

**Naming for Jane Jacobs at the Toronto Public Library**

<b>Date:</b>	April 9, 2009
<b>To:</b>	Naming Committee
<b>From:</b>	City Librarian

**SUMMARY**

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After considering the report *Naming Toronto Reference Library after Jane Jacobs* at the December 8, 2008 Naming Committee meeting, staff was asked to provide additional information. Specifically staff was asked to:

- *report to the Committee regarding a consultation process for the renaming of the Toronto Reference Library;*
- *report to the Committee on any other naming option for Jane Jacobs at the Toronto Public Library;*
- *consult with the Toronto Public Library Foundation to ascertain the impact of the naming of the Toronto Reference Library for Jane Jacobs on the Foundation's Capital Campaign and report back to the Committee.*

This report addresses these requests. In reporting back to the Committee, the information is presented with due consideration to the various issues that arise with each option. Connections to Jane Jacobs' writings and ideas are highlighted to assist in the Committee's deliberations. A proposed approach to consultation is presented in Attachment 1. The Foundation's response about the impact of naming the Toronto Reference Library after Jane Jacobs is included in Attachment 2.

As outlined in the December 8, 2008 report, naming the Toronto Reference Library after an individual is a very significant decision both for Toronto Public Library and for the City. Naming a branch, program or collection after Jane Jacobs meets criteria in the Library's *Naming Policy*. Including naming the Toronto Reference Library after Jane Jacobs, five options are presented for consideration.

New options for naming include:

- a lecture series;
- an external colonnade and gathering place along Asquith Street;
- the Urban Affairs Library;
- A neighbourhood branch.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

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**The City Librarian recommends that the Naming Committee considers:**

1. the options for naming for Jane Jacobs at Toronto Public Library;
2. the consultation plan in the context of the naming options being presented (Attachment 1);
3. the Foundation's memo about the impact on the capital campaign of naming the Toronto Reference Library after Jane Jacobs.

### Implementation Points

The Toronto Public Library has not approached Jane Jacobs' family about the proposed options and would have to do so formally before it is taken to the Library Board for consideration. Toronto Public Library would have to consult legal counsel regarding any agreement.

## FINANCIAL IMPACT

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The *Naming Policy* requires details on the costs of the proposed recognition when naming is contemplated without a gift.

Costs of the consultation regarding the name could be absorbed within the approved operating budget.

Renaming the Toronto Reference Library or a neighbourhood branch would include a launch event, communications, signage and changes in Library publications, the catalogue and the website. A communication plan would also be required to inform stakeholders, such as the City and area residents. A no waste approach would be used in introducing the change in publications which means that the existing supply would be used before introducing the new name.

If the Toronto Reference Library is renamed, the costs are estimated at \$50,000 which would include a public launch, communications and staff costs for website and catalogue changes. The Toronto Reference Library capital project includes a new glass cube entrance which is expected to be completed around the end of 2010, and funding is provided to replace the exterior signage. If new signage is required for a renaming after the completion of the glass cube, this would result in additional costs of up to \$10,000.

Naming a lecture series after Jane Jacobs would cost approximately \$5,000 – \$10,000 per year depending on the prominence of featured speakers and the extent of the promotion of the event.

Renaming the Urban Affairs Library or a neighbourhood branch would each cost approximately \$7,000 including a launch event, signage, website and catalogue changes.

Creating a Jane Jacobs' Way along the Asquith colonnade would require the development and costing of a detailed plan. Funding would be required as this is beyond the scope of Toronto Reference Library's capital renovation. If a colonnade was to be included, additional funding would need to be secured.

## **DECISION HISTORY**

At its September 15, 2008 meeting, the Library Board referred a communication to the Naming Committee from Councillor Adam Vaughan regarding the naming of the Toronto Reference Library for Jane Jacobs.

After considering the report *Naming Toronto Reference Library after Jane Jacobs*, staff was asked to provide the Naming Committee with additional information. Specifically staff was asked to:

- *report to the Committee regarding a consultation process for the renaming of the Toronto Reference Library;*
- *report to the Committee on any other naming option for Jane Jacobs at the Toronto Public Library;*
- *consult with the Toronto Public Library Foundation to ascertain the impact of the naming of the Toronto Reference Library for Jane Jacobs on the Foundation's Capital Campaign and report back to the Committee.*

## **ISSUE BACKGROUND**

Naming a facility of this stature after an individual is a tribute that would be difficult to replicate in the city and should be given due consideration. The Toronto Reference Library is Toronto's flagship facility whose forerunner first opened in 1909; it has been at its present, prominent location at Yonge and Bloor since 1977. The library houses important research collections in a number of areas and has very strong collections in Canadian and Toronto history.

