather than wood lath, was used on all the historic perimeter walls and is still almost entirely intact.

This type of wall finish dates from antiquity and was commonly used in the United States on all types of buildings well into the 20th century. Plaster on brick is a durable surface that is easy to clean and, if protected from moisture invasion, will endure for decades as evidenced by the condition of these walls which are excellent.

Plaster on brick was comprised of at least two sometime three separate layers. The first was a base coat of binding plaster applied to the brick. Often called the “scratch” coat, it was a mixture of lime putty, sand, water and animal hair (typically horse) which served as a binding agent. Strands of this hair are visible

under magnification in a sample from the building.



Fig.II.102 Horsehair was used as a binder in the plaster throughout the building. A basement sample under 10x magnification.

The second coat of plaster, called the “brown coat” built up the wall thickness and typically included the same ingredients but no hair. The final coat, known as the “setting stuff,” contained more lime and little aggregate or fiber. This mixture gave the wall their smooth white surface finish.⁶¹ Evidence on the surviving walls, particularly on the first floor, indicates the historic finish in the building was never entirely smooth as some aggregate, probably sand, is still visible in the surface. One wonders if this rough finish was a cost cutting decision at the time of construction.



Fig.II.103 Note the gritty wall finish which indicates presence of a mixed in aggregate, like sand, as opposed to

the smooth finish typically seen on the ‘setting stuff’ final coat.

In the basement, the plaster finish was applied to wood lath. In the closet off the function room, a small, damaged section reveals the narrow strips of lath over which the plaster was smeared.



Fig.II.104 A damaged section of closet interior wall in the basement shows the wood lath that underlies the plaster.

Plaster walls are now rarely used in modern construction. In most cases, gypsum board, also known as “drywall” or “sheetrock”, has become the finish of choice. Typically, ½” to 5/8” in thickness, the board is installed in 4’ x 8’ sheets and then the seams are taped, compounded and then sanded for a smooth overall finish.



Fig.II.105 Multiple interior walls in the building are finished with gypsum (aka drywall) which has been taped, sanded and painted.

⁶¹ MacDonald, M. (1989). *Preservation Brief 21: Repairing historic flat plaster—walls and ceilings*. National Park Service, Technical Preservation

Services.

<https://www.nps.gov/orgs/1739/upload/preservation-brief-21-flat-plaster.pdf>

All the walls in the 1990s addition and the basement renovation from the early 2000s utilize gypsum board. Figure II.106 shows the location and type of all the wall finishes in the building.

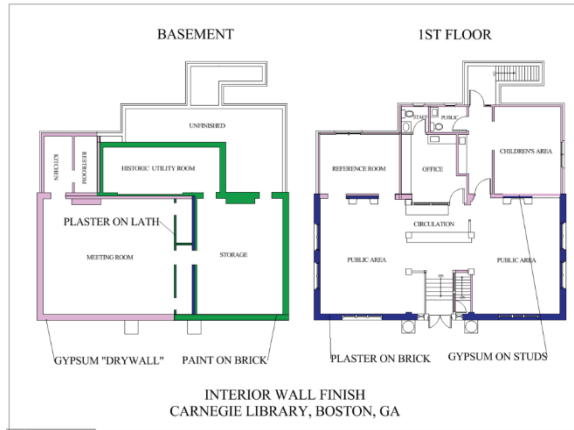


Fig.II.106 Plan showing interior wall finish throughout building.

Condition of Interior Walls

Except for the four issues detailed below, the walls of the building, particularly the plaster on brick sections on the first floor, are in amazing condition. This is a testament to the care the building has received over the last 100 years. Where one would expect to see diagonal cracks or plaster separation due to load shifting or water invasion, the interior finish is firm and intact. On the first floor, only one hairline crack was observed in the front wall over the southeast window. There are likely others but all would be small and almost invisible. This crack should be periodically monitored to determine if it is active.



Fig.II.107 The plaster on brick walls, on the first story, are in excellent condition with only minor cracks observed.

In the basement, the interior walls are showing evidence of long-term water invasion in four separate locations.

① The most significant is in the function room along the east wall beneath the main entry stairs. Here, a chronic leak in the entry floor above has seriously damaged the integrity of the gypsum board. During inspection, a slight application of pressure accidentally punched a 3" hole in a particularly fragile section of this wall.



Fig.II.108 Extensive gypsum board failure below entryway in basement.

Furthermore, behind the drywall, this long-term water exposure is also eroding the steel fasteners used to attach the gypsum to the brick. Note the rust stains coming through the

wall. These are coming from the rusting fastener beneath.



Fig.II.109 Rust stains are bleeding through from moisture trapped behind the wall board.

The source of this water is on the exterior of the building in the corner of the main entryway. The slope of the tiles here are slightly down and inward, toward the building, which creates a pool of water against the threshold.



Fig.II.110 During rain events, water is pooling up on the outside of the threshold because the stoop is slope down and inward here.

This water flows inward beneath the threshold and collects on the floor inside the entry.



Fig.II.111 Water flows under threshold, collects inside and drains into wall cavity below.

Note the water stains, settling and damaged grout in this corner. From here, the water seeps downward onto the brick below and into the interior wall cavity. During inspection, the moisture reading on the inside wall in the basement was low, but this was likely due to the lack of recent rainfall.



The second area of concern is along the stairway wall to the basement. An active source of moisture is damaging the plaster finish here causing it to separate from the brick. The cracks and blisters indicate the problem is widespread along this section of the wall. Multiple moisture readings revealed a mix of high rating between 13.4% and 17.7% - very high for an interior wall such as this.



Fig.II.112 Extensive water damage to interior plaster finish in stairway.

① The source of this moisture has not been fully determined. The damage is not located below any known plumbing line nor is there any evidence that water has flowed downward from the attic/roof. Additionally, the reverse side of this brick wall does not show any indication of similar water invasion.

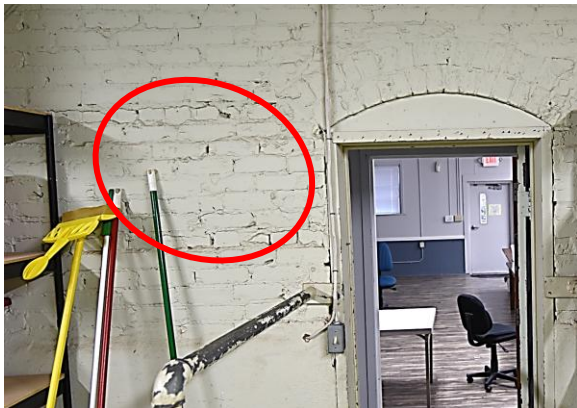


Fig.II.113 Reverse side of damaged stairway wall shows no evidence of water invasion.

The most likely explanation for the source of this water is the pooling rainwater on the northeast exterior described in the drainage section of this report. While this water is some distance away, over 8', the low placement of these "bubbles" combined with the fact that at least one of them show a very pronounced horizontal configuration, strongly suggest the water has flowed along mortar joints in the brick wall, possibly from the exterior. This is speculative and only destructive plaster removal will provide a positive explanation.



Fig.II.114 Note how the damage is spotty and in the lowest area, (red line) very horizontal. This may indicate the water is flowing along the internal mortar joints.

① The third area of water damage in the basement is along the east wall of the storage room. As noted in the Drainage Section of this report, water from a poorly channeled downspout on the northeast corner of the building is creating a destructive level of moisture below grade. This moisture is being absorbed by the brick and migrating inward toward the interior. The spalling bricks are evidence that the problem is chronic and long-term. Moisture readings on the brick registered 17.9%



② The final area of water damage is also in the basement storage room. On the north wall below the rear set of windows, moisture invasion is separating the thin stucco coat from the brick. This water has likely entered below the window frame, from the adjacent paved walkway, and then trickled downward along the inside wall. It could not be determined if the bricks themselves have been damaged by this exposure. Moisture readings were inconclusive, so it is unknown if the leak is active or dormant.



Fig.II.115 Water damage to interior wall along north side basement.

Recommendations for addressing these issues are provided in the Treatment Section of the Report.

Interior Rooms

The interior configuration of the Boston Carnegie Library combines the historic public space in front with the more modest and institutional spaces added to the rear in the 1990s. Figure XXX shows an existing floor plan of the building's main level. The surviving historic area is shaded green.

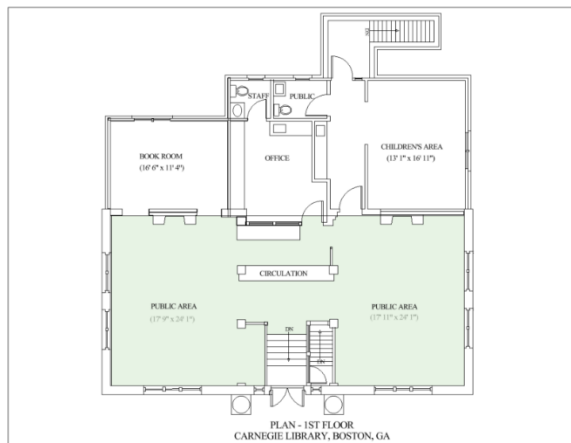


Fig.II. 116 Plan view of existing 1st floor configuration. Green shaded area is historic.

Spatially, the historic area is divided into thirds with the circulation desk positioned squarely in the center. This central area was historically known as the “delivery desk” because books were initially kept in the stacks

in back and “delivered” to patrons at the counter. While the current desk is a modern construction, the original may have been positioned more forward and might have been horseshoe in shape which was a common design in other Carnegie Libraries nationally.



Fig.II.117 Existing “delivery desk” is a modern addition.

On either side of the circulation desk, the historic rooms are largely intact. Their high ceilings (12’), abundant windows and clear sight lines from the circulation desk are hallmarks of Carnegie libraries and an affirmation of the librarian’s needs to supervise the environment. Although these rooms are now segmented by books shelves and tables, their original arrangement might have been more akin to the plan in Bertram’s “Notes on the Erection of Library Buildings” (1911). As noted earlier in this report, one of his small building designs closely mirrors the Boston library and called for separate areas for adults and children with rows of tables in both.

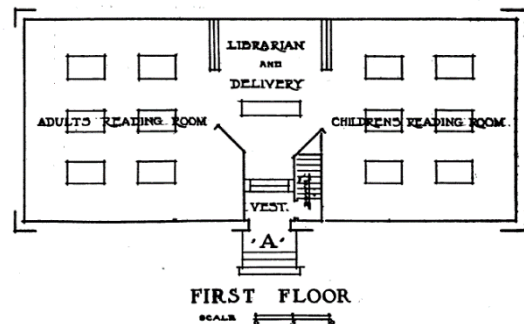


Fig.II.118 From Bertram's "Notes" - suggested small library layout.

Boston Carnegie Library HSR

During site evaluation, in the attic space, it was noted that the historic ceilings of these two areas are very different. Although both are now finished with gypsum (drywall) and painted white, that was not originally the case. On the south side, the original ceiling was finished with plaster and lath but on the north side, the ceiling was tongue and groove wood planks. Why the less expensive wood surface was used over the north room is unknown, but it may reflect the rooms intended use as a children's area which it continues to serve as today.



Fig.II.119 The original ceiling above the children's area was tongue and groove wood planking, the back of this material is still clearly visible in the attic.



Fig.II.120 The ceiling on the other side of the building, over the south side reading area, was finished in plaster and lath the back of which is still visible.

The rooms added to the facility in the 1990s are smaller in scale but dramatically

increased the size and functionality of the overall building. The South side room created space for multiple shelves and computer stations.

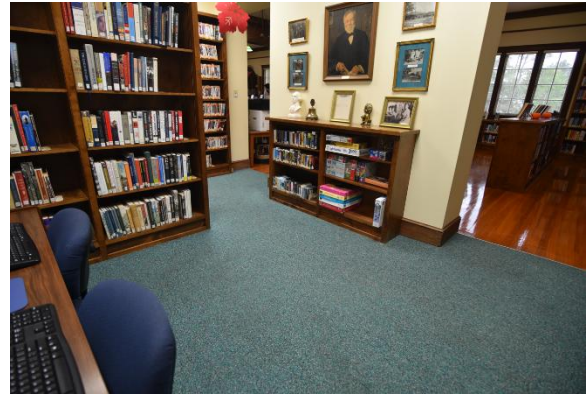


Fig.II. 121 The south side room added in the 1990s.

The north side room was intended be more versatile as the construction plans from the 1990s renovation labeled the space “The Multi-Purpose Room.”

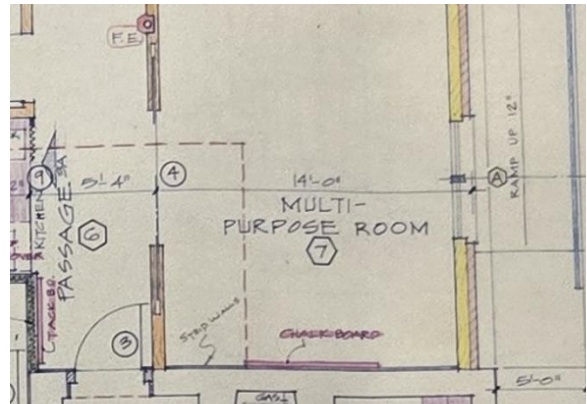


Fig.II.122 The north side room was added in 1990s and now holds the library's rare books and Young Adult literature.

Boston Carnegie Library HSR

A significant aspect of the 1990s remodeling was the creation of two bathrooms, an administrative office and a hallway kitchenette. Prior to this, the area now occupied by the office would have been the stacks where all the books were originally shelved.



Fig.II.123 Librarians office added in 1990s Addition.



Fig.II.124 Kitchenette added in 1990s Addition.

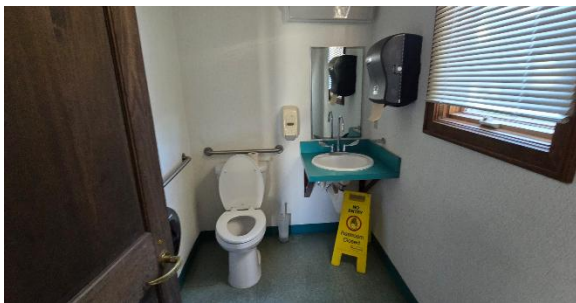


Fig.II.125 Public restroom added in 1990s Addition.

The basement rooms have remained largely unchanged although the southside room received a significant facelift in the early 2000s when the ADA ramp and doorway were added.



Fig.II.126 Basement function room was upgraded in early 2000s (exact date unknown) with new wall, floor and ceiling finishes.

The northside room continues to serve as an unadorned storage area. Its original exterior door became redundant when the addition was added in the 1990s.



Fig.II.127 Northside basement is still a storage space, but original exit door (red circle) no longer serves as egress.

The basement kitchen area was further modified at some point, possibly when the ADA ramp project was undertaken. The rear exterior door in this area was in-filled and the floor was excavated and then raised perhaps to accommodate plumbing for an added bathroom.



Fig.II.128 Basement kitchenette added during ADA ramp project.



Fig.II.129 Basement bathroom added during ADA ramp project.

The rear parts of the basement are vacant and undeveloped. The space below the original rear wing retains much of its historic character.



Fig.II.130 Original basement area below former "stacks" room.

The area beneath the addition is completely unfinished lacking any floor or wall treatment.



Fig.II.131 Basement area of 1990s addition completely unfinished.

Trim & Decorative Elements

In terms of decorative style, the interior trim and fixtures of the historic building are inspired by the Arts and Crafts movement of the early 20th century. Also known as "Craftsman" style, the movement was a reaction to the elaborate and ornate designs of the Victorian era. Emphasizing simplicity and functionality, Craftsman designs incorporate exposed beams, built-in cabinetry, and decorative but plain wood trim to create spaces characterized by clean lines and minimal complex moldings.



Typically, craftsman designs incorporate authentic structural elements such as beam and pillars but, in this building, the beams and pillars are entirely decorative. Their presence serves no structural purpose save to support their own weight, but they do create spatial order and grandeur in the public area.

Additionally, the pillars under the south beam hide the structural tie rods from the roof truss.



Fig.II.132 The beams and pillars in the public space are decorative, not structural.

The beams are a hollow box type construction comprised of multiple vertical and horizontal wood elements. The seams are skillfully hidden by trim or slight reveals which accent the angular design. The beams measure approximately 25" in width at the ceiling, 12 1/2" at the bottom and are 38" in height. The bottom of the beam is 9'8" above the floor.



Fig.II.133 Beams are box configurations with limited trim and detailing.

The largest element in the beams is the 9 3/4" horizontal panel positioned in the center of the beam elevation. These multiple long boards present rich grain patterns which are a hallmark of the Craftsman style. Although no

wood sample was taken, the wood is almost certainly a species of Southern Yellow Pine, perhaps longleaf, which would have been widely available in Southern Georgia in 1914.



Fig.II.134 Note the rich grain presentation in the beam's central panel.

On the southside beam, there is significant evidence of repairs and reconstruction where the stairway wall was removed. The wall pocket has been patched and several of the trim pieces have been replaced. There is a possibility the entire column was reconstructed but this was not confirmed.



Fig.II.135 Southside beam shows extensive patching at old wall seam.

Boston Carnegie Library HSR

The pillars beneath the beams are positioned roughly equidistant across the floor.



Fig.II.136 Pillars are roughly equidistant across the floor (east to west).

The pillars measure 12 ½" square and are detailed at the top with a 4" crown molding and a ¾" band molding.



Fig.II.137 Pillars are topped with a crown molding detail and a skirt at the bottom.

Like the beams, the pillars are hollow boxes. As noted earlier in this report, the pair on the south side conceal structural iron ties that link the roof truss and the floor system. The northern pair appear to be a chase for electric

and telecom cabling as evidenced by a pin hole camera view.



Fig.II.138 Northside pillars are used as wire chase.

