

# Town of Dedham

## Senior Center Site Committee

### Report to Town Meeting

May 19, 2014

#### I. Introduction and Background

##### A. Members

The Senior Center Site Committee was established by a vote of Town Meeting at Special Town Meeting on November 19, 2012. Attached in the Appendix section of this report, as Exhibit A, is a copy of the warrant article approved by the Town Meeting. Pursuant to the requirements of the warrant article establishing the committee, the following people were appointed to the Committee:

*Two members of the Council on Aging:*

Russell Poole  
Margot Pyle \*

\*In January, 2014, Margot Pyle was replaced by Leanne Jasset when Mrs. Pyle moved from Dedham.

*One Member of the Board of Selectmen:*

Carmen DelloIacono

*One Member of the Finance Committee:*

David Martin

*One Member of the School Building Rehabilitation Committee:*

Andrew Lawlor

*Four Town residents appointed by the Moderator:*

State Representative Paul McMurtry  
Wm. Shaw McDermott  
Cameron (Bunk) Read  
Cherylann Sheehan

At the Committee's first meeting, Carmen DelloIacono was elected Chairman, David Martin was elected Vice Chairman and Paul McMurtry was elected Clerk.

##### B. Meetings

From February 2013 until April 2014, the Committee met approximately 17 times in public meetings. The Committee visited the Stoneham and Norwood Senior Centers.

## II. Site and Building Assessments

### A. Input from Council on Aging Director

The Committee met with Laura Levanthal, Town of Dedham Director of the Council on Aging, who supplied the Committee with information\* regarding the space needs for a Senior Center. Following is a synopsis of that information:

<u>Program Space</u>	<u>Square Footage</u>
Reception/lobby	800
Offices	600
Fitness	1500
Conference rooms	1100
Library/computer	0
Arts & Crafts	1000
Outdoor patio/greenhouse	1000
Game Room/Coffee Room/Gift Shop	0
Bathrooms	208
Kitchen/serving	300
Function Room	2000
Storage/Mechanical	2500
Total program space	10508

\*A copy of the information Ms. Levanthal provided to the Committee is attached in the Appendix section of this report as Exhibit B.

The Committee voted to adopt Ms. Levanthal's recommendations and to add 500 square feet of additional program space. Using a standard design formula of adding 45% of the total program space to the building size for hallways, wall cavities, utility chases and other non-program space, the Committee adopted 16,000 square feet for the building's recommended size.

Mr. Richard McCarthy, the Town Planner, was asked by the Committee to compute what the Off-Street Parking Requirements under the Town of Dedham Zoning By-Laws would require for a 16,000 square foot building, with the spaces indicated in Ms. Leventhal's memorandum. Using the regulations applicable to offsite parking for office buildings and applying them to a senior center, the numerical requirement so calculated would be 123 spaces. Mr. McCarthy noted that the number of parking spaces could increase or decrease depending on how the space is allocated and whether or not there were simultaneous activities.

B. Screening and Evaluative Criteria

In order to properly and fairly evaluate the sites for a Senior Center, the Committee adopted Screening and Evaluative Criteria. Following are those criteria:

*The Screening Criteria were:*

1. The property should be not less than 1.6 acres in size.
2. The construction of the building(s) should be completed in not more than 5 years.
3. The property should be located in Dedham.

*The Evaluative Criteria were:*

1. Proximity to East/High Street intersection (considered by the Committee to be the "geographical center" of Dedham):
  - Within ½ mile would be considered best
  - Within 1 mile would be considered good
  - Within 1 ½ - 2 miles would be considered average
  - Greater than 2 miles would be considered poor
2. Functional accessibility by car or foot
3. Cost (acquisition, construction/renovation)
4. Time – sooner is better
5. Operating Cost – less is better
6. Neighborhood Integration
7. Negative or positive impact to existing or planned public use
8. Acreage in excess of 1.6 acres that would permit expansion

III. Review of Options

A. Sites Considered

After much discussion, the following sites were considered and separated according to ownership:

<u>School Dept.</u>	<u>Parks &amp; Rec Dept</u>	<u>Town-Owned</u>	<u>Privately Owned</u>
Capen School	Gonzalez Field	Endicott Library	Wilson & Wash Sts
Dexter School	SMA Property	Endicott Barn	Gobbi East St Prop
Riverdale School		Endicott Mansion	270-280 Bridge St
Greenlodge School		Striar Property	Rustcraft Road
land		High St (St. Mary's)	St. Susanna's land Ames Schoolhouse

