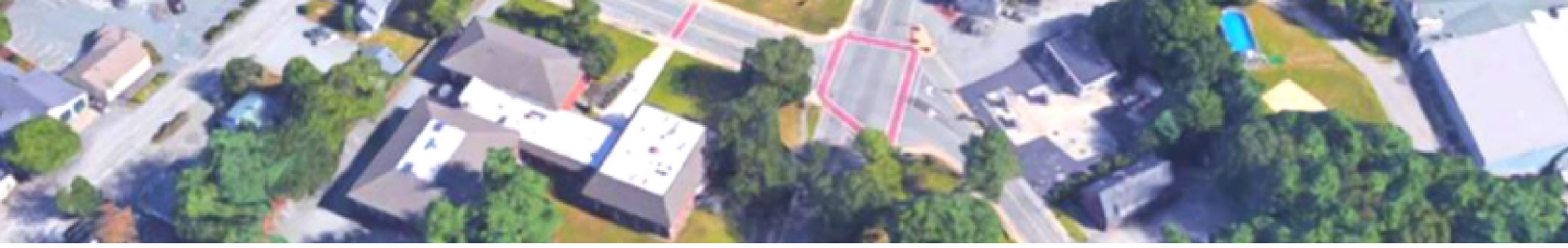
CARYL COMMUNITY CENTER COMMITTEE

Summary of Findings
Frequently Asked Questions

August 2019



Caryl Community Center Committee

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

At the Board of Selectmen's request, the Caryl Community Center Committee analyzed two options for the continued use of community space in the Town Center: fully renovate and continue to provide community programs at Caryl or build a new community center facility for that purpose.

You can explore additional documentation of the committee's work at **www.carylproject.info**

RENOVATE CARYL, $10-$13mm

Our research confirmed that Caryl is an active building. It currently provides space for fitness, recreational and social programs for a wide age range of residents, rehearsal space, meeting space, storage for both town departments and community organizations, event rentals, and the CDC, a pre-school. It also houses the Town's Council on Aging and Park and Recreation offices and their ongoing services.

In addition to the town offices and Caryl licensees, more than 25 community organizations –e.g., community theater groups, Dover Mothers' Association, Friends of the Dover Library, Scouts, garden clubs, etc.–and 300 private events put the space to use in a 15-month period.

Our analysis reflects that the Caryl building is, at 40,000 sq. ft, oversized for our town's needs. However, Dover does not have alternate space that could accommodate the programs, services and town office space provided at Caryl. The Town House has limited office space available and has requested 5,000 sq. ft of space for potential future office space. The library, schools, and town garage are fully occupied. The Whiting Road building is in poor condition and would need major renovations or a tear down and rebuild.

To understand what a full renovation of Caryl would include we used the past 20 years of previous studies, reports & recommendations all of which are on the Town website. Costs are updated to reflect current builder pricing. We also conferred with Don Mills, of Mills Whitaker Architects, who worked for the town on each of the reports. Finally, we contracted with the consulting firm, On-Site Insight, Inc. to obtain a second opinion. Their report (November 27, 2018) confirmed the earlier findings.

We assessed two renovation options:

Renovation, $10mm

This includes all the work that must be done to maintain Caryl to ensure that the building is safe, comfortable and accessible. This option includes:

Building Mechanical and Electrical

- Replacing the building's heating and ventilation system.
- Complying with ADA and code requirements.
- Upgrades to mechanical and electrical systems
- Fire suppression system with underground water storage tank

Building Architectural

- Structural and exterior work
- Improvements to hall/stairs
- Improvements to corridor finishes
- Lighting updates
- Equipment replacement in cafeteria and kitchen
- Individual room updates

Enhanced Renovation, $13mm

This includes all items included in the Full Renovation Option plus select enhancements to better reflect Caryl's role as a modern community center.

