

MOUNT VERNON PUBLIC LIBRARY

916 Cleveland Avenue
MOUNT VERNON, WASHINGTON 98273

May 14, 1968

Senator Warren G. Magnuson
Senate Office Building
Washington D. C.

Dear Sir;

Last November the voters of the city of Mt. Vernon approved a \$150,000 bond issue for expansion of the present library. We judged that this amount would be acceptable to the voters, but since maximum development of the existing location will cost about \$185,000 we applied for a \$35,000 Federal grant under the Library Services and Construction Act. The Washington State Library Commission approved our grant and we instructed the architect to proceed. With the working drawings well along we were informed that since the site is on a flood plane and 6 feet below the 50 year flood level all parts of the building, old and new, must be flood proofed in order that Federal funds be granted. Miss Maryan Reynolds, Washington State Librarian, requested a variance from the Army Corps of Engineers. Her request has been denied.

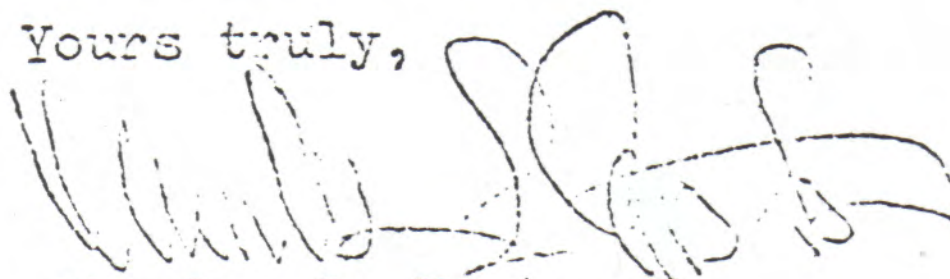
We understand the purpose and the value of flood-proofing but it makes little sense in our situation. The present building was constructed with internal supporting members and the walls are non-supporting screen walls. The walls, if flood-proofed as is, could not support six feet of hydrostatic pressure without collapsing. The architect has estimated that flood-proofing the total structure without reinforcing the existing walls would cost \$50,000. So far he hesitates to estimate reinforcing costs and is unsure that it could be done for any even remotely reasonable figure.

Even if the State Library Commission should grant us an additional \$60,000 or \$70,000 (which is very unlikely in view of the demands for funds) we would consider this a gross waste of the taxpayers money. This is not a flash flood area. If a six foot flood should occur books and equipment would be removed to safe ground and the loss would be but a small fraction of the original flood-proofing cost.

Thus it appears that if a variance is not granted we will be forced to build a lesser addition which does not make full use of the present site. We are hopeful that through your offices the Corps of Engineers may be induced to reconsider their ruling. We have also written Senator Jackson and Representative Needs.

I personally consider our present Washington delegation as strong and efficient. I have faith that you can help us out of our dilemma. Your help will be most sincerely appreciated.

Yours truly,



Charles L. Easton
Chairman Board of Trustees

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