



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Shelley B. Mayer

Legislative Delegation Announces Nearly \$300,000 in State Grants for New Rochelle Public Library Capital Improvements

SHELLEY B. MAYER October 19, 2020

| ISSUE: **PUBLIC LIBRARIES, CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS, NEW ROCHELLE PUBLIC LIBRARY, STATE GRANTS**



LEGISLATIVE DELEGATION ANNOUNCES NEARLY \$300,000 IN STATE GRANTS FOR NEW ROCHELLE PUBLIC LIBRARY CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

On Monday, October 19, the New Rochelle Legislative Delegation celebrated nearly \$300,000 in state grants awarded to the New Rochelle Public Library. The funding comes from the 2019-20 State Aid for Library Construction Program, a program strongly supported by Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins, Senator Shelley B. Mayer, and Assemblymembers Amy Paulin & Steve Otis.

The first grant, \$283,186, will be used for the Main Building of the New Rochelle Public Library to continue renovation of the 2nd floor including reconfiguration and repurposing of areas to make it more efficient and accessible to patrons.

The second grant, \$9,375, will assist the Huguenot Children's Library with replacing the stairway from the 1st floor to the lower level, including new lighting and sprinkler head, for improved and safer access.

Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins said, "Congratulations to the New Rochelle Public Library and Huguenot Children's Library for being the recipients of these grants through New York's Library Construction Program. I was proud to work with Senator Mayer and my Assembly colleagues to invest in this program during the budget process and I am excited to see it benefit our community in New Rochelle and the Westchester Library System."

Senator Shelley B. Mayer said, "Congratulations to the New Rochelle Public Library (NRPL) on receiving over \$290,000 in grants for important capital improvements. I am pleased to continue my strong support for capital funding for local libraries in this year's state budget. Public libraries are essential and trusted community centers, and the NRPL is a gem in the City of New Rochelle. Before I was elected to the legislature, I served on the Board of Trustees of the Yonkers Public Library. I recognize the value that public libraries add to communities, and I am committed to continuing to support these extraordinary community resources."

Assemblymember Amy R. Paulin said, "I am so pleased that the New Rochelle Public Library and the Huguenot Children's Library were among the public libraries awarded grants that will enable them to make necessary upgrades to their infrastructure. The New Rochelle Public Library, with its theater and art gallery in addition to traditional library resources,

provides information, programs, computer access and leisure activities to all of the members of the community. The Huguenot Children's Library provides welcoming indoor and outdoor spaces for New Rochelle's youngest citizens to learn, grow and play. I know that the caring staff members of both libraries have been eager to get back into improved spaces to offer the full range of reference services, story hours, performances and programs, even as they continued to serve their patrons with wonderful virtual programming and sidewalk delivery services during the difficult months of the Covid pandemic.”

Assemblyman Steve Otis, a member of the Assembly Committee on Libraries and Education Technology, said, “We have all been advocates for the NYS Library Construction Grant Program in the state budget which is vital to addressing the capital needs our local libraries. The New Rochelle Public Library has long history of successfully securing state grants from the program. These new grants continue to help fund ongoing improvements with state support while lowering costs to New Rochelle taxpayers.”

Rev. Dierdra Clark, President of the New Rochelle Public Library Board of Trustees, said, "On behalf of all the residents who view the New Rochelle library as the festival, life raft, and heartbeat of the New Rochelle Community, I want to thank Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins, Senator Shelley Mayer, and Assemblymembers Steve Otis and Amy Paulin for their continued commitment to libraries. These grants will provide much needed improvements to both the Huguenot Children’s library and the Main Branch in Downtown New Rochelle. We are so grateful for the work of our elected officials to fund much needed improvements at both branches of our library.”

Thomas Geoffino, Director of the New Rochelle Public Library, said, “We are delighted to learn our two NYS Library Construction Grants will be awarded to us in the near future, and we are very grateful for the Legislative Delegation’s support to make these grants available that benefit the residents of New Rochelle. Our Main Library grant will enable us to continue to

upgrade and repurpose our second floor space in order to make it more relevant, efficient and accessible to our many library patrons. The Huguenot Children's Library grant will allow us to replace the stairway that connects our first floor to our lower level space. Completion of this project will provide for improved and safer access for staff and patrons traversing this space. Our Library Board, staff and residents congratulate our elected officials in their ongoing support of a program that has helped us continuously improve our facilities in order to allow us to continue to serve as New Rochelle's beloved community hub."

More than 52% of the over 1,000 public library buildings in communities across New York are over 60 years old.

This capital grant is from \$34 million in capital funds for public library construction and broadband infrastructure projects provided in the 2019-2020 State Budget.