Building Mechanical and Electrical

- Energy retrofit

Building Architectural

- Reconfiguration of interior walls, if needed, to meet programs requirements
- Renovation of the 2nd floor Caryl Room (a.k.a., the library)
- Renovation of the cafeteria and kitchen
- Enhanced public entrance including a reception station and welcoming space

BUILD NEW FACILITY, $13.5mm*

We assessed a new building to replace the current structure:

We surveyed 15 towns to understand what space and programs/services they offered their citizens and developed a proxy facility that would meet Dover's residents' needs.

The three communities with community centers and demographics most like Dover (population size, town character and tax base) that best met Dover's requirements are:

- **Stow** (population 6,000) - 11,000 sq ft community center plus shared storage space. Stow's building, renovated in 2016, is 33,000 sq. ft. Approximately one third is used for the community center, one third for the fire station & one third shared storage.
- **Wellesley** (senior population of 6,000) - 12,400 sq ft Tolles Parsons senior center built 2017. Wellesley also has a renovated recreation center.
- **Weston** (population 12,000) - 22,000 sq ft community center built 2001

We selected Stow's Community Center space (recreation space and storage) and the Wellesley Tolles Parsons Senior Center (12,400 sq ft) as models of buildings that could meet Dover's needs. Both serve populations of 6,000 and provide programs similar to those provided at Caryl.

We concluded that a 13,000 sq ft facility, costing approximately $10mm*, would meet Dover's community space needs. However, incorporating the Town Administration's request for an additional 5,000 sq. ft for future town use/expansion, suggests an 18,000 sq ft building. The 18,000 sq ft facility places us at the midpoint of the three communities most like Dover.

** Our cost estimates are based on a conservative cost estimate of $ 700 per sq. ft, plus $1mm for Caryl demolition.*

Renovate vs Build New

Either option will provide the space to meet the town's requirements for community programs, services, and office space. Either option, assuming the town borrows $13mm to fund the project, will result in an annual increase of about $370 ($1.00 per day) for the average Dover household (approx. valuation $1mm). However, there are advantages and disadvantages to each.

Renovate – The facility is repurposed to meet programming and other uses.

Advantages

- More square feet for the money
- Less disruption to Town departments, current users, and licensees
- Large building will provide space for future Town needs
- Large building, if sufficiently adaptable and reconfigured, may provide space for more income producing opportunities

Disadvantages

- Building has a very large footprint precluding other uses of Town Center space
- The building is significantly oversized for the need
- Its age raises questions about its longevity and what may be discovered once renovation is undertaken
- The facility gets mixed reviews from users and residents that a renovation may not change

Build New Facility – The new facility is designed to meet program requirements and other anticipated uses.

Advantages

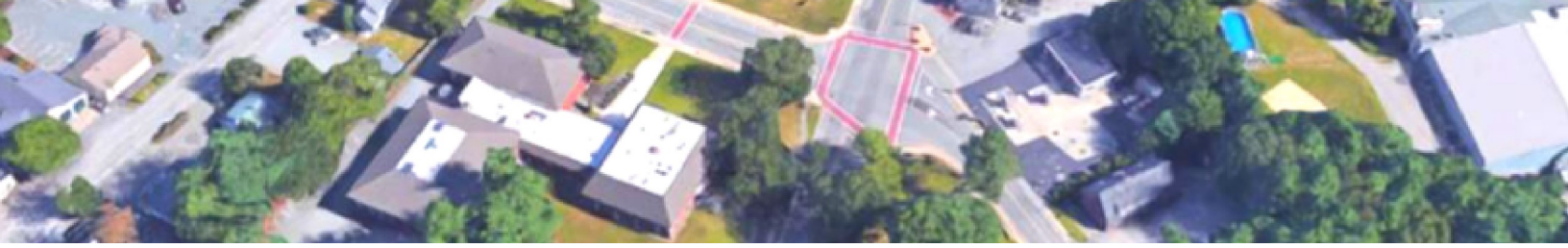
- Purpose built modern facility for about the same cost as renovate
- Modern facility provides opportunity to use environmentally sensitive technologies
- Smaller footprint provides space for additional parking, a major issue for other communities
- Smaller footprint provides open space in Town Center for future use
- Designed to maximize adaptability and efficiency

Disadvantages

- More disruption to current users
- May not include sufficient space for all Licensees

Default – Critical Maintenance Remediation, $5mm

If voters do not approve either of the options outlined above at the October 7th, 2019 Special Town Meeting, the Board of Selectmen is likely to pursue critical maintenance remediation, i.e., replace the heating/ventilation system and comply with ADA and other code requirements at an approximate cost of $5mm dollars.