Observations indicate there were originally four pillars for each beam. The two central pillars were flanked on either side by engaged half pillars which were fixed to the perimeter walls. Only one of these survives on the east side entry wall.



Fig.II.139 Half pillars (red arrows) originally finished the beam at the exterior wall plane. Only one of these survives.

The other three pillar were removed possibly as a part of the 1990s renovation. The outline of the removed pillars is still visible behind the circulation desk where the flooring was patched.

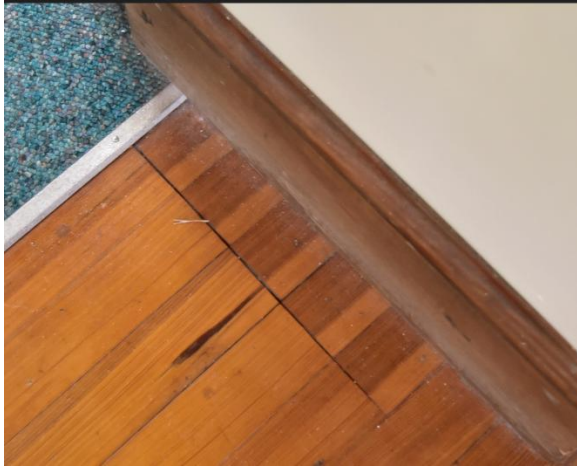


Fig.II.140 Floor patch indicates original footprint of half pillar along wall.

All the interior window and door casings in the historic portion of the building show the Craftsman influence.



Fig.II.141 Window and door casing are vintage Craftsman style: unadorned but elegant.

They are made of unadorned $4\frac{1}{2}$ " x $\frac{7}{8}$ " (actual) stock installed in a simple picture frame configuration. There are no miter joints at the corner, but the edges of the casings have been chamfered. The top rails are $\frac{5}{4}$ stock with a beefy 2" solid crown molding.



Fig.II.142 Top of door and window casings have a solid molding.

The interior walls of the historic structure have two trim details: a picture rail and a crown molding at the wall ceiling intersection. Both circle the entire interior perimeter except for the area behind the circulation desk.

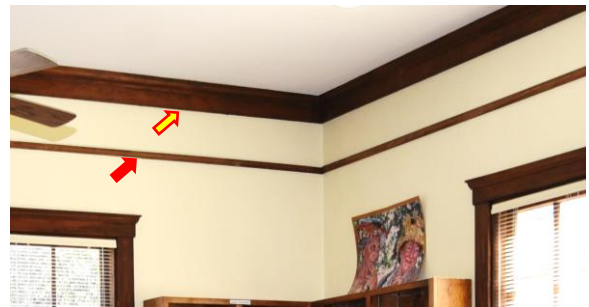


Fig.II. 143 Interior walls have a picture molding detail (red arrow) and crown molding (yellow arrow).

The crown molding is a two-piece construction composed of a fascia with a $3\frac{1}{2}$ " face and an upper crown molding with a $2\frac{3}{4}$ " projection. The picture rail has a $1\frac{1}{2}$ " elevation and $\frac{3}{4}$ " thickness. The recessed back of the picture rail once served as a ledge from which framed pictures would be hung thus its name "picture rail."



Fig.II.144 The "picture rail" (lower element) was intended as a bar from which framed picture could be hung.

Due to the presence of bookshelves along the perimeter walls, it could not be determined if any original baseboard has survived. The only accessible piece was found on the downstairs landing. This 8" stock has a narrow (1") cove cap.



Fig.II.145 Very little baseboard has survived.

Among the buildings most significant character defining elements are the two fireplaces located on the main room's west walls. Although no longer operational, these fixtures reflect a high degree of craftsmanship and style. They also employ a unique combination of materials.



Fig.II.146 A pair of handsome fireplaces combine unique materials and style.

Standing 54" high and nearly 6' wide, the fireplaces were primarily built to be decorative, but functionality was not sacrificed. The fire box is relatively shallow, at 15", which would have thrown the heat outward. Additionally, the low-profile hearth

extends 23" from the base, a distance sufficient to protect the floors and prevent accidental fires.



Fig.II.147 Broad hearth allowed fireplace to be functional.

Archival research indicates that the library spent 15 cents on "stacking wood" in January of 1927 which strongly suggests the fireplaces were operational during the colder months of the year.

Cards sold.....	1.35	
Fines collected....	1.45	
		\$5.12
DISBURSEMENTS		
Housework	\$2.25	
Stacking wood	.15	
New Borrowers		
Cards.....	2.70	
		\$5.10
Balance		\$.02

Fig.II. 148 "Stack wood" expense for January 1927 indicates fireplaces were used. Clipping from Twentieth Century Scrapbook - Boston Carnegie Library Collection.

In the basement along the old exterior wall, the ash clean-out trap is still visible and contains remnants of the building last fire.



Fig.II.149 Ash trap in old exterior basement wall.

The bricks used in the fireplace are unusually long (11 5/8" vs. 7 5/8") and their lightly glazed finish, possibly enameled, is speckled with iron deposits (known as "ironspot" bricks). Like the bricks used in the building's façade, this appearance was a stylistic manufacturing technique and, not surprisingly, was expensive.⁶²



Fig.II. 150 "Ironspot" bricks were used for all visible surfaces.

The segmented arch above the fire box was a decorative flourish that echoed other popular designs of the era.



Fig.II.151 The segmented arch element was a popular choice during this era.

A 1923 publication by the American Face Brick Association provided several designs that incorporate this arched style of stretcher bricks. Design #24 entitled "Where there's hearth room, there's heart room" closely matches the segmented arch configuration of the Boston library.⁶³

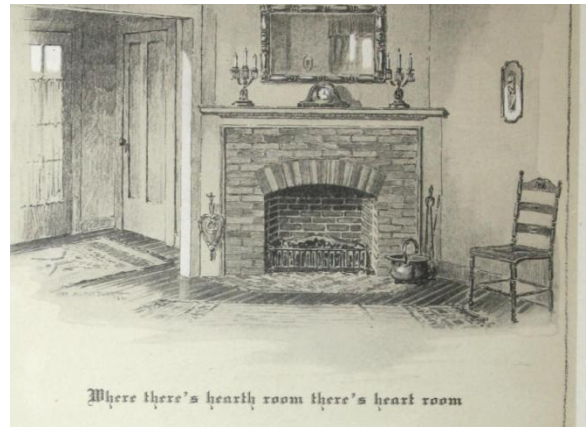


Fig.II.152 Design #24 of the 1923 catalog of the American Face Brick Association featured this segmented arch element.

What makes the fireplaces truly unique is the incorporation of large limestone components. Two finely tool blocks flank the arch, creating a dramatic horizontal course of color and shape. Note the finely tooled corner detail on the inside of the blocks.

⁶²

https://www.architectmagazine.com/technology/products/the-heat-is-on-a-brief-history-of-fireplace-design_o

⁶³

<https://archive.org/details/TheHomeFiresAFewSuggestionsInFaceBrickFireplaces/page/n19/mode/2up>

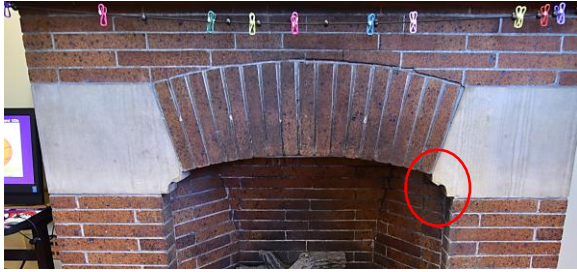


Fig.II. 153 The two large, flanking limestone blocks are unique with their interior corner detail (red circle).

The wooden mantel projects 7 ¾" off the chimney box and expresses the Arts and Crafts design with rich wood grains displayed inside a delicate frame.



Fig.II.154 The mantle echoes the Craftsman style found throughout the interior.

Condition of Trim and Fixtures

The woodwork is in generally good condition but various repairs or replacements over the years have degraded the integrity of these elements. This is most apparent on the beams and pillars. Where the wall pocket was patched on the south beam and the repairs were fastened with modern dry wall screws. This was an unfortunate choice.



Fig.II.155 Repairs to the beams were fastened with drywall screw in a hasty arrangement.

Additionally, perhaps due to the width of the main center board in the beam which is a ½" larger than standard available dimensions, the wood repair was made with plywood versus an actual wood plank. Note the dramatic difference in grain pattern at the seam. The modern wood, on the left, is a poor match for the historic wood on the right.



Fig.II.156 The wood on left is likely plywood made to look like the historic plank on the right.

Plywood may have also been used to reconstruct some or part of the north pillars. Two existing holes show a suspiciously regular growth ring pattern which strongly suggest the layers used in plywood manufacturing.



Fig.II.157 The regular ring pattern on the inside of these holes strongly suggests the separate layers of plywood versus actual wood.

These unsympathetic repairs aside, the beams and pillars are still well attached and appear sound. Spot checks of the wall trim (the picture rail and ceiling molding) indicate both are also still well attached to their underlayment.

③ The fireplaces appear to be in good condition although both have smoke stains that a non-acidic cleaner such as D2 would largely remove. The fireplace on the north side does show signs of past water exposure. There is visible water staining on the right-side limestone block.



Fig.II.158 Water staining on northside fireplace.

This same water has damaged the mortar above the right side of the segmented arch. The source of the water was probably a leak in the flashing way up at the roof line. This does not appear to be an active leak.



Fig.II. 159 Mortar failure above segmented arch on north fireplace.

Ceilings

There are no visible historic ceilings remaining in the building. All have been covered, removed or obscured with new material. As previously noted, the main room had two types of ceilings. There was plaster on lath over much of the main floor including the circulation desk. The back side of this material is still visible in the attic.



Fig.II.160 Attic view of back side of original plaster and lath ceiling.

Over what is now the children's area (the north side of the main room), the ceiling was tongue and groove wood, as previously noted, the backside of which is also visible in the attic.

Presently, all the ceilings in the public area are gypsum board (drywall) which has been taped, sanded smooth and painted flat white.

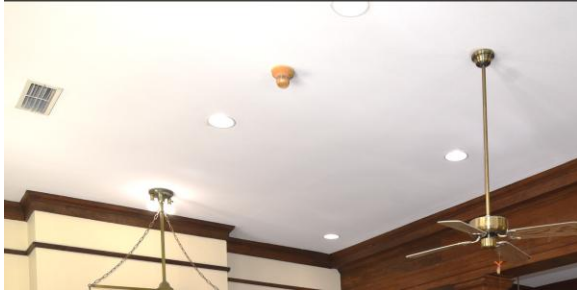


Fig.II.161 Existing ceilings on first floor are gypsum sanded smooth and painted white.

In the basement, the original ceiling, which is intact plaster on lath, has been obscured with a suspended or drop ceiling composed of acoustic panels. This was almost certainly done to facilitate the installation and wiring of upgraded overhead lighting.



Fig.II.162 The acoustic ceiling in basement function room obscures the original plaster finish which is still intact.

All the rooms in the modern addition also use the drop ceiling system.

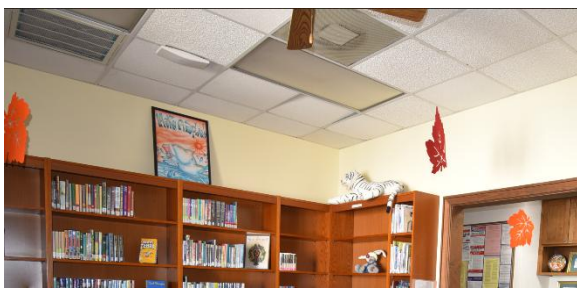


Fig.II.163 All of the rooms added in the 1990s Addition have drop ceilings.

Condition of Ceilings

All the ceilings are in good condition and show no signs of leaks or sagging. All the acoustic panel are intact and properly seated in their channel frames.

Doors

There are fifteen doors in the building serving both interior and exterior purposes. Six are old, possibly original to the structure and nine are modern additions. This section of the report will focus primarily on the historic doors.

The main entrance to the building is a double (aka French) door configuration with an overall opening measuring 60" x 90".

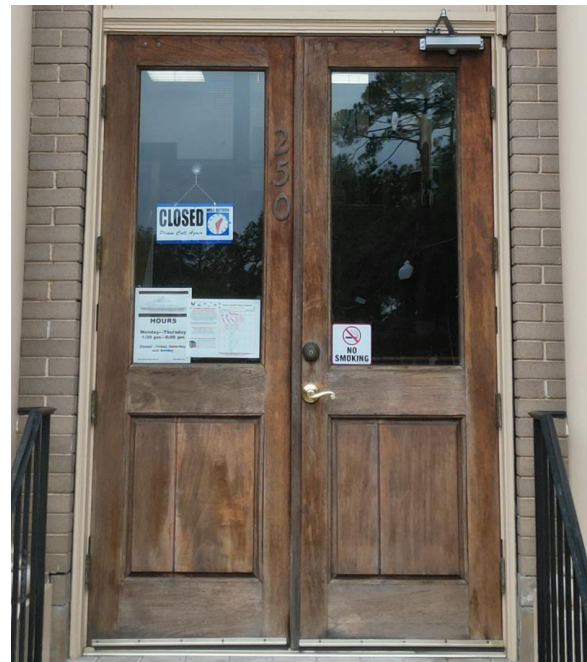


Fig.II.164 Main entrance, outswing, French doors.

The doors are constructed of solid wood, in a two-panel design. The upper panel is a single glass lite that measure 45 ½" by 20 ½". The lower section of each door is a raised panel that measure 23 ¾" x 20 ½". The bottom rail is 8 ¾" and the stiles and top rail are 4 3/8". The slab is 1 ¾" thick. An astragal covers the weather seam on the front.



Fig.II.165 Doors are solid wood construction with a raised lower panel and a glass upper.

Each door is hung on 4 hinges and opens outward. The hinges are 4½” in height. During inspection, the righthand side door, (looking toward the street), was not operational.

These doors are old, possibly more than 50 years, but they are not original to the building or not original to this opening. While their two-panel design is consistent with a historic photograph showing the building in its earliest decade, the distance between the transom window above - and glass panels below is far greater in the historic photographic (yellow ellipse) than in the contemporary photograph (red arrow).



Fig.II.166 There is a significant dimensional difference above the glass panel in the historic photo versus the same

area in a contemporary image. This suggests the present doors are not original.

Furthermore, examining the hinge jamb on the right side shows the overpainted mortise of an earlier hinge mount. There is evidence of another mortise further down the jamb. This strongly suggests that an earlier door/hinge configuration occupied this opening.



Fig.II.167 An earlier hinge mortise is visible in the jamb indicating a prior door mounting.

Adjacent to the building’s main entry is the door to the stairway which is unquestionably historic and represents a very tangible link to the past.



Fig.II.168 Entry to basement stairs is one of the building's original doors.

The door opening is a conventional 36" x 84" and the door is a four-panel flat design with the upper panel a single lite of unbeveled glass. The door's lower rail measures 6 ¾" and the stiles and top rail measure 4 ½". The door swings inward on a set of two 4" hinges which are the only hinges the jamb appears to have had installed.



Fig.II. 169 Basement door jamb shows no evidence of prior mountings.

Although it is unknown where this door was purchased, in 1915, a year or so after it was installed, a national building supplies catalog lists this exact door at a cost \$5.00 a piece or \$7.15 if you wanted beveled glass.⁶⁴ By comparison, a synthetic version of this today would cost around \$400.

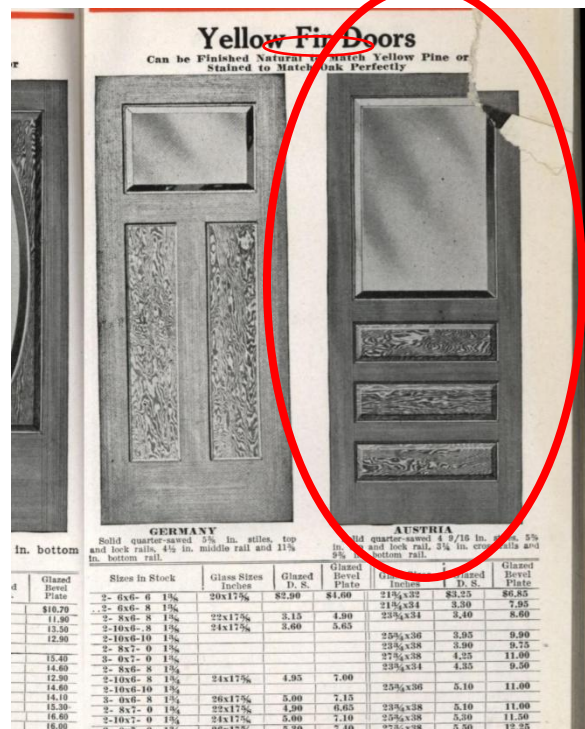


Fig.II.170 The 1915 catalog of [Chicago & Riverdale Lumber Co.](#), listed this exact door for \$5.00.

The most remarkable element of this door is the hardware (not the modern dead bolt) which is original to the door and the building. The knob and face plate are in excellent condition.



Fig.II.171 Original knob and lock mechanism in excellent condition.

Consider the thousands of people who have turned this knob over the decades as they

⁶⁴ [Chicago & Riverdale Lumber Co.](#), 1915, p32

descended to the basement for a meeting, lecture or performance. Note the box mechanism tightly mortised into the door.



Fig.II.172 The historic mortised box lock is still well seated and secure.

At the base of the stairs, the door to the north side storage area is also historic. It is a five-panel design but there are no glass elements. The door measures 29 1/2" x 76 3/4" and is 1 3/8" thick. The bottom rail is 5 1/2" and stiles and top rail are 4 1/2". Like the entry to the other room in the basement, this doorway also features an arch detail in the brick frame.



