

Holliston Community Center Task Force
Meeting Minutes

Date: 5 August 2013

Location: Flagg Building, Recreation Department, 100 Linden St. Holliston, MA

1. Meeting Called to Order at 7:15 by Carl Damigella, Chairman. Task Force members in attendance: Carl Damigella, Kristen Hedrick, Heidi Schreuder-Gibson, Tom O'Leary, Keith Buday and Mark Aharonian. (5 members required for quorum).
2. Public comment: a minute of silence was taken in memory of past Community Center Task Force (CCTF) member Michele Goldberg who passed from our lives earlier this summer. Michele was honored by Selectman Kevin Conley for her dedication and service to community interests and projects in the Town of Holliston. Her enthusiasm and commitment will be missed by all as we continue working for the community that she served and loved.
3. Approval of Minutes – minutes for the 13 May and 4 June meetings were reviewed and approved unanimously by the CCTF.
4. Review of CCTF Charge given by the Holliston Board of Selectmen.
 - **Determination of the need:** The CCTF should work to determine the need within Holliston for a Community Center. Heidi pointed out that a very good survey of need was conducted by the previous Community Center Task Force in 2000, involving a school-based survey of over 200 students. Results of that survey are attached. (Town data from 2000-2005 reported on citytowninfo.com, shows that the town is experiencing a drop in student population; the 2000-2010 census statistics show that Holliston has a 1.8% drop in total population, but a growing senior population with an increase of 48% over this 10-year period. This town has a more educated population and a relatively higher income level than similar towns of this size nationwide; and Holliston has higher taxes than towns of similar size nationwide or statewide.)
 - **Explore other towns' approaches to providing these services in an effort to determine the best practices.** Carl and Heidi discussed the CCTF's Exploration Subcommittee walk-through of other Town Community Centers in Natick and Weston in the Spring. The CCTF was not able to schedule a visit to the Ashland and Franklin Centers before summer). Kevin Conley pointed out that Medway recently built a new Senior Center for under \$1M without any public financing. This was accomplished with grant funding and private donations. Kevin also asked whether the CCTF had considered all possible options for a potential community center in Holliston, ranging in complexity from the renovation of the Flagg School building to the building of an extensive facility at Potoma Park. He questioned the Task Force search for existing commercial buildings in town, such as the recently available Wilde building on Summer Street. Task force members commented that the apparent urgency of repairing or replacing three important department facilities drove this approach to the top of the list of considerations of

- the Site Subcommittee. Carl reported that the CCTF plans to hold discussions with the owner or realtor of the Wilde building to determine potential costs involved in a lease or sale of the building for a Holliston CC. These discussions will continued to be explored with town departments, the board of selectmen, and the owner/realtor to determine whether the location is a realistic alternative to building a center on town owned land. In the meantime, Kevin Conley suggested to the Task Force that we “refocus and look at ALL possibilities.”
- **Confirm the stakeholders.** Heidi sent out a survey to all town departments and volunteer organizations that might have a need or an interest in co-occupation of a Community Center. She reported that only two surveys were returned over the past 3 months. One was from the Council on Aging, and the other was from the Veteran’s Affairs organization for the Hopkinton/Holliston/Ashland area. Both organizations expressed an immediate need for space. Another survey from the Recreation Department is forthcoming, and is expected to demonstrate an emergency need for new space in order to continue operations (due to impending heating problems in the Flagg Building). The CCTF is aware that Youth and Family Services (currently housed in the Flagg Building with a failing boiler), also has an emergency situation requiring new facilities in 2013. CCTF also sent surveys to the Highway and Fire Departments, to gauge interest in co-locating in a Community Center facility, but received no response.
 - **Identify the services that the stakeholders need:** the returned surveys will be compiled and summarized. CCTF will follow up with non-responsive stakeholders.
 - **Examine potential other uses for the Community Center:** the CCTF found that the new Natick Community Center is an emergency shelter, with a backup generator, laundry facilities, and ample showers/sleeping space/parking with a full industrial kitchen and smaller kitchen facilities. Building security is provided by direct link to the Natick police station. Rentable space – both the Natick and Weston Community Centers had rentable function rooms. Few to no weddings were rentals for these facilities, but sports dinners, parties, bar and bat mitzvahs, and professional meetings were found to be good sources of income. (The most important source of income for Weston’s CC is the after-school children’s program – an option that is not available to a Holliston CC, due to the extensive Extended Day program already running in our schools.)
 - **Determine how the services get delivered.** In the course of talking with stakeholders and surveying interested parties, there are some unanticipated issues with the delivery of services that will need to be addressed in conjunction with building planning: 1) reception; 2) manning of the building during extended hours; 3) need for a building manager; 4) overextending the Recreation Department too quickly; 5) building access for seniors (distance from door to parking lot); 6) building location and public access.
5. After discussions on the focus of the CCTF and the progress of the Site Subcommittee’s findings, a tour of the Flagg building was conducted. This walk-through confirmed that many classrooms are in use by either the recreation department for classes (two classrooms), the school department (storage, 2