Other sites were mentioned, i.e. Methodist Church in Oakdale Square, the office building on Milton Street at the end of Walnut Street, land by the river near Dedham Community House, the property in front of the ice hockey rink on East Street, Barron properties near the Readville line, either the American Legion or VFW sites if those entities were ever consolidated, but all of these were disregarded for various reasons. See Letter dated

December 31, 2014 from Patrick Maguire relative to the Striar Property, attached hereto as Exhibit "C"

B. Rustcraft MOU

The Committee recognized that the Special Town Meeting of November 18, 2013 would take a vote as to whether the Town should authorize the Board of Selectmen to enter into negotiations to purchase part of the property at 100 Rustcraft Road to house Town Hall, the Police Station, Senior Center and other municipal services. Prior to that Special Town Meeting, the Committee voted unanimously to approve the following resolution: "That it is the sense of the Senior Center Site Committee that the Rustcraft MOU proposal includes building space that meets the screening criteria and evaluative criteria the Senior Center Site Committee established for a Senior Center." The Town Meeting did not approve the MOU to purchase part of the building at 100 Rustcraft Road so the Committee continued its work.

C. Final Sites Reviewed

After a 5-3 vote of the Committee, it was decided to apply the evaluative criteria to only the following sites: Ames Schoolhouse, Endicott Library, Endicott Barn, Endicott Mansion, High Street and Gobbi property (across from the Endicott Estate). The proponents of the motion felt the other sites listed in Section III, A, for various reasons, did not merit consideration. The opponents of the motion stated that it was premature to exclude any sites from consideration, as all sites had merits and disadvantages, and one could not conclude how each site measured up against the others until the Committee actually went through the process of applying the evaluative criteria to all sites.

The Committee received a copy of a letter dated December 23, 2014 from the Town of Dedham Council on Aging to Michael Butler, Chairman, Dedham Board of Selectmen, relative to Ames Schoolhouse, attached hereto as Exhibit "D"

IV. Summary of Findings and Recommendations

A. Evaluative Criteria

The Committee applied five of the Evaluative Criteria to the six sites mentioned above. Without expert analysis concerning estimated costs and construction schedules, the Committee felt unable to apply three of the evaluative criteria, and decided to whittle the sites down to two before spending any of the funds appropriated to it by Town Meeting for architectural or engineering consultants.

<u>Site</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>8</u>
Ames	1	1	?	?	?	1	1	3 = 7
Endicott Barn	3	3	?	?	?	5	4	1 = 16
Endicott Library	3	3	?	?	?	5	6	1 = 18
Endicott Mansion	3	3	?	?	?	2	4	1 = 13
High St	1	1	?	?	?	2	3	1 = 8
Gobbi	3	3	?	?	?	2	2	1 = 11

*Note:* The numbers across the top refer to the Evaluative Criteria listed under Section II, B, above.

At a subsequent meeting, the Committee learned that Frank Gobbi, Jr. was not interested in selling to the Town any of the Gobbi land on East Street across from the Endicott Estate. Mr. Gobbi did offer 2 alternative sites, 875 East Street and Central Avenue/Jersey Street, for the Committee to consider. For various reasons, the Committee decided to exclude the 2 alternative sites from consideration.

B. Feasibility Study Request

In order to complete its analysis of the top 2 ranked sites, the Ames Schoolhouse and the High Street (St. Mary's parking lot) properties, the Committee decided to engage the services of an architectural/engineering firm to perform a feasibility study and to provide cost estimates to build a Senior Center on both sites. As the Town was already obtaining information relative to purchasing the Ames Schoolhouse to house a Town Hall and Senior Center, the Committee did not see the need to spend any funds allocated to it by Town Meeting to obtain information relative to the Ames Schoolhouse.

As a result, the Committee voted unanimously:

- (1) To authorize the Town Administrator to approach the BETA Group and Dore & Whittier to ascertain their respective availabilities and pricing, and to select one of those two firms to undertake a feasibility study of the High Street (St. Mary's parking lot) location for a Senior Center, with a report to the Committee no later than March 31, 2014; and
- (2) To direct the firm selected by the Town Administrator to conduct a preliminary feasibility study to assess the suitability of the approximate 2.06 acres located at 347 High Street, Dedham, Massachusetts as a location for a 16,000 square foot Senior Center with approximately 123 parking spaces, assessing in particular the property's topography, ability to meet municipal parking by-laws, and its access to utilities, provide a preliminary cost estimate for the total project costs for designing and constructing 16,000 square foot Senior Center with approximately 123 parking spaces on the approximate 2.06 acres located at 347 High Street, Dedham, Massachusetts, and complete the above referenced work and deliver a report of findings and conclusions to the Town of Dedham's Senior Center Site Committee no later than March, 31, 2014.