Fig.II.173 Door to northside storage room is original Note the arched opening in masonry wall..

The door swings outward on a set of two 4" hinges which appear to be the original installation.



Fig.II.174 Door has original hinge mounting and assembly.

Like the door at the top of the stairs, the hardware here is original though slightly different in design.



Fig.II.175 Original hardware in good working condition but some overpaint.

The door at the rear of the storage room once served as the basement exit.



Fig.II.176 This was the building's original basement exit.

It is a two-panel design that measures 30" x 77 12". It is 1 3/8" thick and hangs on a set of 4" hinges. On the exterior of the building, the door opening has an arched detail that is now mostly obscured by the rim joist for the addition's floor system. This doorway was also likely covered with a small, shed roof on the exterior. The unpainted red bricks and anchor holes are still visible to the right of the opening.



Fig.II.177 Note the obscured arch detail in the brick opening (red arrows). On right, an unpainted anchor area (yellow circle) for the shed roof that once covered this doorway.

It is interesting to note that a set of stairs just outside this doorway ascends to an old concrete pad. The height of the grade here is below the current grade which strongly suggests the lot was leveled somewhat during the 1990s Addition.



Fig.II.178 These stairs ascend to what was once the original height of the exterior grade. Today, it is well below the existing grade height.

The final two historic doors in the building are in the basement function room on the south side. They are located on the stairway

demising wall at opposing corners of the room.



Fig.II.179 Historic doors in function room.

Both doors are less than 63" in height which strongly suggests they were cut down and modified when the floor was raised in this room. Both were once probably the five panel design seen on the storage room door. Like that door, both hang from sets of 4" hinges.



Fig.II.180 Note how door has been dramatically shortened at the bottom. A strong indication that the floor was raised from original height and doors cut down to fit.

The nine modern doors in the building represent materials and sizes consistent with public facilities in the late 19th and early 20th

century. All are solid core with a dark satin stain finish. The interior doors on the first floor are two panel configurations with the upper panel a single pane of shatter-proof glass. The doorway to the office features a 13" transom that span the doorway.



Fig.II.181 The modern doors are solid core with panels.

Condition of Doors

② The historic doors are in fair condition which means they are intact but are showing decay or damage. The finish on the exterior of the main entry doors has degraded.



Fig.II.182 Finish on exterior of main doors has degraded and needs restoration.

The flush bolt at the bottom of the south main entry door is not operational. At present, the

lever pinion will not lift, and the door cannot be opened.



Fig.II.183 Lever on interior of main door is not operational.

② The exterior stain finish on the rear entry door adjacent to the mechanical lift is showing advanced decay. This should be properly prepped, cleaned, and finished with either an exterior latex paint or pigmented stain.



Fig.II.184 Exterior rear door needs refinishing.

The old basement exterior exit door has a broken upper panel that needs repair.



Fig.II.185 Broken upper panel on historic basement exit door.

Windows

The historic windows of the Boston Carnegie Library are a character defining feature of the building. Their balanced position, scale and construction communicate critical aspects of the building's historic identity and fabric.



Fig.II.186 The historic windows are a character defining feature of the building.

There are 42 windows in the building: 32 are original and 10 are modern additions. This section of the report will focus primarily on the historic windows. A [full window evaluation](#) is provided in the Appendix.

Large, abundant windows are a common element of most Carnegie Library designs around the nation. While electricity was increasingly available in the early 20th century, and this building was wired when constructed, natural light through windows was the primary means of illumination. These windows display typical Arts and Crafts influence in their size, design, placement and proportion. Used in groups and pairs, the

windows emphasize the horizontality of the design and unify the interior and exterior.



Fig.II.187 The proportion and balance of the windows give the overall building much of its historic character.

Apart from the windows around the formal entry which are fixed, all the historic units are casements which are a side-hinged windows that swing open like a door. An undated photograph, likely from the 1990s, shows some of these windows in their open position.



Fig.II.188 An undated photograph (ca early 2000s) shows these casement windows in an open position.

The windows in the building are grouped in two configurations. On the front (east) elevation, there are triple sash arrays positioned to either side of the monumental entry. On the north and south sides of the building, there are two double sash pairs.



Fig.II.189 The side elevations have double sash configurations.

The basement mirrors the same pattern, triple sash in front and double pairs along the side. Recall that one window on the south elevation was removed and in-filled for the ADA doorway in the early 2000s. Also, there were three historic windows on the rear of the first floor, maybe five, that were demolished during the creation of the rear addition in the 1990s.



Fig.II.190 The basement openings are smaller and one was converted to a doorway.

While all the windows are casements, their light patterns vary by position. “Lights” are the number of separate panes of glass (real or apparent) that are contained within one sash. The first-floor front windows have eight lights, while all the others have six. Interestingly, two of the historic windows entombed in the rear basement wall have nine lights.



Fig.II.191 One of the historic 9 light windows in the basement.

On the exterior, the windows are set within the brick opening and trimmed with a 2” weather molding. Each window bay has a 5” limestone sill that extends beyond the window box on both sides. A 3” mullion serves as the center post between the sashes.



Fig.II.192 The windows are recessed in the brick wall above a limestone sill.

On the first-floor interior, the windows are positioned at two heights. The front windows are 39 ½” above the floor while the side windows are at 57 ¼”. To Bertram’s point from his 1911 “Notes”, the higher elevation of the side window does allow for more substantial bookshelves below.



Fig.II.193 The window sills are at different heights on the interior.

Although sash dimensions differ between the front and side units, the construction is identical. The bottom rails are 2 ½”, and the top rail and stiles are a 1 3/8”. The center mullion projects 3 5/8” and the cap is 3” wide. The full dimensions for each window are provided in the Appendix Window Survey.



The muntin profiles also reflect the influence of the Arts and Craft style. Muntins are narrow strips that separate and hold individual panes of glass within a window sash. These muntins are slightly blockier at the base than other designs from this era (1” vs. the more common ¾”), but their delicate milled ogee curve and stepped relief provide a sense of visual depth.



Fig.II.194 The muntins (1st floor on left, basement on right) are slightly larger at the base than other Arts and Crafts style profiles.

All the glass is single pane probably 1/8” thick. Much of it is historic, meaning the era’s manufacturing techniques left marks that, under the right lighting conditions and angle of viewing, are still visible. The most prevalent is a wavy appearance, best seen from the side. While this is nearly impossible to capture with a camera, other characteristics were visible. Several of the windows had “pits” in their finish.



Fig.II.195 Some of the glass shows signs of its early manufacturing process. Note the pits in this entry window.

All the original window hardware is intact and operational, even if the windows themselves cannot be opened due to paint buildup. The casement window stay (opener lever) is a simple but elegant mechanical device that was used to open and secure the window at the desired distance.



Fig.II.196 Much of the original hardware is intact and operational.

All the latches are also intact, and spot checks indicate many are fully operational.

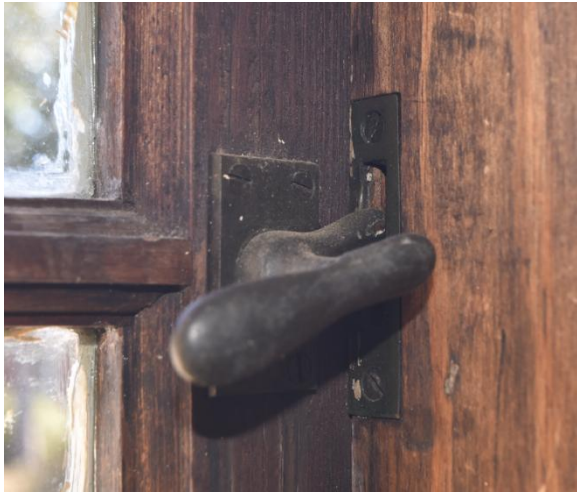


Fig.II.197 Simple latches were used to lock the window in a closed position.

The casing or trim treatment around the windows differs by floor. Upstairs, the windows are encircled by a stool, sill and a picture frame construction made of 4 ½" x 7/8" stock.



Fig.II.198 The windows are cased with unadorned trim.

In the basement, windows in the storage room have no casing treatment while those in the

function room combine the historic sill and jamb with modern trim elements.



Fig.II.199 Windows in northside storage room have no interior trim.



Fig.II.200 Windows in southside function room have a combination of historic elements and modern components. The trim on these windows was "built out" to accommodate the wall board added during renovation.

All the modern windows in the building are vinyl-clad wood with double pane, insulated glazing. All the modern windows are single lights.



Fig.II.201 All the modern windows are vinyl-clad, double glazed, single light configurations.

All but two of the modern windows, the basement units, are casements with hand crank hardware.



Fig.II.202 All but two modern windows are casements with hand crank hardware.

The basement units in the rear are awning windows.



Fig.II.203 Window units in rear of Addition basement are awnings.

Condition of Windows

The historic windows are in good condition meaning their structural integrity and weather sealing functions are sound. However, they do need specific types of maintenance and care. With the exception of the three windows entombed in the back basement, none of the historic windows are presently operational.

This is due to multiple paintings of the seams and hinges.



Fig.II.204 The windows are not operational due to overpainting of seams and hinges.

It should be noted that the basement window on the front (east) elevation were inaccessible (on the exterior) due to the plexiglass storm coverings.



Fig.II.205 Plexiglass storm windows made front basement windows inaccessible for inspection.

② These plastic storm windows can be beneficial for stopping chronic moisture exposure but they also pose risks as water can be trapped inside the void between the window and the plastic cover. Additionally, they negatively impact the historic character of the building.

The structural integrity of the windows is remarkably good. Very little material deterioration or decay was observed on either the interior or exterior sashes or frames. The muntins are also sound and firm on the interior but rust jacking (where an iron residue from a nail or fastener bleeds through a finish)

was observed on many of the exteriors where the muntin is attached to the stile.



Fig.II.206 The window elements have good integrity but rust jacking was noted on several. Note the reddish stain where the muntin meets the stile.

2 Many of the windows are showing failure to their painted finish. It is not yet severe but there were numerous instances where the paint is chipping, alleagoting or flaking.



Fig.II.207 Various types of paint failure was observed.



Fig.II.208 Several windows exhibited large chips or flaking.



Fig.II.209 Some of the damaged areas are exposing the wood below which will lead to rot and deterioration.

The condition of the glazing (putty) is fair to poor. Multiple windowpanes show cracked or missing sections on the outside.



Fig.II. 210 Many windows have failing glazing (putty seal on exterior).

On the interior, many of the windows show sloppily applied silicone caulk which may have been used to seal gaps.



Fig.II.211 Silicone chalk was applied to the interior on many of the windows.

The wood finish on the interior is old and, under close examination, shows some fading, marks of past water invasion, cracking and material separation.



Fig.II.212 Some of the interior wood elements show past damage from water or sun.

A full window survey is provided in the Appendix which details the configuration and condition of every historic window. Maintenance and repair suggestions are detailed in the Treatment Recommendations Section of this report.

Flooring

The flooring in the historic building is a 2 1/2" face tongue and groove. The wood appears to be a species of southern yellow pine and the thickness, though unconfirmed during inspection, is likely a 3/4" (actual) stock.



Fig.II.213 Flooring is a tongue and groove with a 2 1/2" face.

The wood exhibits a tight vertical grain pattern which strongly suggests a quarter or rift sawn milling.



Fig.II.214 Floor uses quarter or rift sawn boards. Note the orientation of the grain.

Quarter and rift sawn lumber is a technique where the log is rotated by quarters to the saw blade when milled. This produces the long grains that run parallel to the edges of the board. Quarter and rift milling is a much less efficient use of the log versus the plain or live sawn approach, so it is more expensive. As such, its use in historic buildings is typically only seen in the public spaces such as flooring.

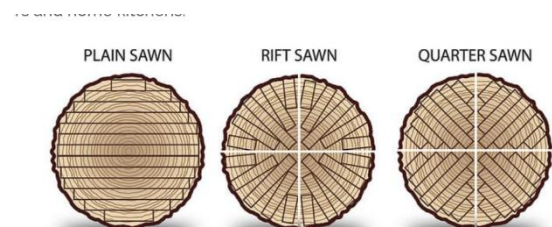


Fig.II.215 How log is oriented to blade for different cuts of wood. <https://www.woodmood.com/quarter-sawn/>

While the color of this wood has been altered (darkened) by the high-gloss polyurethane finish used to protect it, the hue of the wood strongly suggests it was cut from the inner portion of the tree - what's come to be known as "heartwood." This differs from sapwood which tends to be lighter and more susceptible to pests, fungi, and decay.



Fig.II. 216 Wood species appears to be Southern Yellow Pine, possibly "heartwood."

People often refer to evergreen conifers like pine and spruce as "soft wood" which they technically are because they have needles and produce cones whereas hardwoods like oak and walnut typically have leaves and produce nuts or flowers. But not all soft wood is necessarily "soft" to the touch. Southern yellow pine like this flooring has a Janka rating of hardness just below American Cherry which makes it a very hard "soft wood" and a good choice for flooring.



Fig.II.217 Portion of The Janka Hardness Scale. Note southern Yellow Pine is just below cherry. Image: www.familyhandyman.com

The floor in the public area has been refinished (sanded) several times. It has also been patched in several places, most significantly at the top of the main entry stairs where an interior wall once stood.



Fig.II.218 Patching where entry stairway wall once stood.

In addition to the historic wood, the first floor has three other flooring finishes. The main entryway has 5" marble tiles laid between the doorway and main stairs.

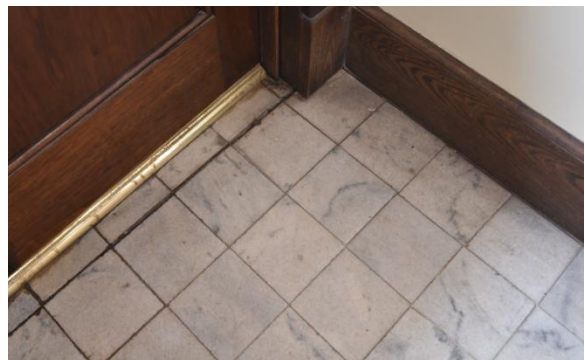


Fig.II. 219 The tile floor in the entry is not historic.

These tiles are not original to the building as the adjacent flooring at the top of the basement stairs appears to have been covered with a self-leveling cement – a relatively new product of the late 20thc. Also, modern materials (pressure treated lumber) were observed below this tile floor which indicates the whole entry may have been rebuilt. Additionally, the seam between these two materials is too unblemished to have been exposed to 111 years of foot traffic.



Fig.II. 220 The lack of visible wear on this heavily travel doorway (to basement) indicates materials are relatively new.

In the book rooms and circulation/office areas, a tight weave synthetic carpet covers a plywood subfloor.



Fig.II.221 A synthetic, polyester carpet covers much of the modern addition floors.

The hallway and bathrooms have 12" x 12" vinyl tiles.



Fig.II.222 The hallway/kitchenette and restrooms have 12" vinyl tiles.

At the bottom of the stairs in the basement, original wood flooring is still visible. This is a

wider dimension than the quarter sawn stock used on the first floor.



Fig.II.223 The floor at the bottom of the basement stairs is historic.

The southside function room, kitchenette and bathroom were refloored in 2015 with floating 5" vinyl planking.



Fig.II. 224 The southside rooms have a vinyl plank covering installed sometime after 2015.

In the storage room, green indoor/outdoor plastic carpeting covers an original, poured concrete slab floor. The thickness of this slab could not be determined during inspection. It is considerably higher (23") than the adjacent stairwell wood floor and even higher than the southside function room which was actually raised when the room was refurbished in 2015. This difference in the floor elevation across the basement is presently an unsolved mystery.



Fig.II. 225 The thickness of the raised concrete floor on the northside basement could not be determined.

One possible explanation is the that builders did not remove all the dirt excavated for the foundation in the northside room and chose instead to simply level and cover it for this non-public space. This makes some sense given how much more dirt would have been moved at this end the building, which is considerably deeper, than the south end where the grade is nearly a foot lower. A set of test holes would be the best way to determine the exact thickness of this slab.

Condition of Floors

The flooring in the public area is in good condition. The quarter sawn boards are well attached to the subfloor and there is little separation along the tongue and groove seams. No areas were felt to be spongy or soft, which would indicate decay in the subfloor below, typically caused by moisture. The polyurethane finish on the floor is still working to protect the surface even if the choice of high gloss finish as opposed to a satin or matte finish, tends to reveal all the scratches and scuffs.

- ② The marble tile in the entry has suffered in the southeast corner due to water invasion from the stoop outside. The grout here has been extensively damaged and several tiles have settled suggesting damage to the

substrate

below.



Fig.II.226 Note the damage grout and lowered tiles due to repeated water exposure.

Stairs

The building has four stairways. Two are on the exterior and two are in the interior.

Exterior Entry Stairs

The main entry stairs on the east elevation are limestone blocks with a rise of 7 ¼" and a run (tread width) of 12". The overall stairway is 10'2" wide, between the cheek walls, and 36 ¼" high from sidewalk to stoop. The stairway has two no-historic iron handrails that rise 36" above the treads.

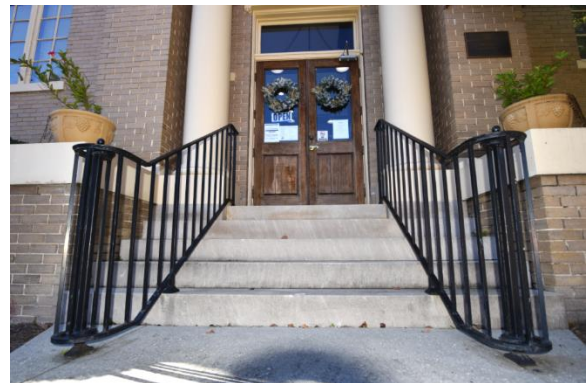


Fig.II.227 Main entry stairs are limestone slabs with a rise of 7 1/4" and a run of 12".