The current name provides a strong statement that the library belongs to residents of Toronto. There are very few public institutions named for the City; the Toronto Reference Library, the Toronto Zoo and the University of Toronto are some of the few examples. If the library was renamed the Jane Jacobs Reference Library, the link to the city and to Toronto Public Library is lost. For this reason, if the library is to be renamed, it is suggested the name be the Jane Jacobs Toronto Reference Library.

## **COMMENTS**

As outlined in the December 8, 2008 report to the Naming Committee, naming a branch, program or collection after Jane Jacobs meets criteria in the Library's *Naming Policy*. The policy states that the naming of library branches by geographic location is the preferred practice; however consideration can be given to naming a branch with a gift or after an individual whose contribution to the Library or the City of Toronto *is well*

*documented and is widely recognized and valued.* All the options presented below for consideration meet the criteria set out in the Library's *Naming Policy*.

### **Option One: Renaming the Toronto Reference Library**

Renaming the Toronto Reference Library would recognize Jane Jacobs' legacy of free thought, activism, and debate. She was a prolific author and urban visionary who received many notable awards in Canada and internationally. Her most famous work, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (1961) revolutionized urban planning. Jane Jacobs was a self taught researcher who lacked formal training in urban planning and who used the resources of public libraries.

Jane Jacobs was a distinguished Torontonians recognized for the development of the idea of liveable cities, and is acknowledged for preserving the character of Toronto's unique neighbourhoods. Within Toronto, she spearheaded protests to stop the Spadina Expressway and the demolition of historical buildings including Old City Hall, Union Station, and the St. Lawrence Market. After her death in 2006, Mayor David Miller proclaimed May 4, 2007 as Jane Jacobs' Day and many free *Jane's Walks* are held annually to encourage people to celebrate her legacy and ideas.

As outlined in the December 8, 2008 report, if the Toronto Reference Library was renamed after Jane Jacobs, there would have to be careful consideration for the way in which to link the name to other collections or services in the building. The name would be the Jane Jacobs Toronto Reference Library. If the name was the Jane Jacobs Reference Library, the reference library's link to the city and to Toronto Public Library is lost.

Naming a major research facility of the stature of the Toronto Reference Library after Jane Jacobs may imply to the public that her archives are located in the library. Jane Jacobs' papers are held at the Burns Library in Boston. The preferred practice among archivists is to gather all papers in one location. Therefore, it is unlikely that the Toronto Reference Library would receive any donation of archival material including two works in progress at the time of her death. It is not common practice to name a large reference library after an individual with a few notable exceptions. Jane Jacobs is one of many successful Torontonians including creators and authors who have used the Toronto Reference Library to advance their work.

### **Option Two: Creating a lecture series on urban issues named for Jane Jacobs**

A lecture series named after Jane Jacobs that focused on urban issues would engage residents, encourage discussion and remind the public of Jane Jacobs' work and legacy. A lecture series on urban planning issues would appeal to a broad range of participants including politicians, residents, students, planners and academics. The lectures would raise the profile of the Toronto Reference Library as both a research institution and a centre of civic engagement. The lecture could be modelled on the June Callwood Lecture Series which has successfully honoured Callwood's legacy and commitment to social activism.

### **Option Three: Naming the external Asquith colonnade**

Naming the existing colonnade on the Asquith side of the Toronto Reference Library would also be an option for recognizing Jane Jacobs. With its trees and natural grasses in large raised planting beds, the area provides a public oasis at the heart of Yonge and Bloor. Protected from the elements in all seasons, the area is well used by library customers and others in the community as a meeting spot or a place to take a break and enjoy some fresh air away from the traffic on Yonge Street. Current renovation plans call for the addition of some street furniture along the colonnade to augment seating provided by the planters. A unique vision could be created for this area that would serve as a tribute to Jane Jacobs. Potential project elements include quotations from her writings or a physical representation of her, and other design elements that could extend the length of the colonnade to encourage residents to “cross paths and mix” which she saw as being essential to urban neighbourhoods.

Creating a Jane Jacobs’ Way builds on an idea implemented in New York City to extend the central library into public space by creating visual interest and connection with the library in the two blocks leading to the entrance. In partnership with the *New Yorker Magazine*, quotations from prominent works of literature were inscribed on bronze plaques by the sculptural artist Greg Le Febvre to create a *Library Way*. As this project expands on the funded portion of the Toronto Reference Library renovation, separate funding would be required.