classrooms), the town offices (records storage, one classroom), or community group storage (PTSA, Lacrosse, and other sports groups). Office areas are currently occupied by the recreation department and Youth and Family Services, including meeting rooms. Kristen Hedrick reported that she has received quotations for installation of a new heating system to replace the old heating system (boiler) that has failed. The state of the building is very poor – years of unheated winters has taken a toll on the building’s façade and ceiling tiles are falling, mold is apparent by smell and sight, exterior doors and windows are no longer tight. Plumbing is functional, and one public use bathroom is available for Men’s and Women’s use, with approximately 3 stalls each. The building has been used as a dumping area for materials left over from town office and police department occupation, with litter, stacks of wood and debris in the hallways and unused rooms. Kristen Hedrick noted that a walk-through by the building commissioner last month confirmed that work was needed to keep the boiler operational through the winter – although a replacement might be needed. The building had “good bones,” but was in dire need of renovation (especially doors, windows, ceiling tile and floor tile) and mold/asbestos abatement. Keith Buday mentioned that there needed to be greater separation between the Flagg Building and the Middle School. Heidi noted that the original 2004 building plan for renovation of the Flagg Building for the first Community Center concept involved the removal of the two wings of the Flagg Building that were closest to the Middle School, allowing space for both a Fire Lane and outdoor basketball courts.

6. Other comments:

- Concerns were raised about the size and plan for the Wilde Building. Kevin asked if the CCTF had any knowledge of local interest from the Boys and Girls Club to establish a center in the area. He asked for a cost/benefits analysis for the Wilde building (possibly a trade-off study of the Pros and Cons of reusing a commercial building).
- The CCTF study would benefit from a usage listing of current activities at the Flagg Building.
- The CCTF should attempt to identify grant opportunities for local community or senior centers.
- Assess the potential for building sites including Potoma Park and Miller Hill (behind Pinecrest Golf Course).

7. Action Items:

- Contact Gerry Kennedy about Boys and Girls Club
- Meet with owner of Wilde Building
 - o Develop a cost/benefits analysis of Wilde Building
- Conduct a cost/benefits analysis of ground-up building projects at Potoma or Miller Hill.
- Conduct a cost/benefits analysis of Flagg Building renovation.
- Compile summary of Stakeholder Surveys
- Compile summary of past Student Survey

Next meeting: 7 Oct 2013 at the Senior Center.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:55pm.

Respectfully Submitted

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

2 ATCH:

- 1) Summary of 2000 Community Center Survey of Holliston Students
- 2) Summary of 2013 Stakeholders for Proposed Holliston Community Center

ATTACHMENT 1

Summary of 2000 Survey of Holliston Students

If there was a Teen Center in Holliston, would you go?

RESPONDENTS	YES	NO	UNDECIDED
Grade 6 (21 students responding)	100%	0	0
Grade 7 (161 students)	71%	24%	5%
Grade 10/11 (31 students)	84%	16%	0

What age group(s) would you like the Ten Center to be directed towards?

AGE GROUPS CONSIDERED:	ALL	<u>10-20</u>	<u>12-21</u>	<u>10-14</u>	<u>13-18</u>
Grade 6 (21 students responding)	---	19%	10%	24%	29%
Grade 7 (161 students)	5%	7%	16%	8%	59%
Grade 10/11 (31 students)	3%	0%	29%	0%	61%

If you were in High School, would you go to events if Middle School kids were there?

