

SPRINGFIELD CITY LIBRARY:
*PART OF SPRINGFIELD'S HISTORY,
PART OF SPRINGFIELD'S FUTURE*

The Pine Point Branch

1931–present



204 Boston Road
Springfield MA 01109



Library Locations

A Brighter Future for Springfield Today

Central Library

220 State Street
(413) 263-6828

Brightwood Branch

(413) 263-6805
359 Plainfield Street

East Forest Park Branch

(413) 263-6836
122 Island Pond Road

East Springfield Branch

(413) 263-6840
21 Osborne Terrace

Forest Park Branch

(413) 263-6843
380 Belmont Avenue

Indian Orchard Branch

(413) 263-6846
44 Oak Street

Liberty Branch

(413) 263-6849
773 Liberty Street

Mason Square Branch

(413) 263-6853
765 State Street

Pine Point Branch

(413) 263-6855
204 Boston Road

Sixteen Acres Branch

(413) 263-6858
1187 Parker Street



A major fire did extensive damage to the Pine Point Branch Library building, often referred to as “the old Boston Road school,” on the night of April 25, 1970.

Originally the Pine Point section of Springfield was called the “Pine Plain” since there were so many Yellow Pines in the area.



“Since July a penny-a-day fund has been raised by the church toward the establishment of a branch library. This fund now totals \$147.”



So begins the story of Pine Point Branch Library. The year was 1931, and again (like Mason Square, Liberty, and Forest Park) in response to requests of area residents, a local church offered space in their building for a branch library.

On the corner of Jasper Street and Berkshire Avenue, the library housed in Union Church was open on Friday nights from 6-8 p.m. By January it was so busy that more hours were needed, and by the spring of 1932 the residents of Pine Point had gathered over 100 signatures on a petition asking the city to convert the “Boston-road school building” into a branch library. Aware of the need, Hiller C. Wellman, City Librarian, stated that the old school building was perfectly located and could easily be adapted for use as a comfortable branch library. At a May meeting Mayor Dwight R. Winter, the City Council, and City Realty Committee agreed to the property transfer of the school building to the Library Association after school was out in June. (Students would be moving into the new Hiram L. Dorman School on Lydia Street.)

Renovations were made and the new Pine Point Branch Library, serving residents three days a week, opened in the Boston Road School on June 1, 1933. According to the *Springfield Daily Republican*, “on the open-

ing day more that 1200 books were circulated and 200 new library cards were issued” by librarians Mrs. Miriam Shaw and Miss Geraldine Stafford. The new branch was well-suited to the stable working class neighborhood located in the center of Springfield. In fact the first affordable house built in Massachusetts under the state’s Housing Partnership Program was erected in Pine Point. (And yes, named for the numerous pine trees growing in the area.) Over thirty years later the two-story library building’s roof leaked and space was cramped. By 1966 Mayor Charles V. Ryan, Jr. was recommending a new library be built. In April 1968 city firemen saved the old school building from catching on fire when the house next door burned.

Unfortunately a major fire did extensive damage on the night of April 25, 1970, forcing the closure of the Pine Point Branch Library. The collection of 18,000 books was saved and moved into storage at other branches. In addition to the older branches, the Central Library and the Bookmobile, neighborhood residents were able to access materials at the recently opened Sixteen Acres Branch on Parker Street. The Pine Point Library Association was formed; people in the community united their efforts and pressed Mayor Frank H. Freedman for a new building. The following year plans were drawn up by Chamberlain and Thomas Architects for a one-story contemporary brick library able to house 35,000 volumes, with an open floor plan and large meeting room. Francis P. Keough, Library Director, said it would be a “library in the traditional sense as well as a neighborhood center for children, young adults and adults.”

Ground was broken on November 10, 1971 with the C. J. Driscoll Co., Inc. in charge of construction of the \$437,000 Pine Point Branch Library. The neighborhood must have felt like it was opening a huge gift on December 26, 1972 when they first stepped into the new modern library! The *Springfield Union* reported that about 300 people attended the Open House from 3-5 p.m. on January 7, 1973, including City officials, library trustees and staff, S. Dakin Chamberlain of Thomas Architects, Inc. and Cornelius J. Driscoll, president of C.J. Driscoll. Since its opening two weeks earlier, patrons had already borrowed 25 per cent of the collection, about five thousand books!

The Pine Point Branch Library, 204 Boston Road, currently houses over 55,000 items; patrons borrowed 37,000 books, DVDs and other materials in 2010. Seven computers are set up for public use plus if you bring in your laptop you may access our wireless internet service. A parking lot is adjacent this branch library, also home of the Read/Write/Now Adult Learning Center. We have a friendly and knowledgeable staff ready to help you select a book or movie, sign up for a program, or provide a daily newspaper to read.

Open hours:

Mondays 1-5 p.m.

Wednesdays 1-8 p.m.

Fridays 1-5 p.m.

