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## New Book Drop Coming to Library

By Cathy Tyson



A new book drop will be conveniently located along Mt. Diablo Blvd. Photo Cathy Tyson

paid for by Friends of the Library. Mike Gilson, President of the LLLC Foundation, said they have been "considering a book drop for quite some time," the number of returns has "put a strain on their system." Even when the library is closed, library staff is needed to manually handle the overflow.

"These are our customers" said Kathy Merchant, Executive Director of LLLC Foundation, "and we want to keep them happy." The LLLC Foundation funds 53% of the building's expenses, and has cited the need for increased visibility and convenience for library patrons returning books. Merchant said the Foundation is sensitive to safety concerns-there's plenty of room for a car door to open without impeding the bike lane or vehicles on Mt. Diablo Boulevard.

Immediate neighbors aren't pleased; representatives from Boswells and Caffino believe it will have a negative impact, calling it "disruptive to our business" and "already a bad situation."

The City Council encouraged staff to make signage and curb painting crystal clear that only parking for approximately two to three minutes was allowed. For readers dropping off books, they should feel free to briefly stop in the designated spot, then round the driveway and head into the parking lot next door for coffee and party supplies.

Free books for everyone - a good thing, but Lafayette Library and Learning Center's (LLLC) success in getting books in the hands of readers becomes an issue when it comes time to return those books - existing book drops are overflowing with 30,000 returns per month. The odd location of two book drops at the rear of the building along Golden Gate Way and an automated receptacle in the main entrance lobby that's only available during open hours aren't meeting the needs of patrons.

A new driver-friendly option was recently approved by the City Council. A drop box will be located along Mt. Diablo near the edge of the sidewalk, just east of the bus stop. Special signs and curb markings will designate one spot for very limited parking, approximately two or three minutes, just enough time to get out of your car and deposit books. Certainly not enough time to collect children, grab a latte from the cafe or pick up books that are on hold.

"With the new building it's been a learn-as-you-go process," said City Manager Steven Falk, adding "people aren't naturally inclined to drive around the back of the building" to drop off books.

Plans call for a stainless steel structure that would be

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