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Leers Weinzapfel Associates completes Roslindale Branch Library renovations

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Photo Credit: Jane Messenger

Boston, MA Leers Weinzapfel Associates has completely renovated the Boston Public Library's Roslindale Branch Library for 21st century use while respecting and restoring its signature design elements. One of the Boston Public Library's busiest locations, the 14,885 s/f library's historical blue color theme appears on its bright new entry, integrated into a series of multi-colored terra-cotta baguettes representing the diversity of the neighborhood and also serving as a metaphor for books on shelves. Slightly elevated from the adjacent street level and sheltered with landscape, an intimate reading garden with wood decking, seating, and fencing provides a pleasant outdoor space

in the midst of the site's busy urban intersection.

Photo Credit: Jane Messenger

The library's completely reconfigured interior revives this vital place of community learning and gathering. Its design takes advantage of historical features such as the central dome with clerestory lighting, under which a new central point circulation desk provides ease of access between library staff and patrons. A semi-circular, open reading space provides greater overall visibility while maintaining separate areas for adults, teens, and children. And a new "reading maze" now houses children's books, peaks young visitors' curiosity. A community room, reading room, conference room, computer stations, and an exterior urban reading garden complete the interior spaces. New roofing, new mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems were also installed.

All aspects of the library have been made accessible. A new canopy-covered entry eliminates outside steps and ramps and provides universal access at grade.

Photo Credit: Jane Messenger

level, leading to a gently sloped interior walkway connected to the main spaces. A new elevator provides library staff access to the basement space, which contains storage spaces for area organizations including the Friends of Roslindale Branch Library and the Roslindale Historical Society as well as other aspects.

"Our branch libraries are neighborhood treasures—as hubs of learning and community," said Boston Mayor Michelle Wu at the library's opening. "The Roslindale Branch Library renovation is a true reflection of our community...our families have this space to meet, read, learn, and play once more."

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