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ALLSTON BRIGHTON

After \$5-million, two-year project, Brighton branch set to reopen

Posted by Matt Rocheleau November 8, 2010 05:26 PM

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(Courtesy: City of Boston)

By Matt Rocheleau, Town Correspondent

After a \$5-million renovation, the [Brighton branch library](#) will reopen in mid-December, even as the city weighs the possible closure of another neighborhood branch about one mile away.

Part of the city's 26-branch system, the 22,400-square-foot library on Academy Hill Road will reopen at 11 a.m. on Dec. 11. Work began in January 2009 to update the 41-year-old building's mechanical equipment, accessibility and technology capacity, said a Boston Public Library release.

Renovations include a new teen space with café-style seating, more than 20 new computers, a self check-out machine, new circulation desk, new windows that provide added interior light, modern furniture and a new community room with a restored local historic piece, the Matchett Clock, the release said.

The branch will be one of Boston's first city-owned buildings to incorporate the U.S. Green Building Council's Leadership Energy Environmental Design (LEED) Commercial Interiors guidelines toward achieving LEED status, according to library officials.

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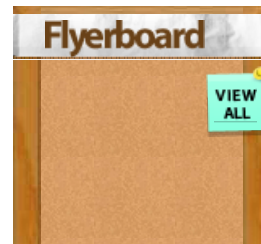
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On the Thursday prior to the Brighton branch's reopening, local residents and city and library officials will meet at the Faneuil branch in Oak Square for the [second meeting in recent weeks](#) on the fate of that branch. Faneuil is one of four city branches slated to close in the spring unless additional funding can be raised to keep the branches afloat through the remainder of the fiscal year, which runs through June.

The Brighton branch's history dates back to the Brighton Social Library formed over 200 years ago by town of Brighton residents, who paid a fee to access its resources.

When the town was annexed to Boston in 1874, the library became a branch the city's public library system, which is the country's first publicly-supported municipal library. That same year, as part of a plan approved previously, Brighton's library collection was moved from the Town Hall to an ornate building named for Brighton notable, James Holton, who donated \$6,000 – a large sum of money then – to buy books.

In 1969, the existing Brighton branch library building was opened on the same site as the Holton Library, which had been demolished.

To read more about Brighton's library history, visit the Brighton-Allston Historical Society's website, [here](#). To see pictures of the Brighton branch today, [click here](#).

E-mail Matt Rocheleau at mjrochele@gmail.com.

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