RESPONDENTS	YES	NO
Grade 6 (21 students responding)	67%	33%
Grade 7 (161 students)	63%	34%
Grade 10/11 (31 students)	26%	74%

When would you be most likely to use the Center?

	2-6pm	6-8pm	8-10pm	Wkend Days	Wkend nights
Grade 6	76%	14%	0%	29%	19%
Grade 7	42%	19%	15%	20%	25%
Grade 10/11	32%	32%	29%	6%	26%

How often do you think you would use the Center?

	Once a week	More than O/W	Once in a while	Never
Grade 6	24%	57%	19%	0%
Grade 7	25%	33%	35%	5%
Grade 10/11	19%	52%	26%	3%

*With approximately 215 students per grade. 10% 6th graders responded; 75% 7th graders responding; 7% 10-11th graders responding.

ATTACHMENT 2

Summary of 2013 Stakeholders for Proposed Holliston Community Center

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 (Rec Dept, Vets)**
- Afternoons (Rec Dept, Vets)**
- Evenings
- Weekends
- Other: please describe

Rec Dept: With a community Center we would have the space and ability to run programming and events on weekends and evenings and additional programs throughout the day.

Vet Affairs: May stay open late one day a week. May conduct a seminar once a year on a weekend.

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

- 3 - Rec Dep Staff (morning through afternoon)
- 15 - Rec Dep Patrons (morning through afternoon)
- 2 - Vet Affairs Staff (8-5)
- 1 - Vet Affairs Patrons (8-5)

Rec Dept: Pick up and drop off for programs would be the peak times. If we are able to expand the programming we would need additional parking spaces for the participants.

Vet Affairs: May require after-hours access to building.

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

Rec Dept: no

Vet Affairs: some after-hours access.

4. Any special features?

Rec Dept: A gymnasium would be the biggest benefit for the kids and programming activities. It would also benefit youth basketball and or adult basketball for gym rentals and programming.

Vet Affairs: ADA compliant entry including offices. Depending on the location and floor plan of the office space, may require an automatic door opener.

5. Space requirements for your department/program:

-Approximate number of offices for operation:

Rec Dept: two offices with reception area and office storage area and a meeting room.

Vet Affairs: 3 offices/rooms

-Describe functions (reception counter; number of cubicles; private meeting rooms; file cabinets; other)

Rec Dept: Classrooms and large activity rooms would be helpful. Four Classrooms and one carpeted multi purpose room would be beneficial. Gymnasium.

Vet Affairs: Approx 500-600 sq feet. Concept is 2 offices and a storage/file room. An outer office will act as a work space/reception desk, an area for customers to sit and for placement of handouts/information.

1 Office for Director of Veteran Services

1 Office (can be 10x12) for Veteran Agent

The outer office is a work space for staff support, volunteers, etc. File/storage room is preferred, but with sufficient space, this can be located in the outer office.

6. Typical space needed for your department/programs:

Open space (Rec Dept)

Classroom space (Rec Dept)

Kitchen

Other (describe)

Rec Dept: Classrooms are great- if there was a kitchen then we could run programs for the public.

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

Social events and activities (Rec Dept)

Physical and fitness activities (Rec Dept)

Educational programs

Arts (Rec Dept)

Gym (Rec Dept)

Pool (Rec Dept)

Kitchen/Lounge (Rec Dept)

Mini Library

Computer Room (Vet Affairs)

Game Room (Rec Dept)

Classrooms (Rec Dept & Vet Affairs)

Office Space for Town Departments (Rec Dept)

Staff rooms

Storage Space for Town and Community Volunteer Groups

Fields (Rec Dept)

All

Comment:

Rec Dept: Office space for the Parks & Recreation Department is the main priority at this time.

-A gym would be a huge asset to the Recreation Department and the community.

-There is a need for additional gym space in town for youth and adults.

-A small field would be helpful for sports or fitness programs.

-Classrooms and a large multi purpose room would be most beneficial for programming.

-A pool would be a dream to have for the community.

CCTF NOTE: We need the document file from Council on Aging “Memo – Description of New Building Requirements). Need survey results from Council on Aging.