

**Committee to Save the
NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY**

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The Committee to Save the New York Public Library, until now an informal coalition of New Yorkers and other users of the New York Public Library at 42nd Street and Fifth Avenue, has just established itself as a formal organization. The group is calling for a halt to the Central Library Plan (CLP), which, at enormous cost to the city and its taxpayers, would install a circulating library in the 42nd Street building where the historic central book stacks now stand, displacing 1.5 million books to New Jersey. Last spring, the Committee circulated a letter opposing the CLP that drew over 1,000 signatures, among them those of Mario Vargas Llosa, Salman Rushdie, Lorin Stein, Jonathan Galassi, Jonathan Lethem, Art Spiegelman and Francine Prose.

Today, the Committee is issuing **“The Truth About the Central Library Plan.”** This detailed analysis questions many of the Library's assumptions and calls for public debate about the CLP's impact on the Research Library and its users, on branch libraries throughout the city, and on the financial well-being of the library itself.

[CLICK HERE TO VIEW: “The Truth About the Central Library Plan.”](#)

The Central Library Plan (CLP) will consolidate two midtown libraries—the Mid-Manhattan and the Science, Industry and Business Library—into the 42nd Street building at an estimated cost of over \$300 million (including \$150 million to be paid by New York City). There has been widespread skepticism among library patrons, preservationists and architecture critics about the wisdom, financial feasibility, and aesthetic quality of the plan. The Committee to Save the NYPL believes these criticisms must be reviewed and discussed publicly before the CLP is put into operation.

Specifically, the Committee to Save the NYPL is asking that the CLP be halted until:

1. An independent agency makes public a detailed cost analysis of the CLP, including potential cost overruns—which have been a regular feature of projects of this kind at other cultural institutions. Even as the library insists it will stay within budget, the chairman of its board admits that “Our own budget estimates are reasonable, but even they cannot be refined with any precision at this stage.”
2. The NYPL seriously considers the suggestions of critics Ada Louise Huxtable and Michael Kimmelman that the 42nd Street building be left intact and attention directed instead to a renovation and expansion of the Mid-Manhattan building. Kimmelman points out that “the Mid-Manhattan site...has the potential to be redeveloped as a 20-story building. The library could also sell some 100,000 square feet of unused space.... A new Mid-Manhattan branch should cost a fraction of gutting the stacks and could produce much better architecture.”
3. The NYPL administration provides more than improvised figures about the impact of spending \$150 million of city money on the 42nd Street building, money that could otherwise be used for the many branch libraries in desperate need of support and for replenishing Research Library staff positions (1/3 of the staff has been laid off since 2008).
4. The New York State Historic Preservation Office conducts a full assessment of the plan's impact on the iconic 42nd Street building (a State and National Historic Landmark).

The Committee will continue to monitor the NYPL and reveal the truth about its proposals. We urge others to join our efforts to **stop the Central Library Plan.**

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