



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

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Island Elected Officials Break Ground on Renovation and Expansion of Historic Stapleton Branch

DIANE J. SAVINO August 23, 2009

| ISSUE: **AGENCIES**

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State-of-the-art renovation will more than double the library's size, add more than two dozen new computers, 11 laptop stations, wireless access, new areas for adults, teens and children and self-checkout stations

New York Public Library President Paul LeClerc and Staten Island elected officials broke ground today on a project that will dramatically renovate and expand the library's Stapleton

Branch, located at 132 Canal St. The building will undergo a technology facelift, receiving 11 laptop plug-in stations, convenient self-checkout stations and free wireless Internet access. Public space will more than double, and a light, airy new building will be added to the historic structure, retaining its character and providing neighborhood residents a sleek, modern new library.

"Once this renovation and expansion are complete, the striking new Stapleton Library will provide a wide range of free resources reflecting the needs of its community at a time of expanding information needs," said Library President Paul LeClerc. "Whether programs for children, books for recreational reading, free Internet access, job information, or any of its many other services, the library will be a robust resource for its users."

The renovation, designed by Andrew Berman Architect, will provide new areas for adults, teens and children, as well as a community room. The adjoining new building will feature 18-foot ceilings, attractive wood floors and a glass curtain wall to create light and space. Adult and teen reading areas will include cozy chairs for reading, and the children's area will feature interactive educational games. The project is to include a new HVAC system and new electrical wiring.

"I am honored to be here today to celebrate the expansion of Stapleton Library, a vital source of learning for this community. In this digital age it is crucial for public libraries to keep up technologically, so that everyone, regardless of income, has access to information. I am happy to have been able to facilitate funding for this modernization," said Senator Diane J Savino

"Today marks a new beginning for the Stapleton library and the community it serves," said Congressman Michael E. McMahon. "The renovation and expansion of the Stapleton library

has been a project close to my heart since I was a Council Member and I am thrilled that this project is finally coming to fruition. This renovation will modernize the Stapleton branch and ensure that it remains a center of learning and community for years to come."

"It is an honor to be a part of this exciting and long-awaited step to bring the expanded Stapleton Library to the community, said Council Member Kenneth Mitchell. "With the old Carnegie Library structure receiving a much needed renovation and the expansion bringing the long desired programming and resource space we are truly preserving the past while building for the future."

Staten Island Borough President James P. Molinaro said, "I am pleased to allocate \$800,000 in capital funding towards the expansion of the historic Stapleton Library, that will more than double the current space for Islanders using the facility. A strong library makes for a strong community, and I expect that this renovation will make the Stapleton branch even more popular among Islanders of all ages who seek enrichment through learning, and continue the renaissance of the St.George/Stapleton area."

"This groundbreaking is a great step towards addressing the needs of Stapleton," said Assembly Member Matthew Titone. "The expansion of this branch of the Public Library demonstrates that Stapleton is a growing and thriving Staten Island neighborhood."

"As we all know, libraries are about more than books," Councilman Domenic M. Recchia, Jr., chairman of the Committee on Cultural Affairs, Libraries & International Intergroup Relations. "They provide important services to the communities they serve, and this neighborhood has waited a very long time for this important expansion."

"It's always a great day for a neighborhood fortunate enough to see their local public library expanded and renovated," said Council Member Vincent J. Gentile, Chair of the Libraries

Subcommittee. "Through the consistent and continued funding of public libraries, New York City has proved time and time again that community involvement, employment and literacy are top priorities. Libraries *should* be a priority now more than ever – they're going to help buoy local communities and families through these tough economic times. My thanks goes out to Speaker Christine Quinn for her deep and abiding commitment to our City's local neighborhoods and libraries, as well as to the New York Public Library for adding to and enriching the lives New York City residents every day."

About the Stapleton Branch

The Stapleton Branch of The New York Public Library, which opened in 1907, is located on Canal Street, near the center of Stapleton Village and adjacent to Tappen Park and the Old Village Hall. The graceful, single story, brick and limestone building was constructed with funds provided by Andrew Carnegie. It was designed by Carrere and Hastings. Today the Stapleton Branch continues to be a center of community life. The branch serves its diverse neighborhood by presenting programs for all ages, providing access to computer technology and lending books, magazines and other media to inform, educate, and entertain. Programs include a book discussion group, picture book hours, preschool programs and arts & crafts programs for teens.

About The New York Public Library

The New York Public Library was created in 1895 with the consolidation of the private libraries of John Jacob Astor and James Lenox with the Samuel Jones Tilden Trust. The Library provides free and open access to its physical and electronic collections and information, as well as to its services. Its renowned research collections are located in the Stephen A. Schwarzman Building at Fifth Avenue and 42nd Street; The New York Public

Library for the Performing Arts at Lincoln Center; the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture in Harlem; and the Science, Industry and Business Library at 34th Street and Madison Avenue. Eighty-seven branch libraries provide access to circulating collections and a wide range of other services in neighborhoods throughout the Bronx, Manhattan, and Staten Island. Research and circulating collections combined total more than 50 million items. In addition, each year the Library presents thousands of exhibitions and public programs, which include classes in technology, literacy, and English for speakers of other languages. The New York Public Library serves more than 17 million patrons who come through its doors annually; the Library's website, www.nypl.org, receives 25 million visits annually from users in more than 200 countries.

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