



Andrew Carnegie Free Library & Music Hall

For Immediate Release

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Library Park Resumes...Albeit Slowly Mudslide Pushes opening back to 2019

Like many Southwest PA communities, businesses and homeowners, the Andrew Carnegie Free Library & Music Hall has experienced the unpredictable, irascible behavior of Mother Nature. A late February mudslide from the steep bluff at the edge of our grounds dropped 12 truckloads of "spoil" (mud and rubble) onto Williams Way below.

No one was hurt, no property was damaged, and Carnegie's Department Public Works did a great job cleaning up the debris quickly.

Fortunately, despite all the rain this spring and summer, there have been no further problems. However, the incident was grave enough that Borough and the ACFL&MH agreed to commission a geotechnical survey. There were actually two surveys, plus several meetings with engineers, architects, contractors and other ACFL&MH and Borough representatives.

The studies revealed a "potentially hazardous" outcrop of rock, topped by trees along the edge of the ACFL&MH's bluff. The problem is caused by weathering and is more impacted by freeze and thaw cycles than rain. "Potentially hazardous" is not a description the Library & Music Hall can ignore. The ACFL&MH must stabilize its hillside before proceeding with Library Park.

It is a challenging project. After removing some trees from the edge of the bluff, contractors will extract the outcropping of rock onto the ACFL&MH grounds for removal. They will regrade and seed the edge of the slope and install a barrier fence. The ACFL&MH will plant new trees inside the barrier fence after Library Park is completed.

Library Park will *not* open before 2019. The ACFL&MH has permission from a foundation to use part of very generous grant to Library Park for the remediation. It is a costly correction. The Library & Music Hall is coordinating with the Borough to close Williams Way between Mary Street and Beechwood Avenue while that work is underway. In collaboration with the Borough, Jersey barriers topped by fencing will be installed along the edge of Williams Way. This will protect the street from any "talus" (debris) that will inevitably continue to fall.

The ACFL&MH will continue fundraising to raise the monies used for slope remediation to finish Library Park.

On a brighter note, the marvelous mosaic mural designed by artist Laura Jean McLaughlin and fabricated by more than 220 people in 14 spring workshops will be installed in September. By pure serendipity this extraordinary 117-ft piece of public art that will be enjoyed by generations of visitors to Library Park was created in the Andrew Carnegie Free Library & Music Hall's 117th year of service.