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ARCHITECTURAL WORK ON CENTENNIAL RESTORATION OF HARRISON MEMORIAL LIBRARY NOW UNDERWAY; UNPRECEDENTED EARLY FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR HISTORIC \$17.5 MILLION PROJECT

CARMEL, CA - JULY 2, 2025

At its meeting last night, the City Council approved the contract with Santa Monica based historic preservation specialist firm Moore Ruble Yudell Architects. The selection of the architects had been made previously following the recommendation of the Architect Selection Committee co-chaired by Lacy Williams Buck and Carmel Public Library Foundation President, Marci Meaux.

The project is being funded entirely through monies raised by the Library Foundation in a capital fundraising campaign. To date, \$8.8 million has been committed, even before the start of schematic design. Central to the fundraising success is a \$5 million matching gift from a Carmel Public Library Foundation Board Member. To date, there have been 34 major gifts ranging from \$10,000 to \$5,000,000.

BACKGROUND

This marks the first comprehensive restoration of the landmark, 7300 square foot, 1928 Harrison Memorial Library. The Centennial Restoration, to be completed in 2028, will focus around upgrading all critical systems, enhancing accessibility and becoming ADA compliant, improving visitor flow, and rejuvenating the Library's iconic interiors. It is urgent to achieve full accessibility, enhance seismic and other systems and safeguards, modernize technology, and optimize patron flow and programmatic space layouts to properly serve the community and meet the needs of its residents.

Following a formal Request for Proposal process and presentations by the two finalist architectural firms, Moore Ruble Yudell Architects was chosen earlier this year, in large part, because of their expertise and experience and sensibility in major historic preservation projects and proven ability in numerous commissions to undertake major required upgrades while honoring a building's history and distinctive character. Buzz Yuddell, a part time resident and homeowner in Carmel, understands the historic significance of the Harrison Memorial Library as a cherished civic institution and building, integral to Carmel-by-the-Sea's rich architectural, literary, and artistic traditions. Of even greater importance, perhaps is our community's reputation for valuing the breadth of vital resources our library provides to its community.

In commenting on the success to date of the fundraising, Carmel Mayor Dale Byrne observed that “the generosity expressed by Carmel, Carmel Valley and Pebble Beach residents is an extraordinary statement about the educational and intellectual traditions and standards of our community. The Centennial Restoration of the Harrison Memorial Library is an essential project that must be completed over the next three years. I am very grateful for (but not surprised by) the outpouring of major philanthropic support.”

Marci Meaux, CPLF Board President, observed “We are deeply grateful for the support received to date for the Centennial Restoration of our wonderful public library. Andrew Carnegie (who personally funded the construction of several thousand public libraries) perhaps said it best: ‘A library outranks any other one thing a community can do to benefit its people.’”

Pledges to the Library’s Capital Campaign can be paid in installments over a period of five years. For more information on the Library’s Centennial Restoration Campaign and to make a contribution, please contact Carmel Public Library Foundation, CEO, Alexandra Fallon at 831-624-2811 or afallon@carmelpubliclibraryfoundation.org.

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