C. Information from the BETA Feasibility Study with Respect to High Street and Reports from GSA with Respect to Ames Schoolhouse

1. The BETA Company provided the Committee with renderings, floor and site plans and construction estimates with regard to the High Street (St.

Mary's parking lot) site. The estimated construction cost to construct a 16,000 square foot Senior Center at the High Street site is \$7,500,000 to \$8,000,000. The estimated completion date of the site is April 2016 to March 2017.

2. GSA provided the Town of Dedham Board of Selectmen with information with respect to the construction/renovation cost of the entire 48,000-50,000 square foot Ames Schoolhouse, as a location for both a new Town Hall and a Senior Center. The estimated acquisition cost of the Ames Schoolhouse is \$5,850,000. The estimated relocation costs are \$1,000,000. The estimated construction/renovation cost of the entire building would be from \$4,800,000 (minor renovations) to \$12,000,000 (major renovations), with the attributable costs for a 16,000 square foot Senior Center being approximately one-third of the entire acquisition and renovation cost. The estimated start of construction is January 2016, with a target completion date of March, 2017.

D. Final Application of Evaluative Criteria to High Street and Ames Schoolhouse

<u>Site</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>8</u>
Ames	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	3 = 11
High St	1	1	2	1	1.5	2	3	1 = 12.5

The committee discussed the results of applying the Evaluative Criteria to both sites and the exercise of its judgment in coming to a final decision and recommendation.

E. Recommendation of the Senior Center Site Committee

After careful deliberations, analysis of sites against the Committee's established criteria and review of all the information available to the Committee, a motion was made that the Senior Center Site Committee recommend the Ames Schoolhouse be rehabilitated for a Senior Center. The vote on this motion was 7 in favor and 2 against.

Preferred site for a Senior Center in the Town of Dedham: Ames Schoolhouse

Preferred size of a Senior Center in the Town of Dedham: 16,000 square feet

Recommendation as to the rehabilitation and/or expansion of current town buildings or construction of a new Town building: Rehabilitation of Ames Schoolhouse

Approximate cost estimate: \$19,000,000, 1/3 of which (\$6,330,000) is attributable to the Senior Center

**Recommendation as to the funding source: Robin Reyes Major Capital  
Facilities Stabilization Fund**

v. **Appendix**

- Vote to approve Article Seven of warrant for November 19, 2012 Special Town Meeting, attached hereto as Exhibit "A"
- Information sheet provided to the Senior Center Sit Committee by Town of Dedham Council on Aging Director, Laura Levanthal, regarding program space, attached hereto as Exhibit "B"
- Letter dated December 31, 2013 from Patrick Maguire relative to the Striar Property, attached as Exhibit "A" to the Senior Center Site Committee's January 7, 2014 minutes and attached hereto as Exhibit "C"
- Letter dated December 23, 2013 from the Town of Dedham Council on Aging to Michael Butler, Chairman, Dedham Board of Selectmen relative to Ames Schoolhouse, attached as Exhibit "A" to the Senior Center Site Committee's February 4, 2014 minutes and attached hereto as Exhibit "D"

Respectfully submitted,

Carmen DelloIacono, Chairman  
David Martin, Vice Chairman  
State Representative Paul McMurtry, Clerk  
Leanne Jasset  
Andrew Lawlor

Wm. Shaw McDermott  
Russell Poole  
Cameron Read  
Cherylann Sheehan





EXHIBIT "A"

Dedham Special Town Meeting 2012- November 19, 2012

---

**7. VOTE TO ESTABLISH A SENIOR CENTER SITE COMMITTEE AND APPROPRIATION FOR STUDIES**

**ARTICLE SEVEN:** *By District One Town Meeting Member, Fred Civian, District Two Town Meeting Members, Ellen Burns and Maurice Burns, District Three Town Meeting Member, Geraldine Roberts, District Four Town Meeting Members, Joseph Findlen, Robert Schortmann, Kathleen Schortmann, Timothy Lesinski, James Fay, Susan Fay, and Robert Frasca, , District Five Town Meeting Member, Michael Leahy, District Six Town Meeting Members, Cherylann W. Sheehan, Andrew Lawlor and Roberta Lawlor, and District Seven Town Meeting Member, Kevin Mawe:* To see if the Town will vote to establish a Senior Center Site Committee. The purpose of said committee would be to determine the preferred site and size of a Senior Center, make a recommendation as to the rehabilitation and/or expansion of current town buildings or construction of a new town building for a Senior Center, provide an approximate cost estimate of such a Senior Center, and make a recommendation as to the funding source for such a project.