Caryl Community Center Committee

20 FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. Why are we considering such a big investment in a community center?

Our research demonstrates that there is demand in Dover for programs and services usually provided in a community center. Caryl is an active building providing space for a wide variety of resident activities for young and old and in between. There is no other space in Dover that can support all the programs available at Caryl. In addition, Caryl provides space for core COA services and Park & Recreation offices. Our Town Hall is fully occupied with town offices. The Great Room is also a community space that will continue to be used. The Library is already active as community space for their purposes. The Luttazi Town Garage cannot house the activities offered in Caryl. Our schools are fully occupied. The Whiting Road building cannot meet town needs unless it was completely renovated or torn down.

2. What is the process we are following?

We were asked by the Board of Selectmen to produce facility options for town voters to choose whether to fully renovate and continue to provide community programs at Caryl or to build a new community center facility for that purpose.

- **Phase One:** Perform a comparative analysis of those options, provide residents with the information required to make an informed decision and ask voters at a Special Town Meeting (STM) to give the selectmen the direction and budget they (the voters) wished to pursue, whether to renovate the existing Caryl facility or build a new facility. A majority vote at the October 7th STM for an article will allow us to proceed.

- **Phase Two:** A selectman-appointed building committee would engage an owner's project manager firm (OPM) and an architect who will work with the building committee to confirm objectives and then produce schematic renderings with not-to-exceed costs. This design phase will take approximately up to 12 months culminating in a Town Meeting vote in 2020. That vote will seek **full funding** to move to design/build. The Town Meeting vote requires a 2/3rds positive vote to move forward, assuming the project will be bonded. It will also need approval by a majority vote at a town wide election. **This phase is when the project is approved and funded.**

- **Phase Three:** Final construction documents are prepared. A general contractor (GC) is hired by the town. The GC hires sub-contractors, construction proceeds. A selectmen-appointed committee reviews the work and approves all expenditures monthly which then go to the selectmen for final approval. This process can take up to 24 months.

3. What does "Renovate" Caryl encompass?

Renovate Caryl covers a range of improvements to the existing building. We know from extensive past research and recent work done by an independent capital needs assessment firm that critical work needs to be done to maintain Caryl for resident use. Work that must be performed if the town is to continue using the Caryl facility includes replacing the building's heating system, complying with ADA requirements, and other core infrastructure repairs. It will require approximately $5mm to address this work. A similar proposal was rejected by voters at Town Meeting in May 2018.

The $10mm renovation estimate includes the work discussed above and further work on mechanical and electrical systems, sprinkler system, and improvements to corridor finishes, lighting, the cafeteria and the caterer's kitchen.

The $13mm renovation estimate includes all of the above plus remodeling the former library to create a great room, remodeling the current entryway, and funds to reconfigure internal space, where necessary, to make the space better reflect its role as a community center.

The renovate information came from almost 20 years of various town committee studies all assisted by and updated by Don Mills of Mills Whitaker Architects. This documentation can be found on the town website. In addition, a capital needs assessment commissioned by the current Board of Selectman dated November 27, 2018 (On-Site Insight), also available on the website, confirmed the earlier work. Our committee also met with Don Mills and some of the previous committee members to be sure our understanding of Mill's work was correct. In all cases the numbers provided above are our best estimates. They will be updated and confirmed in Phase Two.

4. What does a "Build New Facility" replacement for Caryl encompass?

A new community center facility would provide the space for residents to get together to pursue activities with friends or individual pursuits. The center would offer program space, exercise/recreational space, social and meeting space, and storage space consistent with what Dover and other towns provide. The center would encourage multi-generational use through appropriate programs reflecting Dover's residents' interests. This space would include approximately 5-7 activity rooms, 1 or 2 large rooms, offices and space for the COA and Park & Recreation, a proper entrance and lobby area, and kitchen facilities.

