

Holliston Community Center Task Force Meeting Minutes

Date: 1 April, 2013

Location: Room Basement Pinecrest Room, Holliston Town Hall

1. Meeting Called to Order at 7:05 by Carl Damigella, Chairman. Task Force members in attendance: Carl Damigella, Kristen Hedrick, Michele Goldberg, Tom O’Leary, Heidi Schreuder-Gibson and Bob Malone.
-Audience in attendance: Bobby Blair, Holliston Net News; Kevin Conley, Holliston Town Selectman
2. Welcome new member of the CCTF: Margaret Fitzpatrick, Director of Youth and Family Services has joined the task force, but was not able to attend this meeting.
3. Public comment: there were no public comments offered.
4. Approval of 4 March 2013 Minutes – unanimously approved.
5. Discussion of Goals, Objectives and Tasks: Heidi passed around a draft survey for projected needs from stakeholders including town departments and groups. Some comments/additions were added. The Stakeholder survey will be emailed to the Task Force Committee members for input from 1) Parks and Recreation; 2) Youth and Family Services; 3) Veterans Affairs; 4) Senior Center Staff; 5) Historical Commission; all of these programs or departments could possibly be accommodated in a new Community Center if we can accurately determine the space, schedule, parking and facilities needs of each program. Michele Goldberg mentioned that the “Happy Holliston” facebook page has posted a survey “would you like to have a community center in Holliston?” So far, over 60 have responded. Could we get a listing of those who have responded – they seem like very interested and possibly motivated citizens. Heidi will inquire.
6. Community Center facilities visits. Carl and Heidi visited the Weston Community Center on 27 March 2013 from 4-6pm. Doug O’Donnell, Director of the Weston Recreation Department manages the facility and gave the tour. The Weston Community Center is located on town property next to the School Department building and the Middle School on Alphabet Lane. The Recreation Department was originally in the basement of the school gym (in 1985) – then was placed in the School Department Building until 1998 when Weston began fundraising (throughout the 1990’s) and built the new Community Center building. The new building cost \$4.2M (bond) to build (\$1.2M was raised privately), with an additional \$1.3M used to build up the school septic system. The building phase took 2 years. The Recreation department operates out of the Community Center with an annual budget of \$1.5M, and they return \$35K to the town each year. Rec department operates the “extended day” afterschool program which generates \$800K per year with hours from 2-4pm daily. The afterschool program serves K-3 in the building. Middle school afterschool

program stays primarily in the Middle school with band, orchestra and sports programs in the school building. The Community Center manager has an enterprise account that is used to purchase equipment and improvements needed in the building after approval at Town Meeting. Currently contemplating the purchase of a generator in order to better serve the community as an emergency shelter. Facilities: 22,050 square foot building with three levels: 22,000 sq feet useable space. The center has a Great Room with vaulted 2-story ceiling and wood beam/paneling/flooring for premium rental use (area of 20x40 sq feet seating 160): \$1,200 non-resident and \$800 resident Bar mitzvah, wedding and social parties; \$300 (3hr) birthday parties; \$1,200 professional meetings; used also for multiple town meetings and functions at no cost to town. Great room is used for exercise classes, afterschool play, and rentals. The Great Room has an adjoining kitchen that can be used for catering, but is smaller than an industrial kitchen – ideal for cooking classes for all ages. Weston Senior center is located on 1st floor, while Recreation center is located on 2nd floor, and classrooms are located on 3rd floor. Senior center has its own separate entrance and offices, with small kitchen, classrooms, dance/exercise room, card room, and sitting/meeting room. Senior outdoor patio with tall windows in card and meeting rooms provide good light. 1st floor is cozy and warm. Senior center is outgrowing their space, however. Pantry shelf exists in small closet, and a larger closet is devoted to extra wheelchairs/walkers/equipment. OPERATIONS: The Weston CC isn't as modular as the Natick CC. Note that the Natick CC has its own building manager. Weston CC is managed by the Recreation Director, who is the go-to person to solve all building problems. He meets regularly with the Senior Center staff and addresses their daily concerns, but is under great pressure to accommodate all while also running profitable programs in the building. May be too much for one person that creates friction between functions. Doug O'Donnell is a Holliston resident and offered to meet with the Task Force to answer further questions about Community Center planning.

