



Stalco Construction completes foundation of the new \$27.8 million, 30,000 s/f Queens Library at Elmhurst; Designed by Marpillero Pollak Architects

August 13, 2012 - Design / Build

Queens borough president Helen Marshall, New York City council member Daniel Dromm, library president and CEO Tom Galante, Stalco Construction president Alan Nahmias and NYC DDC commissioner David Burney recently poured the last of the concrete for the foundation of the new Queens Library at Elmhurst with members of the community. Now the new library is officially on the rise. It is anticipated to open in 2014.

"Future success is based on a solid foundation. And so, it is my pleasure today to join city councilman Danny Dromm, library president and CEO Tom Galante, and all our partners in government and the community to put the finishing touches on a foundation that will support a wonderful state-of-the-art library that will include a Memory Wall and original building bricks to acknowledge our past as we build for the future. I have believed for many years in the power of libraries to educate and inspire. And, I have had the privilege of allocating more than \$117 million to our libraries since becoming borough president in 2002. I take great pride in knowing that more than \$23.5 million from my office will help to build this new facility, which will double the size of the former Elmhurst library," said Marshall.

Dromm said, "This is a very exciting development for Elmhurst. It is important for an area so diverse and dense to have a library that can serve the needs of local residents. As chair of the New York City Council's Immigration Committee, I am keenly aware of how important libraries are for our immigrant population. Libraries provide a place to learn English, catch up on news from back home, and connect with loved ones who are far away. The new, larger Queens Library will meet the needs of all members of our community and offer more services than the old library."

"Elmhurst is a thriving neighborhood that needs a state-of-the-art library to support education, job growth and intellectual development. The new design by award-winning Marpillero Pollak Architects will combine all the library features the community deserves while paying homage to the library's legacy in Elmhurst," said Thomas Galante, Queens Library's president and CEO.

"The new, \$27.8 million, 30,000 s/f Elmhurst Library is one of the most important and best-designed public projects currently under way in New York City," said Alan Nahmias, principal of Stalco. "The library will feature numerous environmentally responsible materials and systems, green roofs, and energy saving engineering solutions. It will also be one of the first projects to incorporate New York City's new Active Design Guidelines, a set of architectural principles that encourage building tenants and visitors to engage in a physical activity. Today's ceremony marks the completion of the building's foundation that required 1,200 cubic yards of concrete, delivered by more than 100 trucks."

In addition to general contractor Stalco and architect Marpillero Pollak Architects, the project team

includes structural engineer Severud Associates, MEP engineer and Engineers, lighting designer See/Arch and landscape architect Wallace Roberts & Todd.

The new Queens Library at Elmhurst will be double the size of the former library, featuring four levels for customer service with elevator access to all levels. Features include separate library areas for adults, children and teens; a large 32-computer Cyber Center for customer use; a new Adult Learner Center; an interior reading atrium and front and rear community gardens. "Memory features" will preserve the library's legacy in the community. Original bricks will be used in the new façade. The nostalgic Children's Room fireplace will be relocated to the new building. There will be a 1906 Memory Wall plus many other acknowledgements of the library's long history in the community. The new library will cost \$27.8 million. Funding for the new library was provided by BMarshall, Bloomberg and Dromm.

While the new building is under construction, library service is being provided from a temporary building parked behind the church on 85-08 51st Ave. at Broadway. The Adult Learning Center is holding classes in the St. James Gymnasium at 84-07 Broadway.

Queens Library is an independent, not-for-profit corporation and is not affiliated with any other library. Queens Library serves a population of 2.3 million in one of the most ethnically diverse counties in the U.S. and has among the highest circulations of any public library system in the world. For more information about programs, services, locations, events and news, visit the Queens Library web site at www.queenslibrary.org or phone 718-990-0700. Queens Library. Enrich your life®

Architecture

During early design phases, Marpillero Pollak Architects (MPA) investigated patterns of use by library patrons. "We were impressed by the intensity with which the local community used the library: as a venue for social gathering, interaction between generations, educational facility, news and information source, internet access, cultural setting, and, of course, as a reading and books borrowing outlet," said MPA Principal Linda Pollak. "Whenever we visited in the morning, there would be a large group of patrons outside, waiting for the library to open. It was clear that the library needed to expand in order to accommodate the community that places so much importance on it."

