

**TOWN OF SUDBURY**  
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For immediate release

## **The Future of the Fairbank Community Center to be Considered at Town Meeting**

**Sudbury, MA (September 13, 2018)** - When the Fairbank Community Center Study Task Force was created in 2012, it was tasked with trying to take a well-loved and much used facility that was unable to service needs due to limited space and deteriorating conditions, and to bring forward a vision for a true community center that expanded programming for Sudbury residents of all ages.

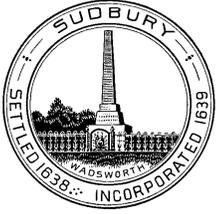
Six years later that journey continues, as the Board of Selectmen introduces a newly designed Fairbank Community Center proposal to the public.

The Fairbank Community Center was originally constructed in 1958 as an elementary school, and became the community center in 1983. The original building has seen two additions and currently is the home for Park and Recreation, the Senior Center, the Atkinson Pool and the Sudbury Public Schools administrative offices. Many aspects of the building contain deficiencies that are in need of remediation or repair, and would need to be addressed if the building was not reconstructed.

In 2016, the Fairbank Community Center Task Force was reconstituted and Selectman Pat Brown was selected as Chairperson. Since that time, the Task Force contracted with Pros Consulting to do a community survey, market analysis, revenues and expenditures projections, and schematic designs of a future center based on those results.

“The Task Force took on an ambitious task,” said Selectman Brown. “It has taken real work and dedication to bring the stakeholders together around one project. I’m proud of the work completed and looking forward to further exploration and discussion of the proposal.”

The Task Force was comprised of members of the Town’s Finance Committee, Board of Selectmen, Park and Recreation Commission, Council on Aging, and School Committee members. Several members of Town Staff assisted the committee in its actions. After the Task Force made their recommendation to the Board of Selectmen in the spring, the committee was thanked and dissolved.



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“While it has been a long and sometimes trying process, we have worked together to bring forward one proposal that benefits the entire community,” said Jim Marotta, Park and Recreation Committee Member. “The project as proposed recognizes the current deficiencies, listens to the needs of the community and will create a community center that will make us all proud.”

The proposed center is 62,000 square feet and includes a full gymnasium, a fitness aspect, programming space, the Senior Center, a walking track and the Atkinson Pool. The proposal includes inside play space, the teen center, concessions and outside elements like a terrace and walking trails. The community center also serves as the Town’s emergency shelter, despite its current deficiencies including lack of a generator to power the shower space.

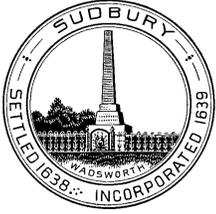
“The amenities and features included in the proposal include what we heard from the community as wants and needs,” explained Selectman Brown. “The survey results were eye opening, and allowed the task force to prioritize what residents saw as priorities for a community center.”

The survey results, which includes two separate surveys and resulted in 707 responses, showed that residents valued the community center, and were interested in seeing it expanded to include a walking track and increased and better programming space.

The center as proposed with design and contingency is estimated to cost over \$32,000,000. The Board of Selectmen has proposed a Town Meeting article at October Town Meeting for \$1,900,000 in design costs in order to move the project forward. The full project would require the Town to take a bond over 30 years. The construction funding would be appropriated at a future town meeting and both the design bond and the construction bond require a Town election to pass

“The design funding would allow the Town to take the project to the next level,” explained Selectman Brown. “We would be able to design the project that the community has said they would like to see and bring it back before them for future funding and input.”

According to the consultant, the project as designed would be sustainable based on estimated programming and revenues. The programming and marketing aspects of the center would need to expand in order to meet the revenue expectations, but the hope is that the new amenities and improved conditions would attract residents who do not currently utilize the center.



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“This project has been in flux for years and, while this process continues, the building continues to deteriorate and the senior population continues to grow,” said John Beeler, Chairman of the Council on Aging. “The Council on Aging has supported this proposal, and this project is a priority for the Council. Our seniors deserve the best possible programming and adequate space for meeting and socializing.”

Since 2012, the building has seen many issues including roof leaking and deficiency, failing cooling and heating systems, and floor buckling. The building lacks adequate insulation, needs window replacement, sprinklers, security systems and, lacks functionality in general.

“If you walk the halls of the Fairbank, participate in any programming, or vote there, the issues are obvious,” said Town Manager Melissa Rodrigues. “We field many complaints about the building, from roofs leaking on employee’s desks, to temperature issues near the pool, to bathroom floors buckling from moisture, to lack of available space. I am hopeful that with the guidance of the Task Force and the leadership of the Board of Selectmen, we can work towards a proposal that works for everyone. The Center is an asset to the community, a gathering place, and the programming run through the departments there is top notch. We deserve a community center that reflects that.”

The Town Meeting article asks the town to bond \$1,900,000 to complete preliminary design of the proposal, which would be brought to Town Meeting for funding in subsequent years. The preliminary design will take the current concept through the next steps, including further programming analysis, conceptual design, and schematic design. At the end of this process, the town will have a solid foundation upon which to bring the facility to fruition. The preliminary design will then be used to create the town’s construction and building documents.

More information about the proposal, as well as the survey results, can be found on the town website at: <https://sudbury.ma.us/boardofselectmen/?p=3863>

Town Meeting is scheduled for Monday, October 15 at Lincoln Sudbury Regional High School.

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