There is a 2' landing at top of the stairway which is finished in 5 ½" travertine style tiles.



Fig.II.228 The top stair landing is finished with non-historic tiles.

The other exterior stairway is located at the rear of the building. It ascends to a first-floor covered deck which is also served by a mechanical wheelchair lift.



Fig.II.229 The rear stairway and lift were added sometime after 1993, likely as part of the ADA ramp project.

Interior Entry Stairs

The interior main entry stairs are constructed of wood. They rise 43 ½" to the main floor and are 5'9" wide. The rise is 7" per step and the run 11 ¼" per tread.



Fig.II. 230 Evidence suggests these stairs are not the building's original stairs.

Several observations about these stairs strongly suggest they do not date from the building's construction. First and most significantly, they do not exhibit the kind of wear associated with the building's age. It would be customary to see rounded divots or depressions, particularly in the center.

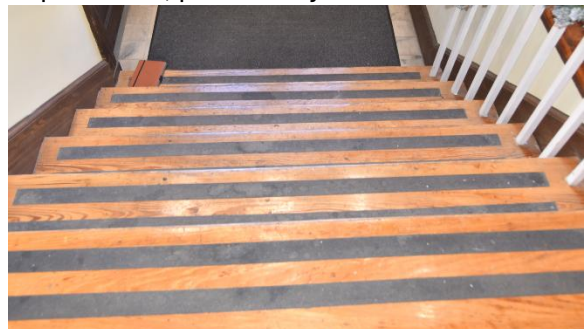


Fig.II.231 These treads do not show the appropriate wear for a building of this age.

Additionally, the fit of the skirt board, on the side of the stairs, is very poor. This is not consistent with the quality of much of the original woodwork in the building. Even today this gap would not be acceptable on a public, high profile project.



Fig.II.232 The gap (red arrows) between the skirt and the tread is not consistent with the workmanship exhibited in other historic elements.

Basement Stairs

The stairway to the basement has a rise of 7" and a run of 11 ½" per tread.

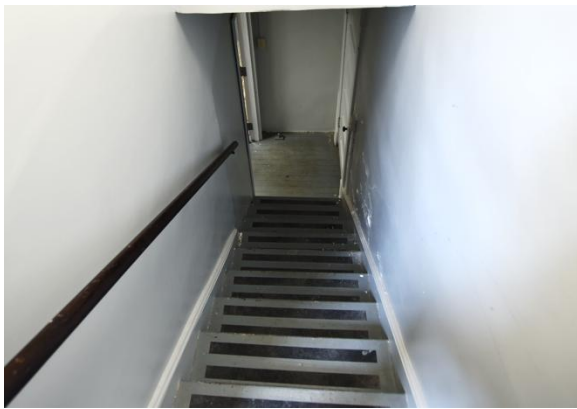


Fig.II.233 The basement stairs appear to be original to the building but have been modified at the bottom.

These stairs appear to be original, but some modifications were noted, particularly in the lower section. Four risers up from the bottom is evidence of a notch that may have once held a newel post. This spot aligns with the arch entry detail (noted in the interior wall section of this report).



Fig.II.234 Evidence of a notch, perhaps for a newel post that was originally anchored at this spot.

Condition of Stairs

All the stairs are in good condition. The main entryway stairs emit a lot of creaking sounds when used and this may indicate the underlying stringers, which were not accessible for inspection, are aging and/or, the fasteners (nails) are loosening.

Electrical

The building has received several electrical upgrades since its construction. The Sanborn Insurance Map notes the building was listed in 1916 as having "lights: electric."

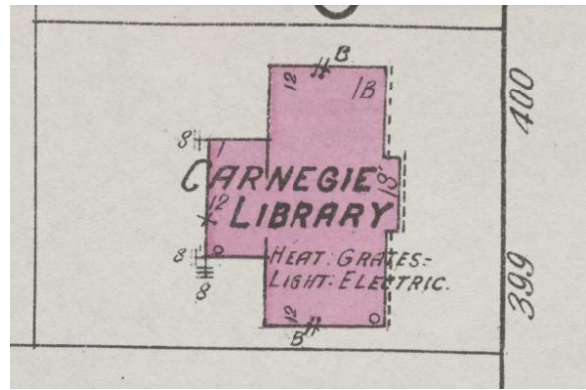


Fig.II.235 Enlargement: 1916 Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps lists "lights-electric" which suggests building was constructed with electricity.

Much of this original wiring is still visible in the attic and its location strongly suggests it was installed as the building was constructed, not after.



Fig.II.236 Evidence of original knob and tube wiring is found throughout the attic.

At present, the library receives its electrical service from a utility pole situated along South Main Street.



Fig.II.237 Electrical service for the building comes from a utility pole along S. Main Street. The line travels underground through a conduit to the northeast corner of the building.

A conduit down the pole indicates a buried service line which emerges at the northeast corner of the building at the meter base.



Fig.II. 238 Electrical meter in northeast corner of building.

On the interior, the service is enclosed in a conduit which wraps around the basement ceiling and leads to the main service panel located in the librarian's office.



Fig.II 239 Main electrical panel is located in the librarian's office along segment of west wall.

The main breaker (master shutoff) in the panel indicates there are 250 amps of service.



Fig.II.240 Main break indicates 250 amps of service in the building.

The panel is a conventional Square D enclosure manufactured in November of 1992. There are thirty-two branch circuits with most rated for 20 amps and two pairs (for the HVAC) rated at 40 and 50 amps. The panel has at least five open slots.



Fig.II.241 Interior view of panel and circuits breakers.

The building appears to be mostly wired with plastic coated, NM-Cable, meaning non-metallic sheathed. In the attic, many of the cable runs were haphazard and not consistently fastened to framing members.

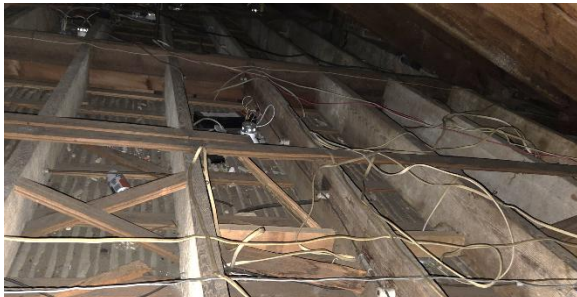


Fig.II.242 Cabling in attic is haphazard and inconsistently anchored.

In the modern addition basement, several runs of BX or MC cable were observed.



Fig.II. 243 There was limited use of BX/MC cable observed in the building.

The lighting in the building is a combination of modern fixtures and historic reproductions.

The main reading areas are primarily illuminated with high intensity discharge (HID) metal halide lights.



Fig.II. 244 High intensity discharge fixtures light the main reading areas.

This lighting is supplemented by hanging historic reproductions with either two or three blub arrangements.



Fig.II.245 Supplemental lighting in the main reading areas comes from historic reproductions with two and three blub configurations.

All the rooms in the 1990s Addition with drop ceilings are illuminated with conventional fluorescent fixtures.



Fig.II.246 Fluorescent fixtures are used throughout the 1990s Addition.

Condition of Electric

The electric service in this building appears to be up to code and operating properly but there are three small issues that should be addressed.

❶ In the attic, most of the upgraded HID lights were not completely enclosed and properly installed. Many show open ballast junction boxes with the wiring exposed and not properly nestled in the housing. This presents a risk to passersby, albeit few humans go into the attic but, perhaps, more relevant, could be impacted by inquisitive or hungry squirrels. Although no animals of any kind were observed in the attic, there is evidence of past infestation. Should this reoccur, squirrels can sometimes nibble on the plastic coating of wires as a source of food. Should this happen, these exposed wires could present a risk of shorting and causing a fire. All these ballast units should be inspected and properly sealed.



Fig.II.247 Many of the junction boxes on the HID ballasts are not properly covered.

❷ It was observed that the lower left corner of the main panel cover is loose.



Fig.II.248 The lower portion of the main panel cover is loose.

❸ Finally, in the attic there is a very worn wire that should be protected. Attached to the northern carrying beam is a section of wire that has lost its plastic coating. This piece of wire is right at the small entry to the attic so everybody who crawls through the restricted opening has put their foot on this cable. This wear has removed the other layer of protection but has not, as yet, exposed the actual copper lines. A licensed electrician will know how to remedy this risk with a minimum of effort.



Fig.II.249 A small section of plastic-coated wire, located just inside the entrance to the historic attic, has worn away.

HVAC

The building has two heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems. The smaller system, serving the 1993 Addition rooms, consists of a Trane/American Standard 2.5-ton, 7.5 kw air handler which is in the southeast corner of the historic basement. It

is electrically powered (as opposed to gas fired).



Fig.II.250 a 2.5-ton air handler cools the basement and rear rooms upstairs.

It was manufactured in November of 2004 and likely installed soon thereafter.

American Standard, Inc.
The Trane Company
Tyler, TX 75711-9010

Assembled in USA

TWG030A140B1 4463N4M6V 1/4 2.00 208-230 1 Ph 60 Hz

MODEL NO. SERIAL NO. MOTOR H.P. F.L. AMPS VOLTS
FACTORY INSTALLED MAY BE FIELD INSTALLED

ELECTRIC HEATER-208 OR 240V, 60Hz, 1PH OR 3PH
REFRIGERANT 22 OR 410A ONLY DESIGN PRESSURE 480 PSI
UNLESS INDICATED "NA" ANY ONE OF THE FOLLOWING HEATERS MAY BE INSTALLED IN THIS UNIT. INSTALLER MUST MARK ONE APPROPRIATE BLOCK IN COLUMN A

MFR DATE 11/2004

A	TRANE HEATER MODEL	SUPPLY VOLTS	PHASE	KW	HEATER AMPS	MIN. BRANCH CIRCUIT AMPACITY	MAXIMUM OVERCURRENT DEVICE	MINIMUM HEATING BLOWER SPEED WITHOUT HEAT PUMP	WITH HEAT PUMP
	NONE					2.5	15		
	BAYHTR1405++	208	1	3.60	17.3	24	25	LOW	LOW
	BAYHTR1408++	240	1	4.80	20	28	30		
	BAYHTR1408++	208	1	5.76	27.7	37	40	LOW	LOW
	BAYHTR1410++	240	1	7.68	32	43	45		
	BAYHTR1410++	208	1	7.20	34.6	46	50	LOW	LOW
	BAYHTR3410000	240	1	9.60	40	53	60		
	BAYHTR3410000	208	3	7.20	30	37	40	LOW	LOW
	BAYHTR3415000	240	3	9.60	34.6	43	45		
	BAYHTR3415000	208	3	11.53	33.1	43	45	LOW	MED
	CIRCUIT 1	240	1	15.36	38.2	50	60		
	BAYHTR1415++	208	1	7.20	34.6	46	50		
	CIRCUIT 2	240	1	9.60	40	53	60	LOW	MED
	CIRCUIT 2	208	1	4.33	20.8	26	30		
	CIRCUIT 2	240	1	5.76	24	30	30		

Note: Heater model number may have additional suffix digits
"+++" = 000, BRK, RBR, PDC, RPD

CAUTION: WHEN HEATER MODELS WITH POWER DISCONNECT ARE INSTALLED USE ONLY 240/208 VOLT SUPPLY CIRCUITS WITH 120 VOLTS TO GROUND (NOMINAL). FOR FIELD CONNECTIONS USE COPPER CONDUCTORS ONLY.

Fig.II.251 The spec tag for the 2.5-ton air handler.

This air handler connects to a compressor unit located outside the building's west wall.



This compressor unit was also manufactured in 2004.

XR 11 MFR DATE 11/2004

MOD. NO. 2TWR1030A1000AB VOLTS 200/230
SERIAL NO. 4472WL54F PH 1 HZ 60
MINIMUM CIRCUIT AMPACITY 18.0 AMPS
OVERCURRENT PROTECTIVE DEVICE USA CANADA
MIN FUSE / BREAKER (HACR) 30 30
MAX FUSE / BREAKER (HACR) 30 30
HCFC - 22 4 LBS. 09 OZ. OR 2.07 kg(SI)
BAYFCCV 069A REQUIRED INDOORS FOR RATED PERFORMANCE
ClimateTuff DuraTuff Spine Fin Quick-Sess Weathertron

TRANE, A BUSINESS OF AMERICAN STANDARD LISTED SECTION OF HEAT PUMP
TYLER, TX 75707 ASSEMBLED IN USA 23MF OUTDOOR USE

COMPR. MOT. 13.6 RLA 200/230 V 73 LRA
O.D. MOT. 1.30 FLA 200/230 V 1/4 HP
M.E.A. NO. F.I.D. C20
DESIGN PSI - HIGH 300 LOW 300

CERTIFICATION CERTIFIED TO ANSI/ASHRAE 90.1-2005
CERTIFICATION APPLIES ONLY WHEN THE COMPLETE SYSTEM IS LISTED WITH ARI

Fig.II.252 Spec. tag for air compressor.

As noted earlier in this report, the hole for the mechanical lines passing through the foundation is open and needs patching.

The other HVAC unit serves the main public reading areas. The air handler is located in the crawl space above the young adults reading room. It is a 5-ton, multi-position unit manufactured in July of 2021 by International Comfort Products.



Fig.II.253 5-ton air handler located above young adult reading room.



Fig.II.255 Compressor for 5-ton system.

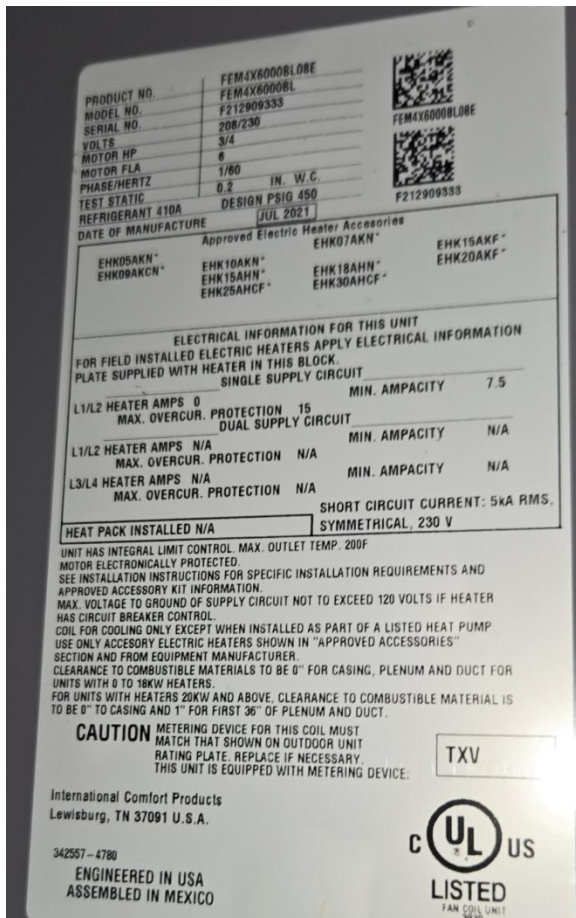


Fig.II.254 Spec. tag for 5-ton handler.

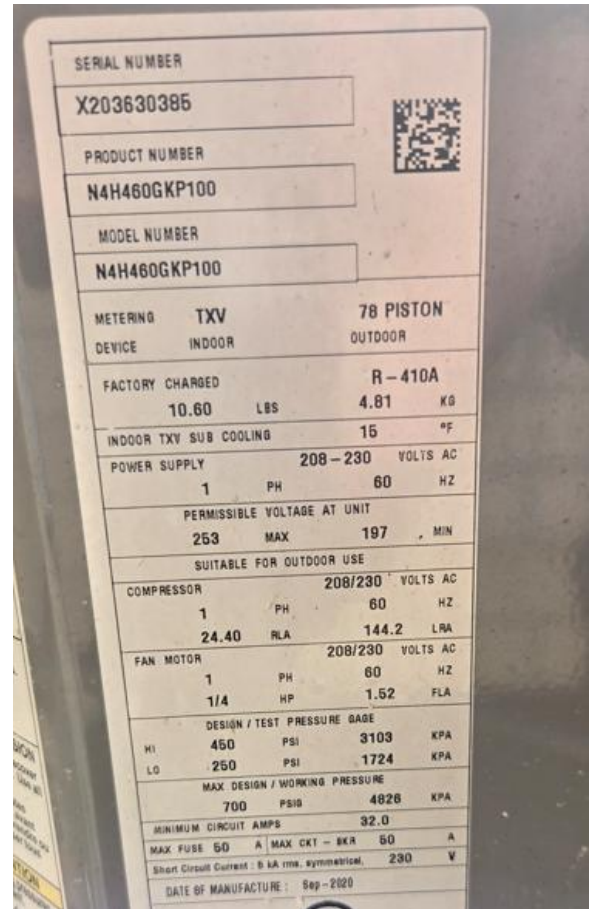


Fig.II.256 Spec. tag for 5-ton compressor.

These heating and cooling units deliver air to the building through a network of both hard pipe and flexible ducts. Most of these ducts appear to be insulated.

The compressor for this system is also located outside the west wall. It was manufactured in 2021.



Fig.II.257 Air supply duct located in the historic attic.

The ducts terminate at the ceiling or wall plane where registers direct the air into or return it from the space.



Fig.II.258 An air return duct for the larger HVAC system.

Plumbing

The building has a modern plumbing system consisting of three half restrooms and three kitchenettes. The total fixtures served by the system are three low-flow toilets and six sinks. All the waste and vent lines are PVC. All the hot and cold supply lines are copper and most appear to be insulated.



Fig.II.259 Waste lines are PVC and supply lines are copper, nicely insulated in most places.

There is a 30-gallon electric hot water tank in the rear section of the basement.



Fig.II.260 30-gallon hot water heater in basement.