Heidi volunteered to list the “top ten” favorite features that the CC Facilities Visit committee has identified from each site visit.

7. Town location search group. Carl met with Charlie Horn (commercial real estate in Framingham area). They reviewed the Hopping Brook/Washington corner lot location but found that the owners are under negotiation to sell a parcel to the Rail Trail Committee for access parking. Other parcels in this lot are small, and there are a lot of wetlands. It's hard to see how we could construct sufficient parking, septic and a large enough building for our needs here. Bob Malone passed around the site maps for review.

Bob Malone also provided site maps for the Town-owned property behind the VFW on Woodland St. This lot is “half-star” shaped with wetlands on the west end. Boston University property abuts this property on the east side, but even if we could form a mutual use parking lot with BU, we wouldn't have a wide enough driveway from Woodland to make this a useful site for a large Community Center

The Task Force talked about possibilities of removing Flagg School and rebuilding on this site, extending down to the Damigella ball field (relocating that field to the Town land off Woodland across the road) but this seemed impractical.

Carl Damigella discussed a new commercial property option – leasing the WA Wilde building on Summer Street. This is a large red barn-like warehouse of over 80,000 sq feet with attached 1-story buildings for offices. There is plenty of parking, and room for more than a Community Center – other departments like DPW could be located there too. Very multipurpose. Location is next to Wenakeening Woods entrance, just south of the Mission Springs housing and recreation fields. Task Force Committee members commented favorably on location, access, size and practicality. Interest was expressed in learning more about leasing options. Carl and Kristen Hedrick will inquire.

8. Report from Council on Aging about the Senior Center roof. It is going to be inspected. Peter Tartikoff Town Building Inspector is assisting.
9. Action Items:
 - Heidi send out Department Survey to Task Force Members
 - Heidi list top ten facilities features
 - Carl and Kristen inquire about Wilde Warehouse lease
 - Heidi send info about Community Center Task Force to Happy Holliston Survey effort. Inquire about access to respondents
 - Michele schedule visit to Franklin Senior Center (week of April 22nd)
 - Kristen schedule visit to Ashland CC (late May)

Next meeting: scheduled for Monday 6 May - at 7pm.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:30pm.

Respectfully Submitted

By Heidi Schreuder-Gibson, Secretary of the Holliston Community Center Task Force.

Attached:

Proposed Community Center – Program/Department Use Survey

**PROPOSED COMMUNITY CENTER
Holliston Program and Department Use Survey**

1. What hours of operation would you consider to be peak hours for your department, if located at a community center in Holliston? Check all that apply

- ☐ Mornings
- ☐ Afternoons
- ☐ Evenings
- ☐ Weekends
- ☐ Other: please describe

2. How much parking would your department require at a Holliston Community Center? Please enter the approximate number.

- Staff (Peak Hours?)
- Patrons (Peak Hours?)

3. Does your department require any special access to the building?

4. Any special features?

5. Space requirements for your department/program:

- Approximate number of offices for operation:
- Describe functions (reception counter; number of cubicles; private meeting rooms; file cabinets; other)

6. Typical space needed for your department/programs:

- ☐ Open space
- ☐ Classroom space
- ☐ Kitchen
- ☐ Other (describe)

7. What features would complement your department activities in a community center in Holliston? Check all that apply:

- ☐ Social events and activities
- ☐ Physical and fitness activities
- ☐ Educational programs
- ☐ Arts
- ☐ Gym
- ☐ Pool
- ☐ Kitchen/Lounge
- ☐ Mini Library
- ☐ Computer Room
- ☐ Game Room
- ☐ Classrooms
- ☐ Office Space for Town Departments
- ☐ Staff rooms
- ☐ Storage Space for Town and Community Volunteer Groups
- ☐ Fields
- ☐ All

Comment: