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PETERBOROUGH -- If the town is to have a new library, it will be at the current site at the corner of Main and Concord streets, if all goes as planned.

Town Library trustees voted on May 24 to accept the recommendation of the 1833 Society that the new library should be at the present site. The 1833 Society is a nonprofit group working to raise private funds for a new library.

Over the past year the society, with the assistance of architect Jay Purcell, has studied three alternate sites – Centertown (at the corner of Summer and Main streets), the Guernsey Office Building and the Historical Society. “The library’s current site is the most suitable when all factors are taken into consideration,” said David Weir, chair of the 1833 Society and also a library trustee.

Both the Historical Society and Centertown sites presented challenges because the library would, in effect, be taking parking away from customers who would patronize downtown merchants. Both sites have limited parking.

While the Guernsey site offers plenty of off-street parking, it presents the challenge of a space shared with business, as well as a space that would need extensive renovations. It would also have been the least visible site.

The Historical Society site would also have entailed a shared building, as well as extensive renovations and an addition.

Architect Purcell’s report on these sites will soon be available on the library website.

“We’re glad to finally take this first big step,” said Marcia Patten, chair of library trustees.

She said that keeping the library at the current site will also have the advantages of allowing all library services to stay together with resulting efficiencies. One negative for each of the three alternate sites was that the new library would have been separated from the Kyes-Sage Bookshop as well as the iconic original building. The original building, with its classic portico, will remain where it is in any case.

Other trustees are treasurer Randy Brown, secretary David Simpson and John Vance. Two alternates sit on the board – Ron Bowman and Diane Burnett.

In addition to Simpson and Weir, members of the 1833 Society board include Karen Clement, Ron McIntire and Audrey White. Other 1833 members are Cy Gregg, Al Johnson, Tina Kriebel, and Peter Robinson.

The 1833 Society is named after the year that the world’s first free tax-supported public library began in Peterborough.