One remnant of the building's original heating and plumbing system is an old copper holding tank in the basement next to the original stack. This is an artifact from a different era and should be left intact as a reminder of the building's origins.



Fig.II.261 The antique hot water tank and plumbing stack are remnants of the original systems.

Condition of Plumbing

③ The condition of the plumbing in the building appears to be excellent. One area needing attention is outside at the municipal service hook-up. The below ground meter

enclosure is filled in with dirt and debris and the main shut-off is inaccessible. This should be cleaned out.



Fig.II.262 Water main hook-up inaccessible due to accumulated dirt and debris.

Section III: Treatment and Use

This building has seen near constant use since it opened in fall of 1914. It has served thousands of patrons, hundreds of school groups, and hosted untold number of events in the basement. By the most conservative of calculations (111 years x 250 days of operation per/year x 8 ppl p/dy.), over 220,000 people have ascended those steps in search of a book, some help with research or a moment of solitude.

To serve this use, the building has evolved, inside and out. The addition of new walls, new rooms, new doorways and new services reflects the value and purpose this structure holds for its community. At the same time, the building has also aged. Joists have sagged, mortar has decayed, windows no longer operate, and repairs have been made for better or worse.

To plot a course forward, the building stewards must identify their ultimate objective for the structure. This decision will turn on a myriad of factors but ultimately boils down to their willingness and capacity to maintain the building and preserve its

services. Conversations to date indicate a strong desire, as does the commissioning of this report, to preserve the building and continue its services to the community.

In light of the fact that the library is on the National Register of Historic Places as a contributing structure in the Boston Historic District, and it is culturally significant as one of the few remaining Carnegie Libraries in Georgia still serving the general public, guidance about how to approach the future can be found *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties* (36 CFR Part 68, 1995). These standards provide a guiding framework for how historic buildings like the library should be treated. They ensure that any repair, alterations, or new work respects the property's historic character. The *Standards* emphasize the importance of retaining original materials and character-defining features wherever possible. They also offer practical directions for making necessary updates in a way that does not diminish a building's integrity but ensures it will remain both functional and authentic for future generations.

The Secretary of Interior's Standards are widely used by preservation professionals, state agencies, and federal programs, and serve as the common language and benchmark for assessing appropriate treatment options. The Standards are advisory, not regulatory but adherence to them is critical for projects reviewed for tax incentives, federal and state grants, and regulatory compliance. Some private foundations also view the Standards as critical for responsible stewardship.

In evaluating next steps for the Boston Carnegie Library, the *SOI Standards* provide guidance on four different approaches. Identifying which approach best matches the Stewards objectives for the building is a critical first step in planning for the future. The

full guidelines can be accessed [here](#) but a brief description of each is provided below.

Preservation is the act or process of preserving the building in its existing form. Measures to protect and stabilize the property concentrate on regular maintenance and repair of historic materials. This can include the sensitive upgrading of mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems and other code-required work to make properties functional. New exterior additions and interior adaptation are not within the scope of this treatment. The Standards for Preservation require retention of the greatest amount of historic fabric along with the building's historic form.

Rehabilitation is the process of making possible a compatible use for a property through repair, alterations, and additions while preserving those portions or features which convey its historical, cultural, or architectural values. The Rehabilitation Standards acknowledge the need to alter or add to a historic building to meet continuing or new uses while retaining the building's historic character.

Restoration is defined as the act or process of accurately depicting the form, features, and character of a property as it appeared at a particular period of time (known as "the period of significance") by means of the removal of features from other periods in its history and reconstruction of missing features from the restoration period. The limited and sensitive upgrading of mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems and other code-required work to make properties functional is appropriate within a restoration project. The Restoration Standards allow for the depiction of a building at a particular time in its history by preserving materials, features, finishes, and spaces from its period of significance and removing those from other periods.

Reconstruction is defined as the act or process of depicting, by means of new construction, the form, features, and detailing of a non-surviving site, landscape, building, structure, or object for the purpose of replicating its appearance at a specific period of time and in its historic location. The Reconstruction Standards establish a limited framework for recreating a vanished or non-surviving building with new materials, primarily for interpretive purposes.

Selecting a Treatment Approach

Not all the Secretary of the Interiors approaches are applicable in all cases. Only the Stewards of this building can decide which approach best suits their long-term objectives. In most cases, a project adopts one approach. The following observations about which approach may best suit Boston Carnegie Library are designed to aid that conversation.

Reconstruction

The historic building is intact and operational, so *Reconstruction* is unwarranted and unnecessary.

Rehabilitation

The stewards have conveyed that the library will continue its primary function as a provider of books, resources and public use space for the community. While some discussion has turned on adapting one of the basement rooms to serve greater uses, there is no proposal to adapt the entire structure to an alternative use. Therefore, a Rehabilitation approach is not applicable.

Restoration

A *Restoration* approach could be considered but there are challenges. In the National Register nomination for The Boston District (approved in 2007), of which the library is a contributing structure, the years of significance are 1860-1956. This period pre-dates all the known modifications of the

building. To restore the library to this period of significance would require the removal of all non-historic elements – like the 1993 addition and the ADA ramp access. In consequence, this would seriously impact how the building serves its community. Furthermore, at this time, there are no floor plans or photographs that illustrate precisely how the rear of the original structure was configured. It cannot be authoritatively documented, for example, what the exterior wall treatment was on the rear of the building or even, exactly, how the interior was divided. This uncertainty would cloud the effort. For these reasons, the *Restoration* approach seems impractical.

Preservation

Preserving the structure in its existing configuration is the most practical approach for The Boston Carnegie Library. As detailed in the *SOI Standards*, preservation is about stabilization, limited and sensitive upgrades and protection of historic materials. These objectives can be achieved without negatively impacting how the building functions for the public.

The specific standards of a Preservation Treatment approach are detailed below.

Standards for Preservation

1. A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that maximizes the retention of distinctive materials, features, spaces and spatial relationships. Where treatment and use have not been identified, a property will be protected and, if necessary, stabilized until additional work may be undertaken.
2. The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The replacement of intact or repairable historic materials or alteration of features, spaces and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.
3. Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place and use.

Work needed to stabilize, consolidate and conserve existing historic materials and features will be physically and visually compatible, identifiable upon close inspection and properly documented for future research.

4. Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved.
5. Distinctive materials, features, finishes and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.
6. The existing condition of historic features will be evaluated to decide the appropriate level of intervention needed. Where the severity of deterioration requires repair or limited replacement of a distinctive feature, the new material will match the old in composition, design, color and texture.
7. Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.
8. Archeological resources will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.

A note about compliance with *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*. These standards are regulatory only for projects receiving historic preservation funding from federal or state sources. Private grant-making entities may also dictate compliance. In other cases, the *Standards* are intended as general guidance and are seen as representing best practice in the field. At the same time, the fact that the Boston Carnegie Library is part of *an existing historic district recognized by the National Register of Historic Places*, strongly encourages a self-regulatory responsibility toward these Standards.

Alterations and Code Compliance

In addition to the SOI *Standards* noted above, any alterations being considered for the Boston Carnegie Library could also be impacted by a variety of state and local building codes. Only an architect licensed in the State of Georgia can properly address these specific requirements but some general considerations pertinent to planning and code compliance are listed below.

ADA Compliance: The Americans with Disabilities Act (1990) requires every public building to make “readily achievable” accommodations for people with disabilities. The Act has been updated numerous times and definitions have broadened but ADA Title III regulations ([28 C.F.R. Section 36.304.](#)) specifically applies to existing structures such as the Library. If the library is maintained in its current configuration and no alterations are made to the northside basement room, then the building is likely in full compliance. If, however, plans are being considered to adapt this storage area to a more versatile public space, the following considerations should be kept in mind. A licensed architect can explain these issues in greater detail.

- **Building Access:** In order to make the north side of the basement accessible to all patrons, a new point of egress would need to be created that can accommodate wheelchairs. Since the finish floor height in the basement would be below grade, a ramp with a pitch no greater than 1:12 would also be required.
- **Doorways** – This new access point would need to have doorways no less than 36” in width. The old exterior doorway into this space currently only measures 30.”
- **Additional ADA compliant bathroom** could be required if access to existing basement bathroom on south side, which

is compliant, is not feasible due to different finished floor heights.

Building Codes: Code compliance for historic buildings is a delicate and complicated issue. The community’s need for a safe environment as expressed in building codes can collide with preserving key elements of a building’s historic significance. While the City of Boston has adopted the International Existing Building Code (IEBC), which alleviates some of the uncertainty, every community and historic structure is unique. A general rule of thumb concerning modern building codes and historic preservation is that the greater alterations, the higher the compliance threshold.

In the specific circumstance of the Carnegie Library, its inclusion in the Boston Historic District, a designation established by the National Register of Historic Places in 2007, qualifies it as an officially sanctioned historic structure. As such, several adopted codes in State of Georgia could favorably impact alterations of the structure.

Each of the citations listed below details how historic building compliance can be balanced with ameliorating “life safety hazards.”

- International Code Council (ICC) Chapter 34, Section 3401 Existing Buildings and Structures
- International Fire Code (IFC) Chapter 1, Section 102
- International Existing Building Code (IEBC) Section 308-1
- National Fire Protection Association (NFPA 101) Section 4.6.4

Since the Library was purpose-built as a library and has served in that function throughout its years of operation, the issue of “change of occupancy” which are the circumstances where a historic structure is significantly modified from its original purpose, would not apply since the anticipated future use of the building would be identical to its historic use.

Treatment Recommendations Matrix

The following recommendations focus on preserving the building's historically noteworthy features in ways that maintain its connection to the past, its historic setting, and the conservation of its historic materials. Whenever possible, the building's historic surfaces and configurations should be protected, and preserved.

A key part of the *Secretary's Standards for Preservation* dictates that any modifications to the historic structure be made in such a way that the "new" is clearly distinguishable from the "old." That means no faux historic touches are added or historic elements from other structures are incorporated because they "look good." The Addition constructed in 1993 adheres to this guideline because its mass, fixtures and finishes are clearly distinguished from the historic elements. Additionally, when modifications or repairs are needed, they should be made in such a way as to be visually compatible and identifiable under close inspection. Finally, wherever possible, modifications should be reversible without damaging the original historic elements.

The table on the following page presents a prioritize list of the recommendations for the Boston Carnegie Library.

All the treatment recommendations are organized as either;

- ① Priority 1 – Critical (Immediate or as soon as possible) Items in this category require immediate action recommended within two years.
- ② Priority 2 – Necessary (Two -five years) Items in this category are not yet critical but require prompt attention.
- ③ Priority 3 – Recommended (Five+ years) Items in this category represent a necessary but longer-term improvement to restore original conditions.

The \$ symbol is relative, not absolute. Its inclusion is meant to identify the most expensive tasks versus the less expensive one.

Boston Carnegie Library HSR

Treatment Recommendation Matrix

Rating	Recommended Treatment	Considerations	Objective	Relative cost
①	Re-direct and re-route ground drainage systems at corners of east elevation.	This may also be the source of the water damage on the basement stairwell wall.	Alter drainage flow by removing barriers.	\$\$\$\$
①	Level entry stoop and repair threshold to stop water infiltration and leak into basement.	Portions of gypsum walls in basement will need replacement	Stop chronic leak damaging floor and basement walls.	\$\$
①	Patch HVAC mechanical holes on west elevation.	Do not use spray foam.	Close opening in exterior wall	\$
①	Clean gutters and replace/extend downspout elbows	Adding flexible ground spouts to downspouts at rear will help move water off concrete apron and slow erosion	Stop water erosion from undermining the concrete apron.	\$
①	Remove two trees at front of building and one in rear.	The crape myrtle and Glossy Privet (at front) are stressing the building.	Remove obstacles to evaporation and/or danger of blow-down.	\$\$\$
①	Properly protect worn cable just inside crawl way to historic attic.	Could be done in conjunction with properly closing ballast junction boxes in historic attic.	Protect against accidental shorts.	\$
①	Properly close ballast junction boxes on HID lights in historic attic.	Open wires present risk of short circuit.	Protect against accidental shorts	\$
①/②	Make windows operational through restorative care on the historic wood sashes.	Clean, scape, patch, re-glaze and paint as conditions dictate.	Minimum treatment: scape, prep and repaint exteriors	\$\$\$
②	Repoint/repair failing mortar joints on historic building exterior walls.	See appendix for detailed areas on each elevation.	Make joints watertight, repair damages, match historic mortar	\$\$\$\$
②	Replace plexiglass storms on basement windows with low-profile inset storm windows.	Inspect integrity of woodwork	Restore historic appearance of basement windows.	\$\$
②	Evaluate and determine cause of crack above and below window on interior basement wall (north side).	Seek evaluation from preservation mason or preservation engineer	Assess if failure in the mortar on adjacent water table is related.	\$

Boston Carnegie Library HSR

②	Inspect, reset, regROUT tile on stairway entry floor.	Part of the repair of the exterior entryway stoop.	Safety issue as tiles become loose.	\$\$
②	Restore/Refinish exterior of front entry doors	Properly prep and refinish with exterior rated stain.	Preserve health of door.	\$
②	Restore/Refinish exterior of rear door to porch	Properly prep and refinish with exterior rated stain.	Preserve health of door.	\$
②	Replace flush pin lock on interior of main entry door.	Will need matching sized mechanism.	Make door operational	\$
②	Secure lower left corner of main electrical panel cover	Wall anchor appears stripped	Safety measure	\$
②	Remove aged fences on north and west property line	Fences serve no purpose and are falling apart. Neither is historic.	Restore historic sight lines of building	\$\$
③	Clean organic moisture stains on lower section of north and west elevation.	Use non-acid cleaner. No power washing.	See guidelines in Treatment section of report	\$
③	Clean fireplaces with non-abrasive/non-acidic cleaner	Use product like D-2 mixed with water. See guidelines in appendix	Not seeking "Like new" appearance, just removal of accumulated stains and dirt.	\$

Specific Recommendations - Details

Reroute ground drains on east elevation.

On the east side of the Boston Carnegie Library, rainwater from the downspouts is being discharged too close to the building, and the landscape grading does not carry that water away. The shallow slope, misaligned ground drains, and nearby hardscape elements—particularly the sidewalk at the northeast corner and the ADA ramp and retaining wall at the southeast corner—trap runoff and allow it to pool against the foundation. This repeated exposure is pushing moisture into the brick at and below grade, causing conditions like spalling brick, efflorescence, and even fracturing of the retaining wall, as documented in the report. Moisture readings taken on the interior side of the wall confirm that water is migrating inward, maybe as far as the stairway. Unless the drains are repositioned and extended so water can clear the building footprint, this ongoing saturation will continue to damage both historic masonry and adjacent structural elements.

Repair Front Entry Leak

A chronic leak at the main entrance is allowing rainwater to collect against the front threshold and work its way into the building. Because the stoop slopes inward toward the door, rainwater pools against the threshold and then flows beneath it, settling on the interior floor. From there, the water seeps downward through the subfloor and into the brick and wall cavity below, which is why rust-colored stains and damaged gypsum board appear on the basement's east wall. Although moisture readings during inspection were low, this was likely due to dry weather; the pattern of staining and damaged grout shows the leak has been active for a long time. Unless the slope of the entry is corrected and the interior flooring evaluated, water will continue to infiltrate the wall system and worsen deterioration.

Remove softscape elements (foliage) that threaten or obscure the building.

Two of the trees on the east side of the building are limiting moisture evaporation and obscuring a full view of the historic structure. The larger one, at the corner, is depositing organic debris in the roof gutter. It is strongly recommended that both these trees be removed.



III. 1 Removal of the crape myrtle and Glossy Privet is recommended. III. 2 Removal of these shrubs would improve access.

In the southwest corner of the lot, it is recommended that the dead tree be removed since its fall path could impact the rear of the library. This area of the property would also benefit from the removal of the secondary growth at ground level.

At the northwest corner of the lot, thought should be given to removing the mature shrubs which dominate this corner of the property and limit access at this corner of the building.

Removing all of these softscape elements would dramatically restore the appearance of the building and recapture its sight lines from the street.

Repoint the historic exterior brick walls.

Note: The appendix contains annotated images for each elevation of the historic building showing areas of damaged mortar.

Repointing is the process of removing deteriorated or loose mortar from the joints of a historic brick wall and replacing it with new mortar that matches the original composition, color, texture, and hardness. Most brick buildings constructed before the 1930s, including the Boston Carnegie Library, used lime-based mortars, which are softer and more flexible than modern Portland cement. Because these old mortars were designed to expand, contract, and “breathe” with the building, any new mortar must be no harder or denser than the original, or it can trap moisture and cause the brick to crack or spall. This principle—matching historic mortar in strength and permeability—is central to best practice as defined by the National Park Service and The National Center for Preservation Technology.

A proper repointing project begins with a close inspection to determine where mortar has failed. Only the deteriorated joints are removed, typically by hand tools, to avoid damaging the brick. The joints are then cleaned, dampened, and refilled with new, compatible mortar placed in layers and finished to match the historic joint profile. When performed correctly, repointing keeps water out of the wall, allows the masonry to dry properly, and can add decades of life to the building.

Cost and time are significant considerations. Repointing is labor-intensive, especially when done correctly with hand tools, and can cost more than many owners expect. Typical prices for historic masonry repointing range from \$12–\$25 per square foot, depending on accessibility, severity of deterioration, and the need for specialty mortar matching which this building will require. Complex areas like the portico can cost more. For an average historic building, a partial repointing project might take a few days to several weeks, while a full elevation repointing campaign, meaning the whole side of a building, can extend to multiple months.

Restore the building’s historic windows.

Note: The appendix contains a full window survey which details key dimensions and conditions for each window.

