

Springfield Library Studio

ARCH 4/584
Fall 2011
Instructor: Tom Hille

Springfield Library Representative: Rob Everett, Library Director
City of Springfield Representatives: Jeff Towery, John Tamulonis, Courtney Griesel
SCI Representative: Chris Jones

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Topic

Civic libraries are vital social and cultural institutions that provide communities with universal access to information and ideas—a fundamental public service that better enables us to be informed, engaged and productive members of society. At no time in the past has the role of public libraries been more important than today, with dramatic increases in the amount and complexity of information available, and new forms of media and mass communication drastically impacting contemporary life.

The Springfield Library Studio will explore the potential of the contemporary civic library to create a meaningful architectural expression—one that represents holistically the values, aspirations and needs of the community it serves. Related design themes include: community use and civic associations; library identity and sense of place; diversification of library activities; flexibility and adaptability for multiuse; integration of new information technologies; and qualitative enhancement of the library environment. As part of the University of Oregon Sustainable Cities Initiative, these themes will be developed within the guidelines of sustainable design practices that support creative and responsible urban development.

Project

For the 2011-2012 SCI Program in Springfield, the City is planning a new public library located downtown on a half-block site near City Hall. The location promotes downtown economic development with pedestrian connections to nearby businesses and the possibility of integrated commercial and residential uses on site. A detailed building program will be developed, with activities and space needs determined by library staff, with input from the City and community. The Library Foundation, which will be involved in the planning process, has expressed interest in a building that makes a strong architectural statement.

The design process will include: analysis of architectural precedents; program development and code review; site analysis and design; and comprehensive building projections in drawing and model form, at a range of scales.

For sustainability, the library design will meet standards for a Silver LEED Certified building.

Precedents: Civic Identity, Community Use, Sustainability

Tom Hille is an architect, designer and researcher based in Seattle. He is currently working on a design study of new neighborhood and community libraries in the U.S.