

Griffin Free Public Library and Museum



Room to Grow

For 124 years, the Griffin Free Public Library has served the interests and needs of Auburn. Sitting on a half-acre lot, the last major improvement was an expansion of the parking lot to accommodate 10 vehicles. The lot is now maxed-out.

Town officials recognized years ago that the future of the library was limited. In order to maximize their space, the library staff and Trustees installed movable shelving to open up meeting space and used a patio area for outdoor events. Still, the current space limits their options.

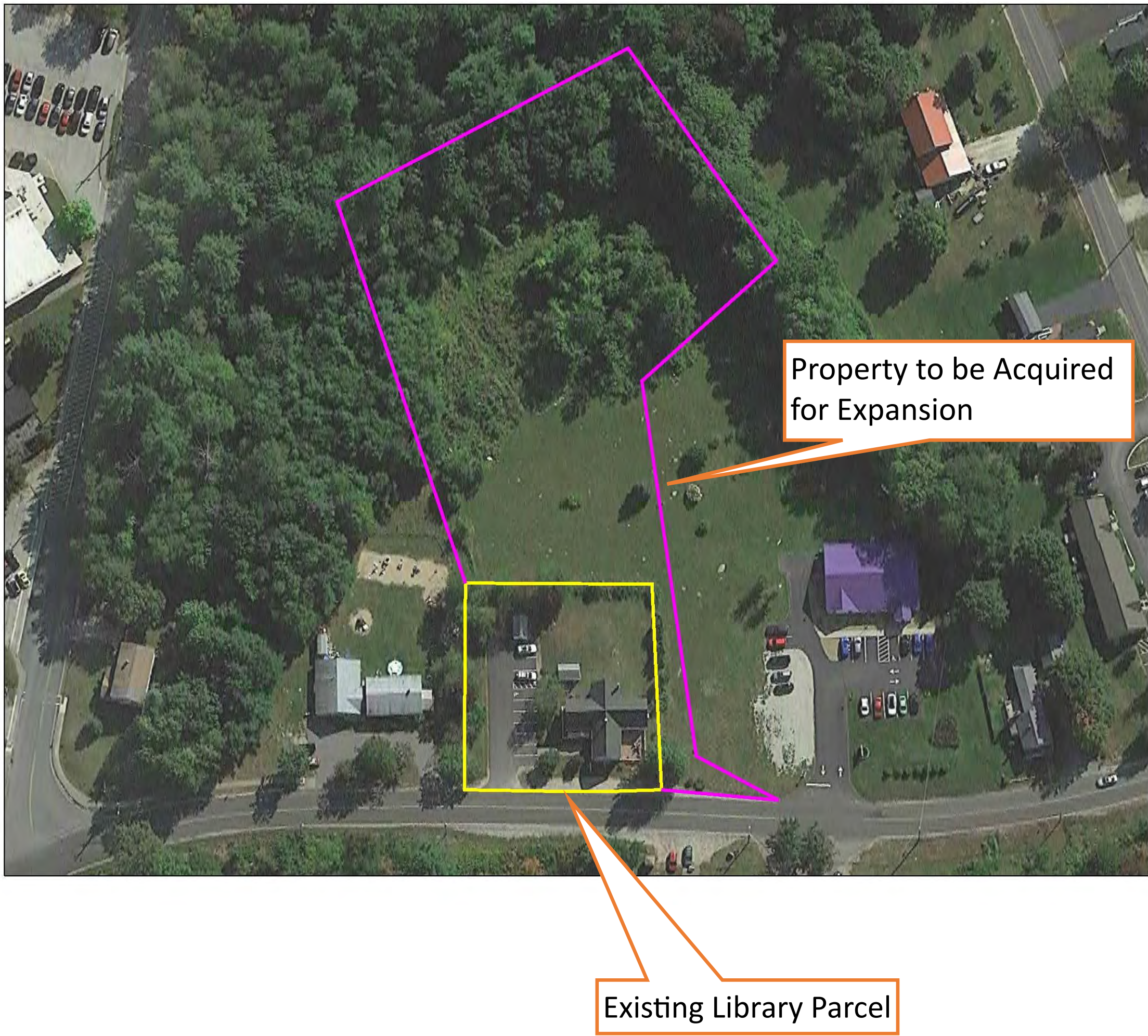
Despite the limitations, foot traffic in the library is up 34% over the last two years. The number of programs, clubs and activities at the Griffin Free Public Library continues to grow. The number of people participating in these activities is up 100%.

Approximately five years ago, land immediately adjacent to the library property went on the market. Recognizing a potential opportunity for the Town, the Library Trustees and Board of Selectmen met with the property owners. Unfortunately, the parties could not agree.

Late in 2016, other potential uses of this property were under consideration. Knowing that the Town was not in a position to act quickly and that the property owners did not want to wait until a March Town Meeting vote, a group of 15 Auburn residents and officials formed the “Friends of Auburn”. They met with the Library Trustees and the Board of Selectmen to determine the Town’s interest in potentially owning this property. Receiving positive encouragement, the Friends of Auburn negotiated with the property owners and secured a 1.9-acre parcel of land adjacent to the library property.

The Friends of Auburn raised \$200,000 to purchase the property with the sole intent of holding it for the Town. In doing so, they are providing an interest-free loan to the Town with the full support of the Board of Selectmen.

There is nothing specifically planned now and nothing would happen immediately. Without the addition of the land, nothing is possible and future library growth can only happen somewhere else. If the Town acquires this property, it opens up a host of potential opportunities. That could mean an expansion of the library. It could mean a “community center” type facility. It could mean different things for young and senior alike. With the land, Griffin Free Public Library and the Town of Auburn can plan for the future.



Town Warrant Article #5:

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Two-hundred thousand dollars (**\$200,000**) to purchase the 1.9-acre parcel of land (Tax Map #26, Lot #10) on Hooksett Road adjacent to existing Town property occupied by the Griffin Free Public Library. This sum to come from the unreserved fund balance (surplus) as of December 31, 2017 with no additional amount to be raised by taxation in 2018. **(Recommended by the Board of Selectmen)**
(Recommended by the Budget Committee)