Historic window restoration is the process of repairing and renewing original wood windows so they continue to function as intended while preserving the architectural character of the building. Unlike

modern replacement units, historic windows were made from dense, old-growth lumber and assembled with repairable joinery, which means they are far more durable and maintainable than most modern alternatives. The goal of restoration is not to replace original fabric, but to stabilize, repair, and return existing sash, frames, glazing, and hardware to good working order.

Many issues common to historic windows—such as peeling paint, loose glazing putty, minor wood decay, worn hardware, or sashes that no longer opens smoothly—can be addressed using traditional repair methods. Work usually includes gentle paint removal, epoxy consolidation of soft wood, if necessary, selective dutchman repairs which are precise wood replacement, new glazing putty, weatherstripping upgrades, and hardware cleaning and lubrication. When finished, restored historic windows perform extremely well, especially when paired with storm panels or interior air sealing.

The windows in this building remain fundamentally sound and repairable, retaining their original wood fabric, profiles, and multi-light configuration. The issues observed—such as failing paint, cracked glazing, and some areas of minor deterioration—are typical for a building of this age and can be corrected through standard preservation practice. Restoration here is less about reconstructing damaged components and more about routine conservation and careful maintenance to extend the life of the building's character-defining fenestration. Well-executed window restoration protects historic materials, improves energy performance, and maintains the authentic appearance of the library's Classical Revival façade. With proper care, the existing wood windows at the Boston Carnegie Library can continue to serve the building reliably for decades to come.

Replace plexiglass storm windows with low profile storm windows on basement windows.

The existing Plexiglass covers, while offering some protection, also create a situation where water can be trapped within the window cavity resulting in decay of the wood sash and frames. This may already be transpiring but could not be determined during inspection.

A preservation-minded alternative is to install low profile storm windows on the basement floor windows. Low-profile storm windows are unobtrusive protective panels designed to improve the energy performance of historic buildings while preserving their original architectural character. Unlike bulky exterior storms that can obscure historic sash profiles or alter the appearance of a façade, low-profile units are built with narrow, minimal frames and are typically installed inside the existing window opening, either as interior storms or as carefully fitted exterior panels that sit flush with the historic casing. They provide a significant boost in thermal efficiency—reducing drafts, improving comfort, and protecting original wood sashes from weather exposure—without covering or visually competing with the building's historic windows. When properly selected and installed, low-profile storm windows are reversible, visually discreet, and fully compatible with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards, making them a practical way to enhance performance while retaining the defining character of historic fenestration.

Remove fences

All the fence structures on the property are in poor condition and should be removed. The one on the northern boundary obscures the historic sight lines of the building and the sharp dog leg turn at the end limits access to property's rear. This may have been done to deliberately shield access to

the mechanical lift but visually this fence damages the historic character of the structure. Its permanent removal is recommended.



North Basement Wall Window Leak

This leak needs to be checked during or immediately after a heavy rain event to determine if it is active or dormant. If active, a mason can properly seal the area with historically appropriate techniques and materials.



Fix/Refinish entry door

The building's front doors need refinishing. At the time of inspection, the flush floor latch (on the south door) was not operational.

Patch Foundation Holes

Two sizable holes in the lower southwest section of the west elevation are allowing direct access into the basement wall cavity. Although this section of foundation is part of a later addition and not historic, the openings are large enough for reptiles, rodents, and moisture to enter, creating both a maintenance and preservation concern. Left unpatched, these gaps will continue to admit pests and allow uncontrolled airflow and moisture into the basement, potentially affecting adjacent historic materials. Proper repair requires a compatible cementitious or epoxy-based patching compound formulated for historic masonry—not spray foam—to ensure the repaired area bonds correctly and performs similarly to the surrounding material.

Replace downspout elbow

The rear downspout on the south side of the historic building is missing an elbow. This is permitting water to flow below grade along the exterior wall. An elbow with a small extension should be re-installed.

Secure electrical panel housing

The main electrical service panel in the librarian office is unsecured at the bottom. This should be properly reattached by a licensed electrician.



Properly close light fixture junction boxes

Most of the ballast junction boxes installed for the updated ceiling lighting were left open and not properly closed.



Although this is not an immediate risk, the exposed wiring here could be impacted by inquisitive squirrels who are known to chew on wire coating. Although no squirrels were observed in the attic during inspection, it is strongly recommended that all these boxes be properly packed and closed.

Suggested: Install K gutters on drip edge roofs

Install K style gutters (and downspouts) on the areas of the roof currently drained by drip edge.



This will greatly diminish the rising moisture stains on the lower portions of the masonry walls.

Suggested: Extend condensate drain line on HVAC units

The existing lines just clear the foundation openings. A small extension away from the building will limit water accumulation in this area.

Clean the fireplaces

The fireplaces need a material sensitive cleaning. This should be done with lightest, gentlest methods capable of removing soot, dirt, and loose deposits without damaging the underlying stone or brick.

For these fireplaces, which are a combination of limestone and ironspot brick, the best approach must account for the differing properties of these two materials. Limestone is a soft, porous, calcareous stone that can be etched or dissolved by acids, while ironspot brick has a harder, vitrified surface that can tolerate slightly more cleaning but is still vulnerable to abrasion and over-wetting.

The process begins with dry cleaning, using natural-bristle brushes or a HEPA vacuum fitted with a soft brush to remove loose soot and ash. This step alone often improves appearance significantly and avoids unnecessary moisture. If additional cleaning is needed, the next step is a mild, pH-neutral detergent wash applied sparingly with damp—not soaking—sponges or cloths. A commercially available product called “D/2” is a good detergent for this task. Limestone should never be cleaned with acidic cleaners or aggressive “masonry wash” products, as these will permanently etch the stone. Ironspot bricks can accept gentle aqueous cleaning, but abrasive pads, wire brushes, or high-pressure washing should be avoided to protect the brick’s distinctive fired surface.

Stubborn soot on limestone can often be reduced with poultices—soft, paste-like mixes that pull stains out through capillary action—rather than scrubbing. On ironspot bricks, localized spot cleaning with a mild detergent and nylon bristle brush is usually sufficient. Throughout the process, the goal is minimal intervention: short dwell times, low moisture, and small test patches to confirm the cleaning method before proceeding.

Importantly, cleaning should not aim to make the materials look “new.” Historic patina is part of the character of both limestone and ironspot brick. The objective is simply to remove harmful buildup, reduce future deterioration, and allow the masonry’s natural color and texture to be appreciated without stripping away its historic surface.

Clean exterior brick walls

(NOTE: If the historic walls are repointed, this will be included in that project. Please note, the modern addition walls also need cleaning but not repointing.)

The lower portions of the exterior masonry walls, both the historic sections and the modern addition, need a cleaning to remove the accumulated organic stains. **Do not use a power washer for this task.**



Cleaning these historic buff-colored speckled bricks requires a gentle, conservation-minded approach to avoid damaging the brick surface or altering its distinctive color and texture. Buff bricks—especially early 20th-century ones—often have a softer, more porous clay body and a thin fired surface that can be easily etched, dulled, or stained by harsh chemical cleaners. The goal is always to remove harmful buildup, not to make the wall look “new,” and to preserve the natural variegation that gives the buff brick its character. The following steps are strongly encouraged.

1. Begin With the Gentlest Method – Using soft natural-bristle brushes and a HEPA-vacuum with soft brush attachment, do a light sweeping to remove dust, grit, and loose biological growth. This minimizes water use and avoids grinding abrasive dirt into the brick surface.

2. Introduce Water Carefully - If dry cleaning isn’t sufficient, use low-pressure water (no power washing) to lightly pre-wet the surface. Buff brick absorbs water quickly, so the goal is dampening—not saturation.

3. Use Safe Cleaners: For historic buff brick, avoid acidic cleaners entirely. Suitable products include: D/2 Biological Solution, widely tested by NPS for historic masonry or some commercial pH-neutral masonry detergents designed for conservation use. D/2 is effective for biological staining, soot, algae, and general exterior grime. It is nearly pH-neutral, contains no salts or acids, and is one of the safest professionally accepted cleaners for historic brick. Always test a small area first, as buff brick can show subtle color change if over-scrubbed or over-wetted.

4. Apply Slow and Controlled – Use a hand-pump sprayer, or sponge or soft brush

Allow the cleaner to dwell for 5–10 minutes, then gently agitate the surface with a soft brush. Avoid wire brushes, abrasive pads, or any abrasive motion that can scratch the fired face of buff brick.

5. Rinse Thoroughly—But Gently Rinse with clean water using a low-pressure hose or bucket pour. Do not use pressure washing. High pressure can open pores, strip protective surface glaze, and force water into the wall where it can cause long-term damage.

6. Avoid Overcleaning - Buff brick often contains natural speckling, mineral inclusions, and historic patina. These are not defects and should not be scrubbed away. Overcleaning can cause irreversible damage and visually flatten the historic character of the wall.

Improvement Considerations

In early conversations, the Stewards expressed some desire to adapt the northside basement room into a more suitable and possibly accessible public space. The current low ceiling height makes a rapid, low-cost adaptation impractical so any adaptation would require removal of the existing concrete floor and then further excavation to increase the head room.

Adapting the north basement room is feasible, but it comes with a bundle of code and preservation considerations—plus some fairly heavy structural work if it is decided to lower the floor and underpin the foundation.

The following provides an outline of those considerations but if the Stewards are truly interested in this adaptation, the best and only resource for planning is a professional preservation architect licensed in the State of Georgia.

1. Existing conditions and preservation frame

The north basement room is currently an unfinished storage space; its historic exterior door was made redundant when the 1990s addition was constructed, and the rear portions of the basement remain largely undeveloped.

The historic library above is a mass-masonry structure on a brick strip footing arranged in a batter; investigations indicate the spread foundation is generally sound and the building is still remarkably level.

There is known moisture activity on the north and east basement walls, tied to drainage and window leaks, that would need to be resolved before finishing the space.

Because this is a contributing resource in the Boston Historic District, any change must respect character-defining features which would be the placement and appearance of the basement windows. Further, the Secretary of the Interior's Standards dictate minimal alteration of historic masonry, reversibility where possible, and clear differentiation between old and new work.

2. Code and accessibility considerations for a public room

Accessible entrance & egress

You'd need an accessible route into the north basement room that is compliant with ADA requirements. This might dictate a new point of egress sized for wheelchairs with a ramp no steeper than 1:12 because the finish floor is below grade.

Existing door openings are undersized; the historic exterior door at this room is only about 30", so any revived entrance in that location would have to be widened to at least 36" clear while avoiding unnecessary loss of historic masonry.

Restroom access

If patrons enter on the north side and can't readily access the existing basement restroom because of level changes, a new ADA-compliant restroom may be required within or adjacent to the adapted space.

Life-safety and existing-building codes

The City has adopted the International Existing Building Code, and because the building remains a library and its occupancy isn't changing—there is some flexibility in how modern requirements are applied.

That said, increasing occupant load in the basement will push you to confirm the number and separation of exits, fire-resistance of stair enclosures, emergency lighting, exit signage, and handrail/guard compliance.

Ceiling height, light, and ventilation

Usable public space will have minimum ceiling-height and ventilation requirements. Any floor lowering to gain headroom feeds directly into the underpinning discussion below.

3. Underpinning the brick foundation (if the floor is lowered)

If you decide to drop the basement floor to gain more headroom and a better accessible route, the historic strip footing will have to be underpinned. Conceptually, the process looks like this:

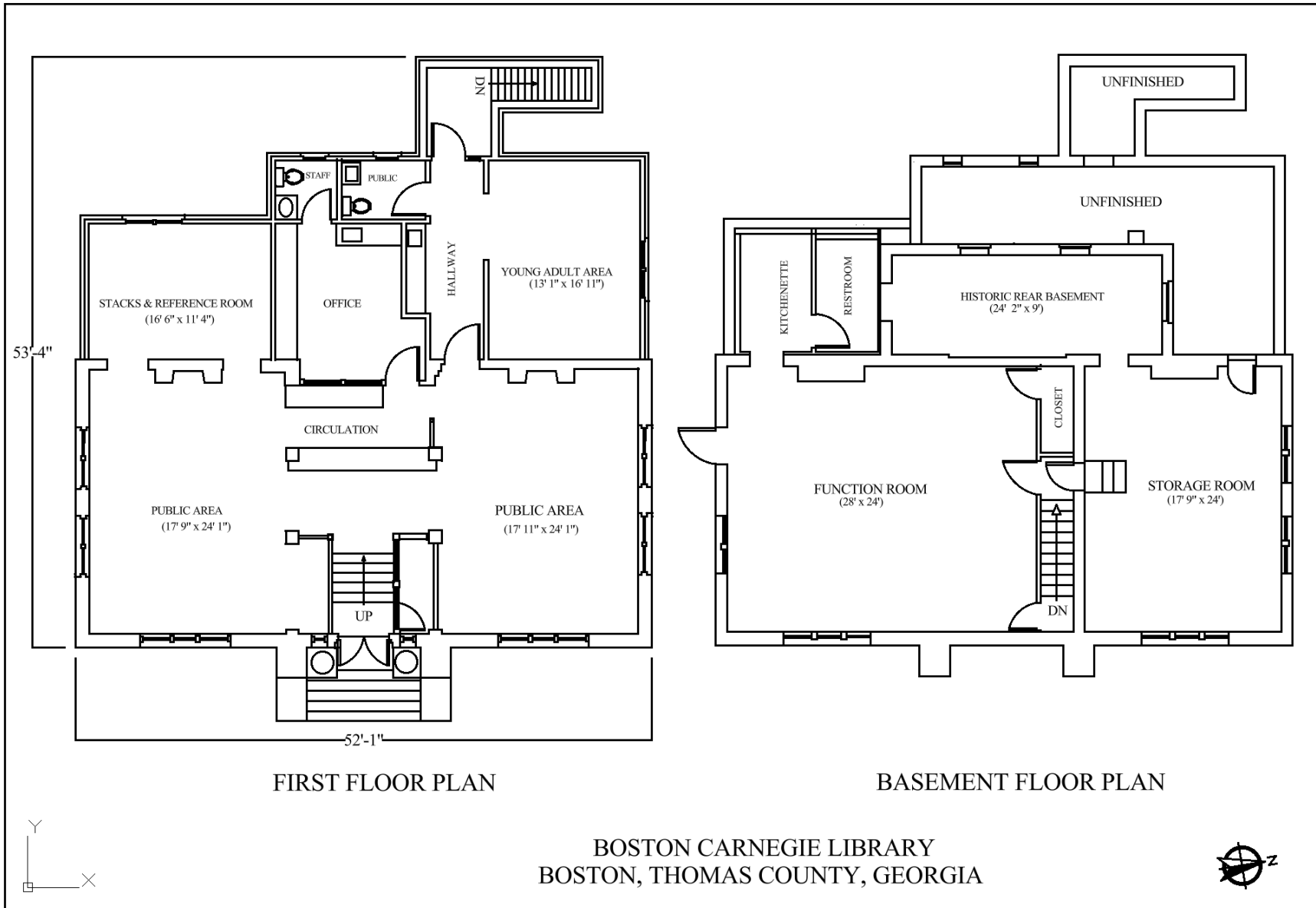
1. Investigation and design - Excavate a few small "test pits" inside along the north wall to confirm footing depth, brick configuration, and soil conditions.
2. A structural engineer then designs the underpinning scheme (typically mass-concrete underpinning or micro-piles with needle beams), sized for the actual loads and soil bearing capacity.
3. The contractor excavates short bays (often 3–4 feet long) beneath the existing footing, leaving untouched "pins" of soil between them so the wall is always supported. In each bay they dig down to the new bearing level, place reinforcement as required, and pour a new concrete underpinning block keyed into or cast tight against the underside of the historic brick footing. After the concrete cures and is fully loaded, they move to the next alternating bay. Once every other bay has been completed and engaged, they return to underpin the remaining pins. This leap-frog method keeps settlement to an absolute minimum.
4. Tying old and new work together Where appropriate, the engineer may call for dowels or shear keys so the new concrete footing works compositely with the historic brick, without crushing it. Any cutting into the original masonry should be limited and carefully detailed to avoid loss of fabric at the exposed basement walls.

5. Lowering the slab and adding drainage; After the perimeter walls are fully underpinned, the contractor can safely excavate the rest of the basement floor to the new elevation and install a compacted granular base, a sub-slab drainage and a sump (if needed), and a new reinforced concrete slab. Where moisture has been an issue on the north and east walls, a perimeter drain and improved exterior grading should be coordinated with this work to relieve hydrostatic pressure rather than just trying to “waterproof” the historic brick from the inside.
6. Monitoring and risk management: Before any underpinning, you’d document existing cracks and elevations; during work you’d monitor for movement with crack gauges or survey points. Underpinning is expensive, noisy, and disruptive; it’s normally phased so the library can keep operating above, but you should expect vibration, dust, and some risk of minor settlement cracking in finishes.