The new build information was developed by proxy. Members of the committee either met with or talked to 16 Massachusetts communities to see what they have done to provide community space for their citizens' use. Based on their community centers' success, the committee developed a model of programs, operating model(s), and space required to meet Dover's community needs.

The communities with community centers and demographics similar to Dover (population size, town character and tax base) that best met Dover's requirements are:

- **Stow** (population 6,000**) -** 11,000 sq ft community center plus shared storage space. Stow's building, renovated in 2016, is actually 33,000 sq. ft but also includes the fire station and shared storage.
- **Wellesley** (senior population of 6,000) -12,400 sq ft Tolles Parsons senior center built 2017. Wellesley also has a renovated recreation center.
- **Weston** (population 12,000**) -** 22,000 sq. ft community center built 2001

Other communities researched with similar demographics to Dover (population, town character and tax base) are:

- **Boxborough, Bolton, Carlisle, Hamilton, and Harvard** do not have community centers. They use their Town Hall, schools and churches for this need.
- **Lincoln** does have smaller pods they are currently using and are in a delayed (2+ years) planning stage for a community center.
- **Manchester by the Sea & Sherborn** have private not-for-profit small buildings serving this need.

Neighboring communities visited who have generally larger populations and a more diverse tax base include:

- **Lexington** - renovated facility
- **Sharon** - renovated facility

- **Natick** - new facility
- **Needham** - only a senior center.
- **Medfield** - a new senior center and a renovated recreation center

5. How did you get to your $13mm number?

Our $13mm cost estimates for renovate are based on work provided by earlier committees and Mills/Whitaker's work that's been updated.

New build estimates are based on space requirements estimated from the research conducted on other towns' community center facilities as well as our current usage at Caryl. For a town our size, we estimated the need for a 13,000 sq ft building. But in response to our space requirements survey, town administration asked for an additional 5,000 sq ft for possible future office space.

Our estimate for a new building is based on an 18,000 sq ft building at a cost of $700 per sq ft or $12.6mm plus Caryl demolition costs of $1mm, totaling $13.6mm.

Borrowing approximately $13mm to fund either option will result in an annual increase of about $370 ($1.00 per day) for the average Dover household (valuation $1.04mm).

6. What about licensees?

We did not find any such arrangements in any of the facilities we visited. In other communities, the center's management controls the programs and the use of the activity rooms. Other communities do hire outside providers to run some programs. Revenue from these programs is usually shared between the instructor (80%) and the town (20%).

Programs similar to those provided by Erin's School of Dance and Community Cycling are offered in many other community buildings. These licensee programs could be run under the auspices of the recreation department or building manager as programs. Ultimately, decisions regarding licensees would be made by the Board of Selectmen.

7. What about the CDC?

Again, no other community center we researched includes a pre-school. Any decision regarding the CDC would be made by the Board of Selectmen. These decisions would be made in Phase Two.

8. Will there be rehearsal space for groups like the Dover Foundation and Open Fields?

Yes, larger rooms similar to what we currently have will provide space for rehearsals, lunches, parties, special events, and large meeting groups.

9. Has outside space on the property been considered?

Most facilities we visited have outside space for socializing, like patios and garden areas with seating. These communities have also stressed the need for enough parking. This issue would be addressed in Phase Two.

10. Why aren't there designs for us to look at?

Design is a phase two activity that would follow a decision by the town to proceed with either renovate Caryl or build a new community facility. We have developed a curated set of pictures from facilities we have visited showing room usage: Renovated facilities (Stow, Lexington, Wellesley Recreation, Sharon) and New (Wellesley Tolles Parsons, Weston, Natick) community buildings. The basic design is 5-7 activity rooms including one or two large rooms for larger use like for events and rehearsal space, kitchen (warming or industrial), offices, conference rooms, bathrooms, storage, corridors, and reception area and citizen gathering area like a café.