The results of MPA's initial analysis, including demographic patterns and forecasts, new library and learning technologies and Queens Library's philosophy influenced the project's architecture, interior design as well as outdoor spaces. "The architectural design for the library is based on three concepts: transparency, identity and subtle differences within a community, and 'spine'," explained MPA Principal Sandro Marpillero. "The transparency theme is the reflection of Queens Library's mantra of transparency and visibility in the community it serves."

The architects implemented it literally, creating a design that focuses on the visibility of the inner works of the new library both in its interiors and from the street vantage point. This is best represented by two 25-foot high structural glass cubes embedded in the building's terracotta façade.

The Broadway cube, the most striking feature of the library's exterior, will showcase artist Allan McCollum's large installation titled "Shapes". The "Shapes" project, a series of artworks consisting of individual, unique, abstract shapes, symbolizes the concept of individuals with differences coming

together as a community, the second theme of the architectural design. In addition to the main "Shapes" project, smaller installations, providing clues about the shapes' assembly, will be present in the main stairwell and elevators.

The concept of the spine was borne out of the understanding of the library visit as an urban-like experience of exploring varied points of interest. MPA developed the urban spine concept as a concrete pathway that spans from the exterior sidewalk to become the main avenue of the library's main floor in a consistent manner, with points of interest located along the way, including displays of new arrivals, a 'newsstand' with newspapers in many languages, and a history exhibition, as well as a monumental open 'book' stair, inviting patrons to ascend to the second floor of the library. The spine integrates exterior and interior of the library and leads visitors of all ages on the tour of exploration, as well as towards their various destinations: the library's diverse program spaces, whose identities are conveyed through variously colored "portals."

Construction

The new library will house an entry plaza, decorative wall commemorating the original library building, lobby with new arrivals display, Park Reading Room, Broadway Reading Room, teen space, children's library, adult learning center and classrooms, two stairs, main circulation spine, newsstand kiosk, Carnegie Room, and staff break room. The Park Reading Room will be located at the center of the building and visually connect to the adjacent park and garden, while the Broadway Reading Room will overlook the street and feature artist Allan McCollum's 20' x 20' "Shapes" wall installation.

"The project encompasses demolition of the pre-existing structure and construction of a three-story library building with an adjacent community park and learning garden. The new branch will feature a concrete foundation, steel frame structural system, terracotta-clad façade with metal bands, and two expansive glass cube spaces. The structural and architectural designs allow for a potential future expansion," explained Stalco Project Manager Robert DeThomasis.

The deepest point of excavation reaches 30 feet below grade at the location of the ejector pit, in the north-east end of the site. The site is located atop capillaries feeding into the nearby Newton Creek, with the water table level reaching six feet above the bottom of the foundation. The watertight "bathtub" foundation system consists of the PRE-PRUF by Gracie roll out plastic liner sealed with self-adhesive tabs. The 30-inch thick reinforced concrete foundation mat slab rests above the liner. Construction of the mat slab required approximately 1,200 cubic yards of concrete delivered by more than 100 trucks. The 12-inch thick, reinforced concrete foundation walls stand atop the slab and reach the height of 14 feet above the slab.

The building's structural system will consist of a steel frame above the concrete foundation. The foundation walls feature beam pockets with imbedded steel plates and anchor bolts pockets for steel columns. Following the installation of beams and columns the pockets will be filled with grout. The beams above the lower level will support the main floor of the new library. The longest beams, 28 feet long, will provide an unobstructed, column-free space in the adult center.

Prior to the commencement of the excavation, the team underpinned the high-rise residential building directly adjacent to the south edge of the library site. The 47-foot long underpinning system consists of a concrete wall extending the existing building's foundations five feet down to reach the level of the excavation as well as metal plates reaching the depth of 22 feet.

The logistics of the construction process are complex, as the site provides a very limited materials storage space and is bordered by two busy streets, including Broadway, a major commercial thoroughfare. The team obtained two one lane street closure permits, one on Broadway and one on 51st Street. The 51st Avenue lane is occupied by the site water removal and filtration system, preventing staging of construction operations. The majority of the site traffic takes place on the Broadway side, with some deliveries taking place through the 51st Avenue gate. Stalco developed a detailed logistical and staging plan that coordinates deliveries of materials and removal of excavation debris. During erection of the steel structure for the building, Stalco will carefully time the deliveries of steel pieces to allow their installation or placement in correct sections of the site immediately upon arrival, which will alleviate the issue of shortage of storage space.