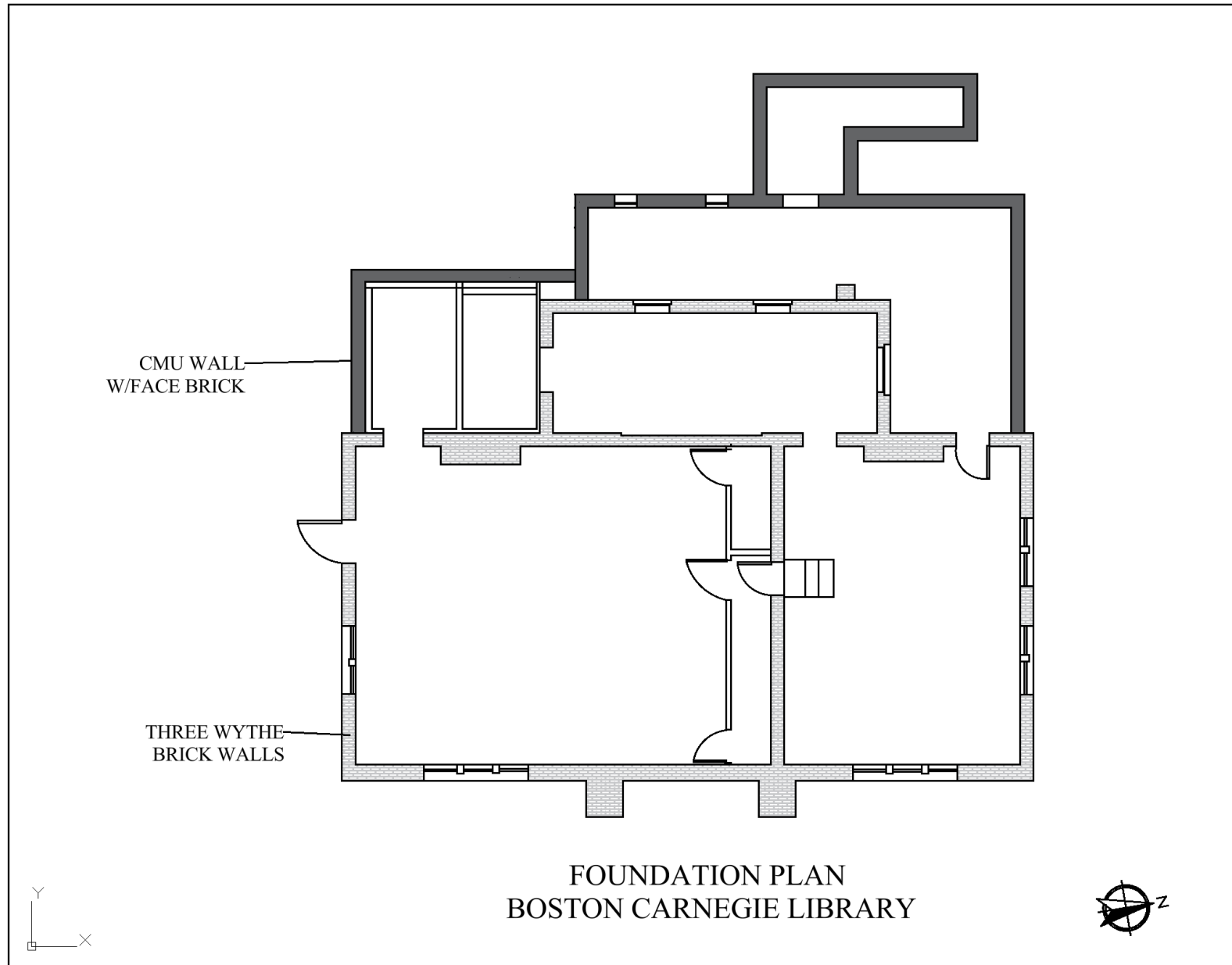
Section IV: Drawings

Boston Carnegie Library HSR

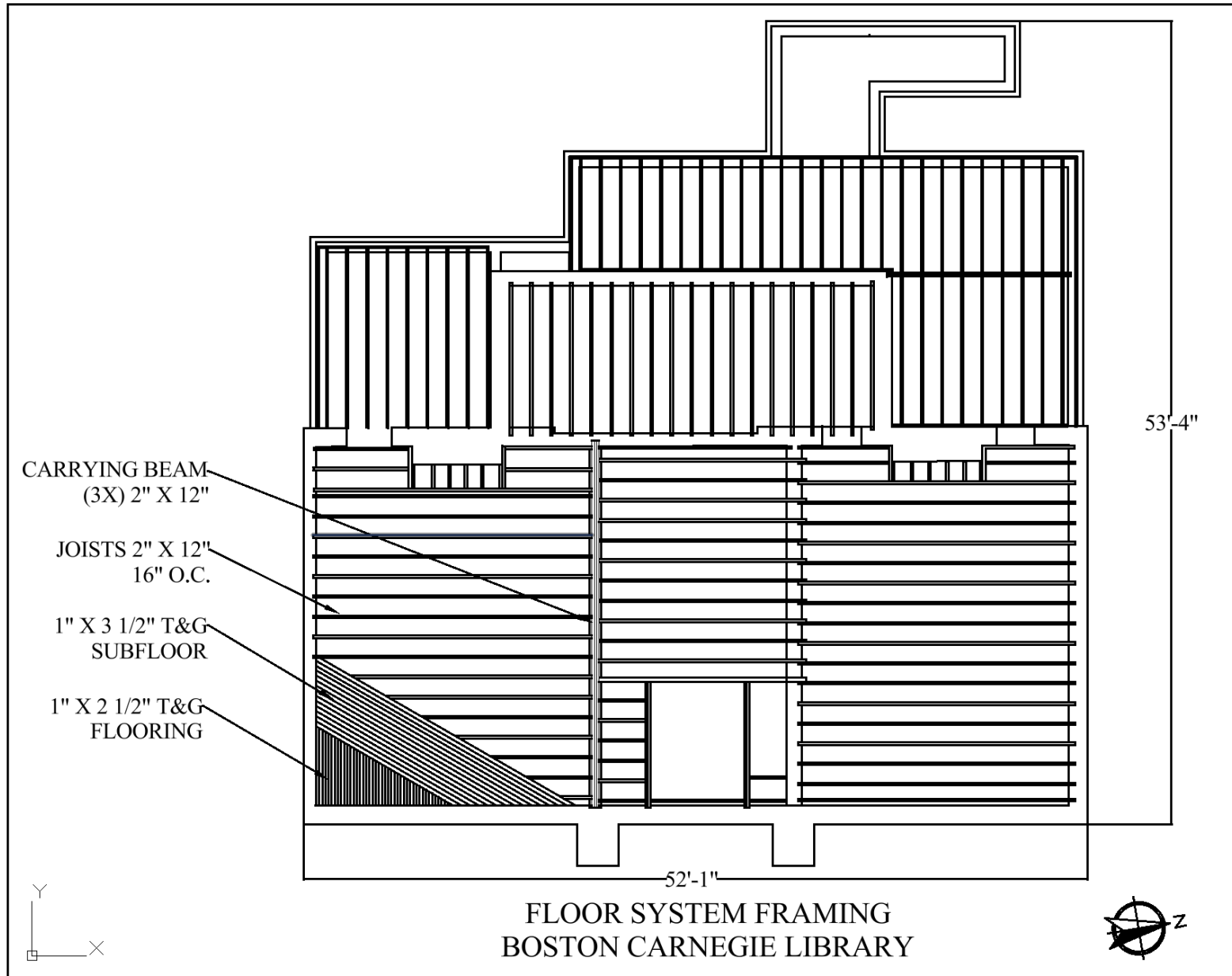
FLOOR PLAN



FOUNDATION PLAN



FLOOR SYSTEM FRAMING PLAN



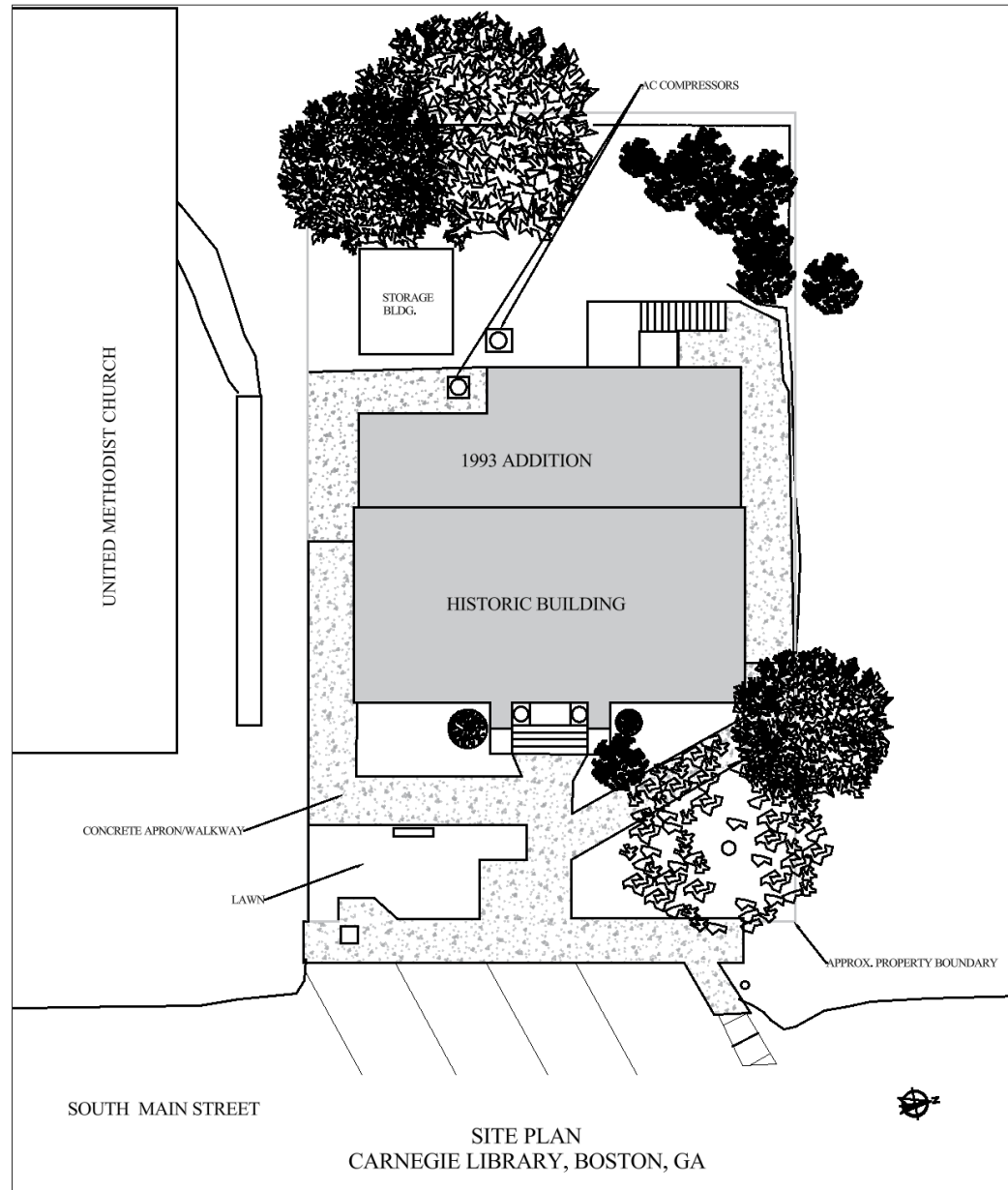
EAST ELEVATION



EAST ELEVATION
BOSTON CARNEGIE LIBRARY
BOSTON, GEORGIA

Boston Carnegie Library HSR

SITE PLAN



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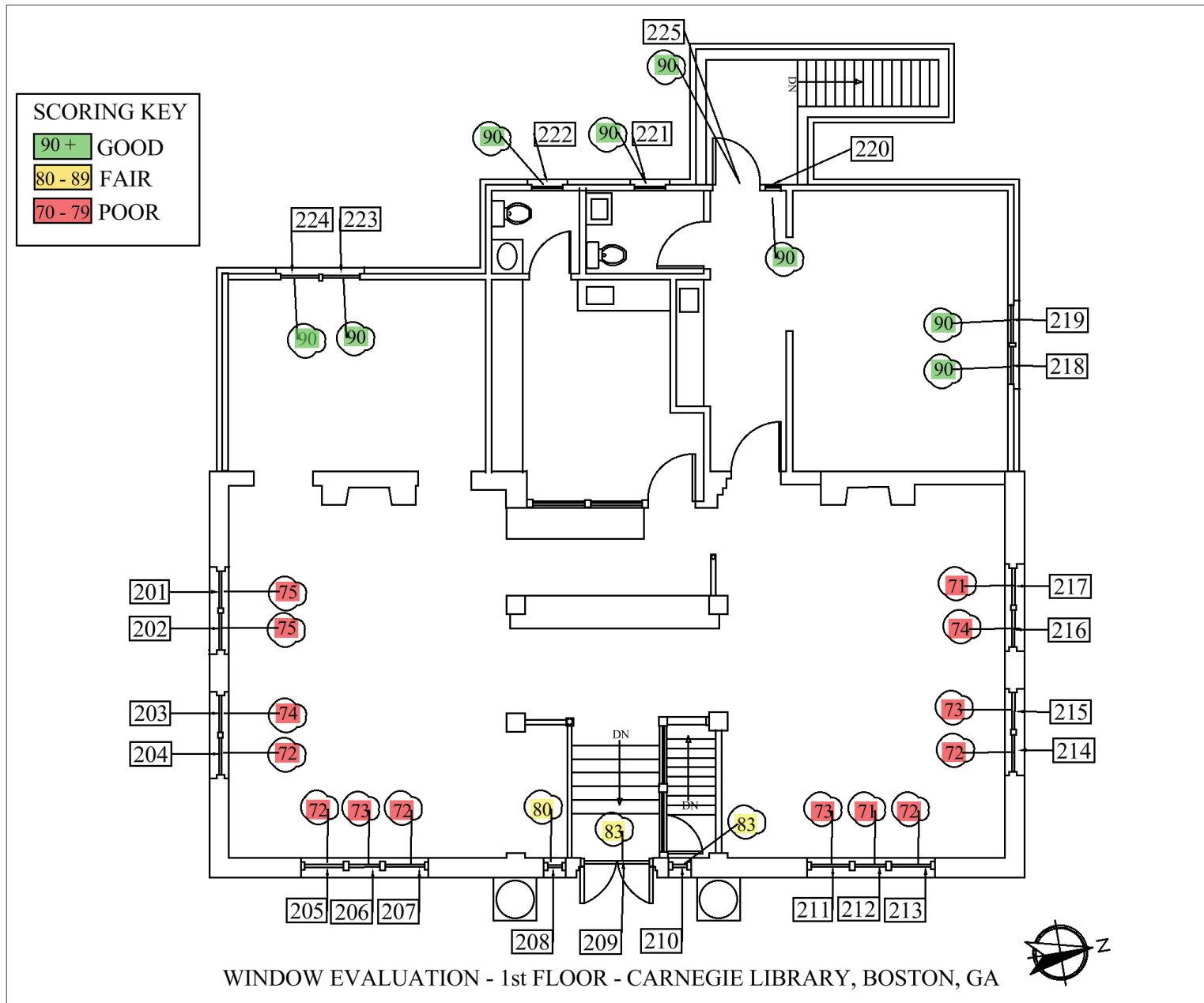
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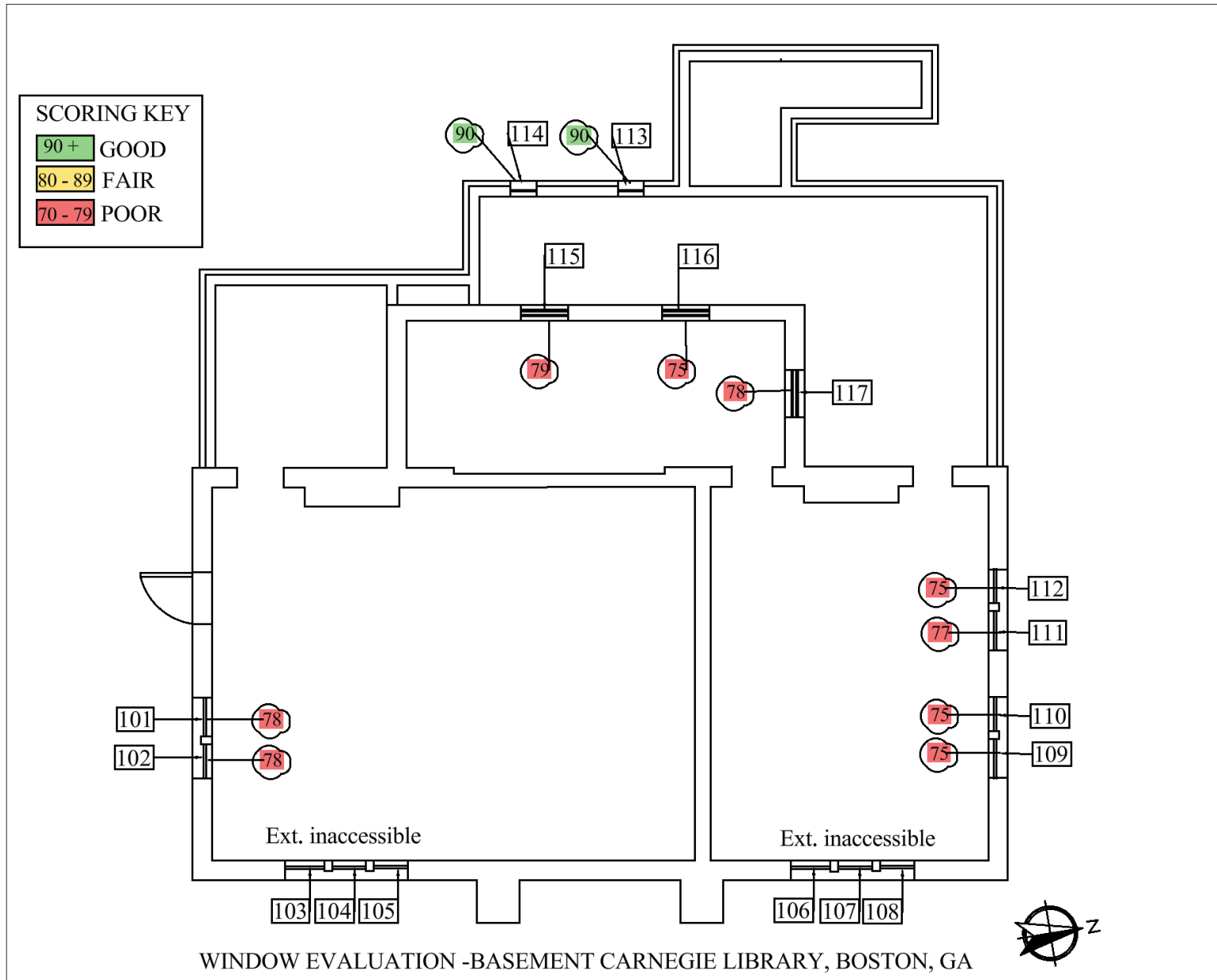
Soil Type Evaluation: <https://websoilsurvey.sc.egov.usda.gov/>

