



It is a truth universally acknowledged that a construction project must be either hurrying toward a deadline or waiting...waiting...waiting.

This summer was a lot of the latter: bidding, permitting, and NYSED review all seemed to move *s l o w l y*; the lack of updates from the Library was because...well, there were no updates to be had.

But that has all changed, *and how!*

Read on for:

- A final update on RTU-6
- Major news about the retaining wall
- The next steps with our building improvements and relocation (!)
- A deeper dive into the project from Phil Rice, chair of our Building & Grounds committee, and some of our engineers

RTU-6



Our rooftop unit was installed in June; it's a great piece of progress to point out to people because it's so visible. Literally, from all over Croton Avenue.

Recap: The unit's installation was expedited to help cool the mezzanine and second floor since the AC unit that serviced that area failed in 2025, leading to high temperatures and numerous service disruptions. We wrote a New York State Construction Grant for a portion of this project, and preparatory work began over the winter. While there were some manufacturing and shipping hiccups along the way, the project went smoothly and successfully overall--our engineers have done numerous rounds of testing to ensure that the unit is functioning as it should, and library Building & Grounds staff has been trained on using and maintaining the unit.

The end result? For the first time in literal *years*, there is cool air on the mezzanine. It's almost disconcerting!

The final reports from engineers and manufacturers are being submitted and this portion of the project will soon officially be **complete**.

Phase I: Retaining Wall



Okay. [*Stretch. Deep breath*]. This is a lot.

Our engineers completed design work for the retaining wall stabilization work, utility remediation, and pavement resurfacing and we received NYSED approval to proceed with the work. Our engineers also did design work on a pedestrian walkway that will connect the upper level of the parking lot to the Croton Avenue entrance (huge sighs of relief from anyone with a stroller, wheelchair or mobility aid who can't find parking on the lower level!). This piece of the work will go to NYSED separately, but soon.

Back to the big project.

Once NYSED approvals came back, we were able to put the project out to bid--and we wound up doing that more than once. During two rounds of bidding, the project received one bid each time that came in substantially higher than the amount we had budgeted.

Fiscal responsibility to the Ossining community is paramount to us. These bids were rejected.

This, of course, pushed the timeline back considerably--work on the wall had been anticipated to start over the summer, but the project team prioritized our budget over our schedule. We chose to rebid the project in hopes that we'd receive multiple bids that were more in line with our estimates.

Luckily, we did. Our construction managers and engineers interviewed the low bidder at the end of August; this company has extensive experience with large scale projects and, especially, work with the kind of tiebacks that will be used in our retaining wall. After this interview, our construction managers recommended that we award this company the bid.

The Board of Trustees will be voting to approve this at their September 28 meeting. Once this approval happens and the bid is officially awarded, everything starts to really happen: submittals, contracts, material acquisition, and then, eventually, construction. A major and important part of our project is kicking off!

So. What does that mean for all of us and our parking lot?

Well...**the parking lot is going to be closing.**

I'll give you a minute.

There's going to be a tremendous amount of work being done in the parking lot's lower level and the upper levels will be used to park construction vehicles and equipment.

We know this is going to be incredibly disruptive. We know this is going to be incredibly inconvenient. We do not know a specific day that this closure will begin, but we will share as soon as we do. We apologize for this disruption and thank you in advance for your understanding as we embark on this part of the project.

Phase II: Building Improvements



This portion of the project is proceeding exactly as it should be (sigh of relief). All of our documents are currently under review with SED.

Over the summer, the Library applied for a New York State Construction Grant for a portion of the project, which includes work to the first floor that enhance safety, security, and accessibility. We plan to apply for this grant every year in order to offset a part of the project's total cost and are working with the [Ossining Library Foundation](#) about possible fundraising opportunities.

What Comes Next?

Construction on the Library building is anticipated to begin in Summer of 2027. What does that mean for OPL programs and services?

Well...it means they'll be taking place elsewhere. The Library is currently in the process of leasing alternate locations for the duration of our construction. Because the Library building is so large, it's difficult (impossible?) to find another space that offers the same amount of square footage, as well as our requirements for ADA compliance, and parking/public transportation access. This means that services will be split between two locations.

We will be sharing details as soon as we have them and are striving to make the transition as seamless as possible.

An Engineer's Deeper Dive

It won't come as a surprise when I say this but I do not have an engineering or construction background; I heard the word shotcrete for the first time in 2026 (based on how often I am currently using it in conversation, I am absolutely making up for lost time and irritating everyone I know).

I've heard from several members of the community that they'd appreciate a closer look at the project from an engineer's perspective, and luckily for us, we are currently working with the best group of engineers and have on our Board of Trustees Phil Rice, a retired Civil Engineer. All of them have agreed to do more detailed updates for me as we go through the project, so those of you who would like a [more technical recap can find one here](#).

As always, please feel free to reach out with questions, complaints, concerns, or primal screams about the parking lot--you can always [email me here](#).





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