11. What are the current operating budgets and the anticipated future operating budgets?

For the three-year period 2015 to 2017, annual fee income from Caryl licensees averaged $96,000. Building operating expenses (including building maintenance) averaged $87,000 over the same period. This outcome reflects the Board of Selectmen's intention to have licensee fees offset operating (mostly utilities) costs when this issue was first addressed. This policy remains in effect.

Since FY 2004 through FY 2018 the Town of Dover has requested $1,940,000 on seven special warrant capital articles ($1,695,000) and seven Selectmen's requests included in Article 5 ($245,000).

Projected operating budgets will be addressed during Phase Two, once we know the building direction voters prefer. Other considerations include changes to a new building management system, potentially a full-time program director and custodial services responsible for setting up and breaking down rooms as they are used for different purposes.

12. What are our options for funding the project?

For this analysis, we anticipate that the town will bond the estimated $13mm investment to spread the cost over an appropriate (20 year) period. The town's treasurer suggests that this may cost the average taxpayer in Dover around $370/year.

This decision will be made prior to the Phase Two Town Meeting approximately a year from now. Other funding considerations to be assessed during phase two include: grant funding, philanthropy, private fundraising opportunities, and legislative possibilities. The use of free cash is unlikely. Any other avenues you can suggest to help lower the costs to taxpayers will be looked at. However, this is meant to be a public building used for public purposes.

13. How do licensees affect funding the project with bonding options?

Information based on a meeting with Bond Counsel, the Town Treasurer and our Interim Town Administrator:

- If the Town's license agreements include the right of the Town or licensee to cancel the agreement, without cause or penalty, with 50 days' notice, then the ability to issue tax exempt debt for the project is not impacted.
- If the annual revenue from the non-governmental use is less than 5% of the annual debt service, then the tax-exempt status of the debt is not impacted. This applies to both the renovated and new options.
- If the revenue from the non-governmental use is less than 15% of the annual debt service for major renovations, then the tax-exempt status is not impacted.
- If a portion of the cost for the Caryl building is funded from Free Cash or the tax levy, then this amount of "Town equity "can count towards the 5% or 15% threshold and the tax-exempt status of the debt is not impacted

14. How do we deal with changing future community needs and desires?

The space we renovate or build new must be flexible, adaptable space for the present and future. Other communities have different sized, multi-use activity rooms that are managed so they can accommodate different activities during the day and evening.

15. What are the options for green building, HVAC systems (and related questions and concerns about specific design/features)?

These and similar issues will be addressed during phase two, assuming the town sets a direction to pursue and a budget they will support.

16. Will the building design fit into the character of the town center?

Building design is a critical part of the phase two process. Community involvement and input should help drive the design process and will be a key element in getting to "YES" at a future Town Meeting.

17. Has the town studied other partial uses for the building and property?

Previous studies, accessible on the Town's website, looked at other partial uses for the building but rejected them favoring keeping the Caryl space for a Dover community center.

This committee's mission does not include analyzing other partial uses for the building and property in Dover.

18. What about a gymnasium?

Few community centers we researched have either a full-sized gymnasium or pool (Natick did construct a gym). All have exercise work out space.

The cost of a full-sized gymnasium similar to the DS Middle School gym (building size 9,600 sq ft / floor size 7,100 sq ft) would range from $4mm to $6mm (based on builders' estimates) depending on specifications. If there is sufficient resident interest and financial appetite, then they could be assessed during phase two.

19. Have you considered resident/senior housing?

Senior housing/affordable housing is a complex question that deserves to be thoroughly researched as a standalone issue by those with expertise in that subject.

Previous Caryl committees have studied this question and decided against this option. A proposal including senior apartments presented at Town Meeting in 2002 was defeated.

This Committee's mission does not include analyzing housing. No community center that we researched included housing.

20. Should we consider the potential relocation of some town offices?

Town Administration has requested that 5,000 sq ft be included in our analysis to address this possibility. Caryl, with 40,900 sq ft of space, if fully renovated, would meet this request. A new 13,000 sq ft facility would not. In order to accommodate this request in a 13,000 sq ft facility, activity room space would be affected. A new 18,000 sq ft facility would provide the requested space allowing the Town to relocate offices when/if necessary.