APPENDIX

WINDOW EVALUATION – 1ST FLOOR



WINDOW EVALUATION – BASEMENT



Boston Carnegie Library HSR

Project Boston Carnegie Library
 Dates 13 Nov. 2025
 Address: 250 S. Main St., Boston, Thomas Cty, GA
 Surveyor: Eric Menninger

HISTORIC WINDOW SURVEY

(MODERN WINDOWS NOT EVALUATED)

summary
 # of windows 42
 # historic 32
 # modern 10

Window ID	Historic	Adjusted Score	Raw Score	Window Type	Material	Glazing Type	Light Pattern	Hinge/Swing (looking out)	Configuration	Ext. Frame (jamb, sill, head)	Ext. Sash (rails, stiles)	Ext. Paint / Finish	Glazing putty / sealant	Glass panes	Ext. Hardware	Ext. Weather Seal	Ext. Casing	Comments
101	yes	78	12	Casement	Wood	Single Pane	6 light	Hinged right/Out	Double	2 - Good	2 - Good	1 - Sound	2 - Good	Good	2 - Paint encrusted	1 - Sound	1 - Excellent	paint decay left ext. stile
102	yes	77	13	Casement	Wood	Single Pane	6 light	Hinged left/Out	Double	2 - Good	2 - Good	1 - Sound	3 - Fair	Good	2 - Paint encrusted	1 - Sound	1 - Excellent	
103	yes	Inaccess		Casement	Wood	Single Pane	6 light	Hinged right/Out	Triple	inaccessible	inaccessible	inaccessible	inaccessible	inaccessible	inaccessible	1 - Sound	3 - Fair	paint decay left ext. casing
104	yes	Inaccess		Casement	Wood	Single Pane	6 light	Hinged right/Out	Triple	inaccessible	inaccessible	inaccessible	inaccessible	inaccessible	inaccessible	1 - Sound	2 - Good	plexi storm on ext.
105	yes	Inaccess		Casement	Wood	Single Pane	6 light	Hinged left/Out	Triple	inaccessible	inaccessible	inaccessible	inaccessible	inaccessible	inaccessible	1 - Sound	2 - Good	plexi storm on ext.
106	yes	Inaccess		Casement	Wood	Single Pane	6 light	Hinged right/Out	Triple	inaccessible	inaccessible	inaccessible	inaccessible	inaccessible	inaccessible	1 - Sound	2 - Good	plexi storm on ext.
107	yes	Inaccess		Casement	Wood	Single Pane	6 light	Hinged left/Out	Triple	inaccessible	inaccessible	inaccessible	inaccessible	inaccessible	inaccessible	1 - Sound	2 - Good	plexi storm on ext.
108	yes	Inaccess		Casement	Wood	Single Pane	6 light	Hinged left/Out	Triple	inaccessible	inaccessible	inaccessible	inaccessible	inaccessible	inaccessible	1 - Sound	2 - Good	plexi storm on ext.
109	yes	75	15	Casement	Wood	Single Pane	6 light	Hinged right/Out	Double	3 - Fair	3 - Fair	2 - Some decay	2 - Good	Good	1 - Sound	1 - Sound	2 - Good	paint decay lower rail, organic growth
110	yes	75	15	Casement	Wood	Single Pane	6 light	Hinged left/Out	Double	3 - Fair	3 - Fair	2 - Some decay	2 - Good	Good	1 - Sound	1 - Sound	2 - Good	paint decay lower rail, organic growth
111	yes	77	13	Casement	Wood	Single Pane	6 light	Hinged right/Out	Double	2 - Good	2 - Good	1 - Sound	2 - Good	Good	2 - Paint encrusted	1 - Sound	2 - Good	organic growth
112	yes	75	15	Casement	Wood	Single Pane	6 light	Hinged left/Out	Double	3 - Fair	2 - Good	1 - Sound	3 - Fair	Good	2 - Paint encrusted	1 - Sound	2 - Good	replaced pane, organic growth
113	no	90		Awning	Vinyl Clad	Double Pane	Single Pane		Single	1 - Excellent	1 - Excellent	1 - Sound	1 - Sound	Good	1 - Sound	1 - Sound	1 - Excellent	
114	no	90		Awning	Vinyl Clad	Double Pane	Single Pane		Single	1 - Excellent	1 - Excellent	1 - Sound	1 - Sound	Good	1 - Sound	1 - Sound	1 - Excellent	
115	yes	79	11	Casement	Wood	Single Pane	9 light	Hinged left/Out	Single	2 - Good	2 - Good	1 - Sound	2 - Good	Good	1 - Sound	1 - Sound	1 - Excellent	inside rear basement
116	yes	75	15	Casement	Wood	Single Pane	9 light	Hinged left/Out	Single	3 - Fair	3 - Fair	2 - Some decay	3 - Fair	Good	1 - Sound	1 - Sound	1 - Excellent	inside rear basement
117	yes	78	12	Casement	Wood	Single Pane	6 light	Hinged right/Out	Single	2 - Good	2 - Good	1 - Sound	2 - Good	Good	1 - Sound	1 - Sound	2 - Good	inside rear basement
201	yes	75	15	Casement	Wood	Single Pane	6 light	Hinged right/Out	Double	2 - Good	2 - Good	1 - Sound	4 - Poor	Good	2 - Paint encrusted	1 - Sound	2 - Good	paint finish decay
202	yes	75	15	Casement	Wood	Single Pane	6 light	Hinged left/Out	Double	2 - Good	2 - Good	2 - Some decay	3 - Fair	Good	2 - Paint encrusted	1 - Sound	2 - Good	paint finish decay
203	yes	74	16	Casement	Wood	Single Pane	6 light	Hinged right/Out	Double	2 - Good	3 - Fair	2 - Some decay	3 - Fair	Good	2 - Paint encrusted	1 - Sound	2 - Good	cracking paint
204	yes	72	18	Casement	Wood	Single Pane	6 light	Hinged left/Out	Double	2 - Good	4 - Poor	2 - Some decay	4 - Poor	Good	2 - Paint encrusted	1 - Sound	2 - Good	paint and glazing decay
205	yes	72	18	Casement	Wood	Single Pane	8 light	Hinged right/Out	Triple	2 - Good	3 - Fair	3 - Advanced decay	3 - Fair	Good	2 - Paint encrusted	1 - Sound	3 - Fair	paint flaking mid left stile
206	yes	73	17	Casement	Wood	Single Pane	8 light	Hinged right/Out	Triple	2 - Good	3 - Fair	2 - Some decay	3 - Fair	Good	2 - Paint encrusted	1 - Sound	3 - Fair	rust jacking left stile
207	yes	72	18	Casement	Wood	Single Pane	8 light	Hinged left/Out	Triple	2 - Good	3 - Fair	3 - Advanced decay	3 - Fair	Good	2 - Paint encrusted	1 - Sound	3 - Fair	paint decay right lower rail/stile
208	yes	80	10	Fixed	Wood	Single Pane	2 light	Fixed	Single	1 - Excellent	1 - Excellent	2 - Some decay	2 - Good	Good	NA	1 - Sound	2 - Good	paint chipped, dirty
209	yes	83	7	Fixed	Wood	Single Pane	Single Pane	Fixed	Single	1 - Excellent	1 - Excellent	1 - Sound	1 - Excellent	Good	NA	1 - Sound	1 - Excellent	good condition, minor paint dents
210	yes	81	9	Fixed	Wood	Single Pane	2 light	Fixed	Single	1 - Excellent	1 - Excellent	1 - Sound	2 - Good	Good	NA	1 - Sound	2 - Good	sound
211	yes	73	17	Casement	Wood	Single Pane	8 light	Hinged right/Out	Single	3 - Fair	3 - Fair	2 - Some decay	3 - Fair	Good	2 - Paint encrusted	1 - Sound	3 - Fair	bottom rail big flakes
212	yes	71	19	Casement	Wood	Single Pane	8 light	Hinged right/Out	Single	3 - Fair	3 - Fair	2 - Some decay	4 - Poor	Good	2 - Paint encrusted	1 - Sound	3 - Fair	some rail/stile joint separation
213	yes	72	18	Casement	Wood	Single Pane	8 light	Hinged left/Out	Single	3 - Fair	3 - Fair	2 - Some decay	3 - Fair	Good	2 - Paint encrusted	1 - Sound	3 - Fair	rust jacking right rail
214	yes	72	18	Casement	Wood	Single Pane	6 light	Hinged right/Out	Single	3 - Fair	3 - Fair	2 - Some decay	3 - Fair	Good	2 - Paint encrusted	1 - Sound	3 - Fair	glazing damage

Boston Carnegie Library HSR

215	yes	73	17	Casement	Wood	Single Pane	6 light	Hinged left/Out	Single	3 - Fair	3 - Fair	2 - Some decay	2 - Good	Good	2 - Paint encrusted	1 - Sound	3 - Fair	right side casing paint failure
216	yes	74	16	Casement	Wood	Single Pane	6 light	Hinged right/Out	Single	2 - Good	3 - Fair	2 - Some decay	3 - Fair	Good	2 - Paint encrusted	1 - Sound	2 - Good	heavy glazing cracks
217	yes	71	19	Casement	Wood	Single Pane	6 light	Hinged left/Out	Single	2 - Good	4 - Poor	3 - Advanced decay	4 - Poor	Good	2 - Paint encrusted	1 - Sound	2 - Good	lower rail/stile separation
218	no	90		Casement	Vinyl Clad	Double Pane	Single Pane											
219	no	90		Casement	Vinyl Clad	Double Pane	Single Pane											
220	no	90		Casement	Vinyl Clad	Double Pane	Single Pane											
221	no	90		Casement	Vinyl Clad	Double Pane	Single Pane											
222	no	90		Casement	Vinyl Clad	Double Pane	Single Pane											
223	no	90		Casement	Vinyl Clad	Double Pane	Single Pane											
224	no	90		Casement	Vinyl Clad	Double Pane	Single Pane											
225	no	90		Fixed	Vinyl Clad	Double Pane	Single Pane											Transom rear door
		95																

EXTERIOR WALL EVALUATION – EAST ELEVATION

- Red circles indicate areas of mortar recession, spalling and/or damaged face bricks
- Green circles indicate areas of organic staining
- Yellow circle notes loose light fixtures
- Areas where circles are superimposed over foreground objects indicates wall behind is damaged



EXTERIOR WALL EVALUATION - SOUTH ELEVATION



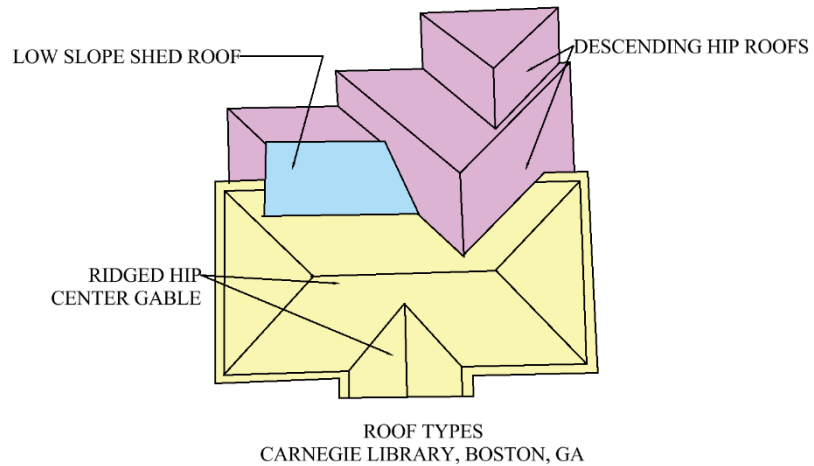
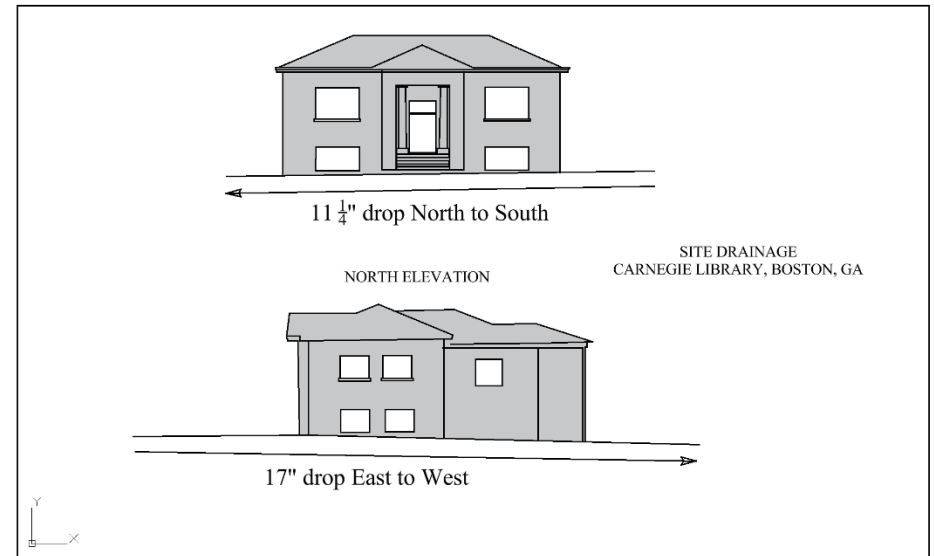
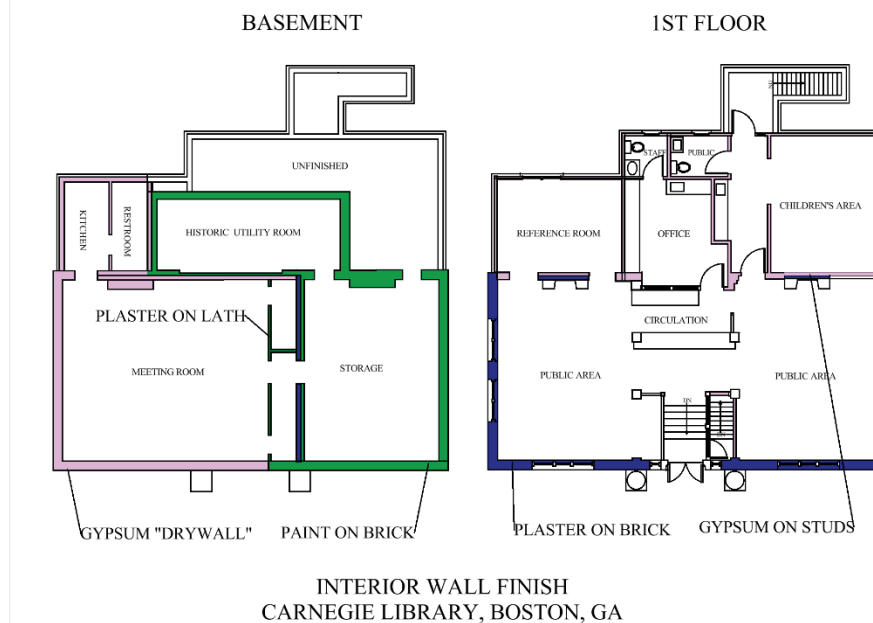
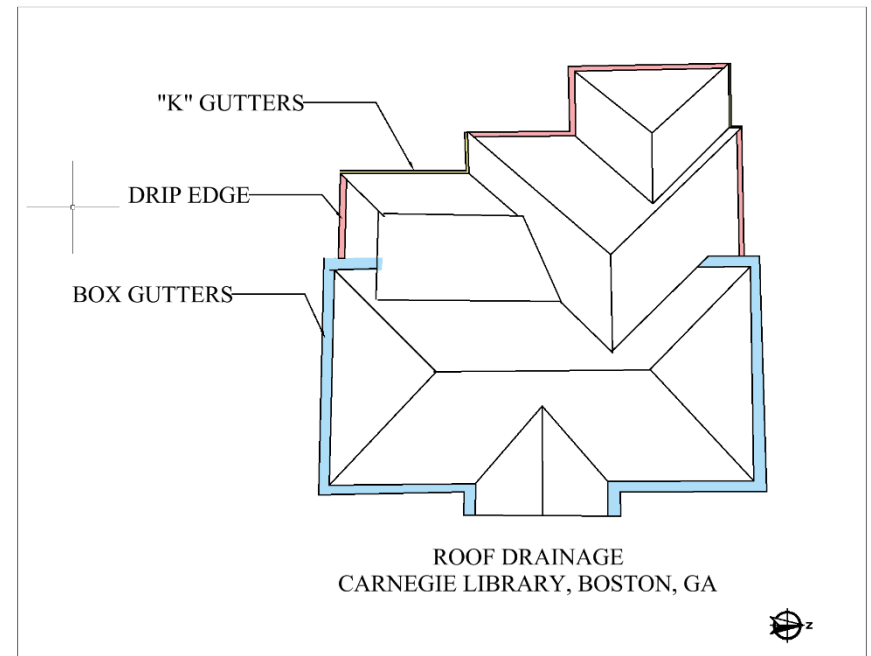
Image of exterior is from a 3D model. Some dimensional and surface distortion is present.

EXTERIOR WALL EVALUATION - NORTH ELEVATION



Image of exterior is from a 3D model. Some dimensional and surface distortion is present.

TECHNICAL DRAWINGS



END OF REPORT