The representation of the committee is to be as follows: two members of the Council on Aging, designated by said Council, one member of the Board of Selectmen designated by said Board, one member of the Finance Committee, designated by said Committee, one member of the School Building Rehabilitation Committee, designated by said Committee, and four Town residents appointed by the Moderator.

Further that the Town appropriate the sum of \$50,000 for purposes of conducting engineering/architectural studies or cost estimates to assist the committee in its work.

The Committee shall report its findings and recommendations to Town Meeting on or before the 2014 Annual Town Meeting and shall terminate upon doing so; or take any other action relative thereto. *Referred to Finance Committee for study and report.*

***ON A SUBSTITUTE MOTION BY FRED CIVIAN THAT IT BE SO VOTED***

***BY MAJORITY VOTE***

***ON A ROLL CALL VOTE***

***108- YES***

***103-NO***

***1-ABSTAIN***

EXHIBIT "B"

PROPOSED ROOM DIMENSIONS, SENIOR CENTER, MARCH 2013

75 – 80 parking spaces (1 per 100 sq. ft.)	
4 bathrooms 52 sq. ft./each:	208 sq. ft.
Full Kitchen	300 sq. ft.
Multi-function room	2000sq. ft.
Fitness room	1500 sq. ft.
Arts and crafts	1000 sq. ft.
Library, small group , small conference	300 sq. ft.
Offices: Director	150 sq. ft.
Outreach	200 sq. ft.
Shared office	150 sq. ft.
Large conference	400 sq. ft.
Reception/lobby	800 sq.ft.
Outdoor patio + greenhouse	500 – 1000 sq. ft.
Total	8008 sq. ft.
Storage 30% of total	2500 sq. ft.
<b>Grand total</b>	<b>10,508 sq. ft.</b>

- Other: 2 large screen tv's
- Sound system
- Laptops
- Wi Fi capability
- Cable

EXHIBIT "C"

*activitas*

*Planning | Landscape | Athletic Facilities*

31 December 2013

Mr. Carmen Dello Iacono  
Dedham Board of Selectman  
26 Bryant Street  
Dedham MA 02026

re: Striar Fields Site – Senior Center Program

Dear Mr. Dello Iacono:

The following summarizes discussion regarding the feasibility of locating the Dedham Senior Center within the Dedham Striar Site development. During the July 23<sup>rd</sup> Striar Site Meeting held at the Dedham Town Hall, Activitas presented a non-site related 'bubble diagram' showing desirable adjacencies for each of the prescribed program elements. The diagram was then superimposed over the existing site aerial. Without the noted site constraints, the diagram illustrates the limitations of the site vis-à-vis program. Of the 24-acre site, only 12 acres (or less) is easily developed.

Based upon the constraints identified with access, grading, easements and wetland resources, the Senior Center as originally depicted on the County Engineers' plan is infeasible. The Undisturbed Buffer Area (UBA) for buildings and parking in addition to the Bordering Vegetated Wetland (BVW) itself make the location severely constrained without major action by the Planning Board, Conservation Commission and the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection. Based on this presentation and following discussion, the Striar Committee directed Activitas to proceed with the design plans without including the Senior Center in the program.

Attached please find the appropriate portions of that presentation for your review. Despite the fact that there is the potential for great synergies if the Senior Center were part of the overall plan, we believe the diagrams make the issues with its inclusion quite clear. Those synergies would be lost because the Senior Center program would require the elimination of one or more of the other major site program pieces such as the dog park or one of the playing fields.

Please contact our office if you need additional information on the Striar site and its various constraints.

Respectfully:



Patrick Maguire, LEED AP  
President



LAURA LEVENTHAL  
ON AGING DIRECTOR  
WASHINGTON STREET 781-326-1650  
DEDHAM, MA 02026 781-320-8922 (FAX)  
Website: www.dedham-ma.go Email:llevanthal@dedham-ma.gov

DEDHAM COUNCIL  
735



TOWN OF DEDHAM  
(COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS)  
COUNCIL ON AGING

Dec 23, 2013

Mr. Michael Butler  
Chairman  
Dedham Board of Selectmen  
Town Hall  
Dedham, MA 02026

Dear Chairman Butler:

At a duly posted meeting of the Council on Aging Board, held on December 19, 2013, Board Members voted unanimously to endorse the former Ames School House as an appropriate location for the Dedham Senior Center. We look forward to working with you in an effort to bring this project to fruition.

Sincerely,

Leanne Jasset  
Chairperson  
Board, Dedham Council on Aging