"The planning challenges include coordination of fabrication of a multitude of exterior materials, some custom manufactured in several countries. For example, the glass panels are manufactured in the U.K. and treated in Germany prior to the delivery to the construction site in Elmhurst," said Stalco Superintendent Kevin Strebel. The library exterior walls will feature stripes of pre-manufactured terracotta tiles, metal panels, brick and expansive glass. The glass cubes will feature prominently within the library's building and incorporate an innovative structural system.

"In order to accelerate the construction process, Stalco began exterior envelope systems coordination and shop drawing development very early in the pre-construction phase," continued Strebel. "Unusually for construction projects, the building's envelope development began even prior to the structural steel shop drawing development. Stalco closely coordinated all shop drawings and ensured all fabricators developed their sections of the exterior wall with the understanding of the exact dimension requirements of other manufacturers and steel fabricators. The early planning for the complex exterior wall allowed the team to avoid delays caused by the unusually long lead items, such as the custom glass panels, which require up to 10 months to manufacture, review, approve and ship."

The roofing system also presented the construction team with logistical and technical challenges. The new library will feature six different roof systems, including extensive and semi-intensive roofs with vegetation. Stalco began work on the roofing systems early in the pre-construction phase as well.

Stalco Construction, Inc.

Headquartered in Islandia, NY, with a regional office in New York City, Stalco Construction, Inc. is a full-service general contracting and construction management firm active in the Greater New York area and on Long Island. In 2011, Building Design & Construction magazine ranked Stalco as the 75th largest general contractor in the United States. ENR New York magazine ranks Stalco as the

22nd largest contractor in the NY/NJ/CT Tri-state area.

Established in 1992, the firm builds commercial and institutional facilities for office, retail, educational, healthcare, governmental, entertainment, sports and worship clients. Stalco's personnel include professional engineers, architects, project managers, superintendents, and support staff. The value of the firm's on-going ground-up, interior, and capital improvement projects totals approximately \$120 million.

Stalco's affiliate, Stalco International Group, designs and erects custom engineered buildings for developers and architects of commercial, office, institutional, public, and industrial structures. Stalco works in a partnership with Varco Pruden Buildings, a division of BlueScope Buildings North America, a world leader of the pre-engineered buildings industry.

Since the firm's inception, its leadership and employees have been involved in supporting the local community through responsible corporate citizenship and charity work. The company's principals, Kevin G. Harney and Alan Nahmias, co-founded Contractors For Kids (CFK), a not-for-profit organization supported by nearly 300 Long Island-based construction and real estate organizations. CFK provides assistance to children and their families impacted by health-related crisis.

Stalco's current and recent work includes the \$8.4-million Battery Park City Community Center and the \$15-million restoration of the landmark Pier A in Manhattan; the \$24-million renovation of the Vaughn College of Aeronautics and Technology in Queens, NY; the new, \$5.2-million Emergency Department at the Lincoln Medical and Mental Health Center in the Bronx; the \$16.5-million renovation and expansion of the Long Beach High School in Lido Beach, NY; the \$1.4-million Home Fair store at the Atlas Park Mall in Queens NY; the Ultra Diamonds jewelry store in Riverhead, NY; the \$11.3-million renovation of the landmarked Erasmus Hall High School in Brooklyn, NY; the on-call Construction Management contract for the 780,000-square foot CA, Inc. Global Headquarters in Islandia, NY; and the \$30-million expansion and renovation program for the Three Village Central School District in Suffolk County.

Suggested photo caption and credit:

Elmhurst Library foundation 085 med RGB.jpg

Political leaders led the ceremonial completion of the foundations for the new 30,000-square-foot Queens Library at Elmhurst in Elmhurst, NY. Left to right: NYC DDC Commissioner David Burney, New York City Council Member Daniel Dromm, Queens Borough President Helen Marshall, Queens Library President Tom Galante and Stalco Construction President Alan Nahmias.

Photo by Ola Wilk/Wilk Marketing Communications

Elmhurst Library EL View_main entry med RGB.jpg

Designed by Marpillero Pollak Architects and under construction by Stalco Construction, the new

Queens Library at Elmhurst will feature a striking architectural design, including two glass cubes representing the ideas of openness and visibility in the community.

Rendering courtesy of Marpillero Pollak Architects

New York Real Estate Journal - 17 Accord Park Drive #207, Norwell MA 02061 - (781) 878-4540