THE BERKELEY ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE ASSOCIATION
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February 28, 2011

Hon. Mayor & City Council
City of Berkeley
2180 Milvia Street
Berkeley, CA 94704

Re: Alternative Branch Library designs

Hon. Mayor & City Councilmembers:

We wish to call your attention to the excellent plans submitted by Todd Jersey Architecture (TJA) as alternative renovation designs for the South Berkeley and West Berkeley Branch Libraries.

No doubt you are acquainted with TJA's highly successful and widely publicized renovation of the Richmond Plunge. Berkeley could boast a similar success story by adopting TJA's very practical suggestions.

TGA's innovative designs for the South Berkeley and West Berkeley Branch Libraries renovations offer a number of advantages over the currently chosen designs. They:

- meet or exceed the libraries' programmatic & space requirements
- are cost-effective and well within the budget
- comply with Measure FF
- preserve two important historic resources
- provide much-needed civic street presence
- meet green construction standards
- comply with CEQA requirements

The Berkeley Architectural Heritage Association (BAHA) Board of Directors is very impressed with TJA's creative approach to solving spatial and programmatic challenges in the two branch libraries, and with the firm's ability to find a pragmatic way to salvage two beautiful historic buildings and combine them with state-of-the-art additions that address the current and future needs of these branch libraries' users, staff, and surrounding communities.

We urge the City of Berkeley and the Board of Library Trustees to study the proposed alternative renovation plans very carefully. The EIR requires that an alternative to demolition be seriously studied. The designs submitted by Todd Jersey Architecture not only provide such an alternative but also offer Berkeley a unique opportunity to nurture civic pride and improve community satisfaction.

Sincerely,

Daniella Thompson
President

Cc: Board of Library Trustees
Planning Commission
Zoning Adjustments Board
Landmarks Preservation Commission