### **Option Four: Renaming the Urban Affairs Library**

Renaming the Urban Affairs Library in honour of Jane Jacobs would be an important visual and symbolic statement and endorsement of her exceptional influence in the field of urban planning. The Urban Affairs Library is the Toronto Reference Library’s research wing in this field and houses a large municipal and urban affairs collection. The collection is international in scope with emphasis on 20<sup>th</sup> century material, with in-depth coverage of Toronto. The collection encompasses over 90,000 books, government documents, current magazine titles, microforms and maps. Located in Metro Hall, the collection fosters and supports research in municipal government and urban issues not only by politicians and City Hall staff but by students, lay researchers and residents which is in keeping with Jane Jacobs’ core belief in the value of public engagement at the municipal level. Although her archives would not be located in the library, emphasis could be placed on collecting materials about and by Jane Jacobs and the collection could be promoted both online and in the library. The overall name of the Toronto Reference Library would not be impacted and the function of the library could be preserved in the name: Jane Jacobs Urban Affairs Library.

### **Option Five: Renaming a neighbourhood branch**

Core to Jane Jacobs’ idea of healthy urban neighbourhoods was the idea that blocks should be mixed use with residential, retail, civic and industrial buildings jumbled together. Public Libraries are accessible to all residents and play an important role in the life of the community. Naming a suitable neighbourhood library after Jane Jacobs would be a living tribute to her support of local libraries and her efforts to preserve public buildings.

The Palmerston Branch of Toronto Public Library was walking distance from her house and is adjacent to the subway. The close integration of the library in the community reflects Jane Jacobs' core ideas. The Palmerston branch is a popular community focal point and hub with a theatre which is used for community events. The library is scheduled for a state of good repair upgrade, and the name could be introduced when the library is reopened. The local community would have to be consulted on the name change. The proposed name would be the Jane Jacobs Branch: Toronto Public Library. The geographical connection in the name would be lost. Another option might be the City Hall branch. The name would be the Jane Jacobs City Hall branch. There is precedent for naming library branches after prominent individuals including Lillian H. Smith and Barbara Frum, although the preferred practice in the Naming Policy is for geographic location.

### **Proposed Consultation Strategy**

At its December 8, 2008 meeting, the Naming Committee requested that staff *report to the Committee regarding a consultation process for the renaming of the Toronto Reference Library*. The Library has received 58 communications from a wide range of supporters about renaming the Toronto Reference Library, including a number received after the December committee meeting. Communications received since the last Naming Committee meeting in December are appended for consideration (Attachment 3). If one of the other options for naming after Jane Jacobs is recommended, consultation would need to be reconsidered.

The Library's *Naming and Public Consultation Policies* do not specifically require public consultation on naming of buildings or rooms; however the *Public Consultation Policy* commits the Library to creating opportunities to participate in decision making processes. Consulting on the naming of the Toronto Reference Library would be in keeping with the significance of the honorary naming and reflect Jane Jacobs' belief in the importance of community engagement. It would also provide an opportunity to communicate about the Toronto Reference Library and Jane Jacobs' life and work.

Research on policy and practice regarding consultation on naming was completed. Recent literature suggests a trend to consult on naming. There are a number of examples where complaints have resulted when naming has occurred without consultation. However, there is a distinction between honorary naming and naming with a gift. Staff could not locate many examples of consultation on honorary naming and could not identify any examples of consultation on naming with a gift. The process for naming with a gift is such that establishing a framework for consultation in these instances is not feasible logistically or conceptually. When consultation on naming occurs, there are generally three components:

- background information on the proposed naming and the facility being named;
- a brief biography of the person for whom the facility is being named with achievements to support the naming and finally;
- the opportunity for the public to submit comments in writing directly to the sponsoring organization. This approach balances obtaining public feedback with honouring the reputation and privacy of the honouree, the family and supporters.

A consultation plan outlining a proposed approach to consultation for renaming the Toronto Reference Library is appended for consideration (Attachment 1). The proposed consultation strategy includes a number of components:

- a backgrounder on the Toronto Reference Library and Jane Jacobs' relevant achievements, and the proposal for renaming the Toronto Reference Library would be posted on the Toronto Public Library website, made available in library branches, and on the City's Civic Engagement website;
- Residents would be provided with the opportunity to provide comments directly to the Library by using an online survey, email address or writing.

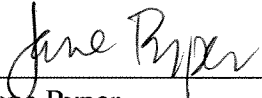
Results of the consultation would be summarized and made available to the Naming Committee and Library Board.

## **CONTACT**

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## **SIGNATURE**



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Jane Pyper  
City Librarian

## **ATTACHMENTS**

- Attachment 1: Proposed Consultation Strategy  
Attachment 2: Response from the Toronto Public Library Foundation  
Attachment 3: Communications

