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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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SOUTH BRANCH LIBRARY PROJECT MOVES FORWARD

At its regular public meeting on Thursday, June 21, the East Baton Rouge Parish Library Board of Control directed Library Director Spencer Watts to move forward with the purchase of property for a south branch library in Rouzan Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) located on Perkins Road between Southdowns and Pollard Estates. The proposed neighborhood branch is part of the Library's 30-year Capital Improvement Plan, with all facilities constructed with no bonds or indebtedness on a Pay-As-You-Go basis. The Library has already set aside funding for this project.

The owner-developer, Engquist-Rouzan Commercial Development, LLC presented a concept for the proposed neighborhood branch to the Library Board at its regular public meeting on March 15, 2018. The developers discussed setting a value at of approximately \$1.7 million for the proposed site. Engquist stated that it would offer a generous discount with the excess as a donation to offset the cost for property in this premium location.

The identified property is a tract of land at the corner of Glasgow Avenue and Tupelo Street. This site will accommodate a neighborhood branch library of between 15,000 square feet and 18,000 square feet, with space for books and materials, dedicated spaces for teens and children, technology, meeting rooms, and collaborative study spaces. The site is accessible from Glasgow Avenue as well as from streets within the Rouzan TND. The library branch will be walkable with sidewalk access, accessible to bikes, and will also accommodate approximately 70 parking spaces plus more on-street parking. The existing large heritage oak tree on the property can be saved and featured in the design.

The Library is prohibited from paying more than the appraised value for any property. Since the March presentation was favorably received, the Library Board of Control directed Watts to obtain an appraisal of the property. The decision to proceed with negotiations was based on the delivery of the independent appraisal of the property, conducted by The Lakvold Group, LLC. The appraisal came in at \$1,690,000, which is above the proposed discounted price for the property. This amount will be treated as a donation by Engquist to the Library, which will better position the new library branch.

The next step is for the Office of the Parish Attorney to negotiate with Engquist-Rouzan representatives for the purchase of the property. Once an agreement is reached between the City-Parish and the developers, the purchase will move on to the Metro Council for approval. The City-Parish is the Owner and the Library is considered the User. Once the purchase is approved, the City-Parish Architectural Selection Board will announce a request for proposals and select the project architect, who will design the exterior in compliance with TND specifications and the interior to the Library's specifications. The City-Parish Architectural Services Division will oversee the project.

The East Baton Rouge Parish Library is a community service organization that connects our citizens with information, resources, materials, technology and experiences in order to make a positive difference in their lives. The Main Library at Goodwood is joined by 13 branches open seven days a week (hours vary), and Library services are available 24 / 7 at www.ebrpl.com. Please follow us on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube and Pinterest.