



Town of Colchester BULLETIN AUGUST 2021

NOTE: This Bulletin provides important information for Colchester residents to review prior to making an informed decision at the referendum to be held September 23, 2021. Please go to the town website for updates about this project at www.colchesterct.gov/senior-center

In 1978, Colchester's earliest senior center began as an initiative of the Commission on Aging and was housed in the former NuNu's restaurant which at that time was the Colchester Grange. Through the generosity of the Bacon Academy Board of Trustees, the current building, formerly the Arts and Science Department of Bacon Academy, was leased to the town for many years for a dollar a year for use as a senior center.

For the last forty years, the Center has seen many changes as well as tremendous growth in population, diversity, outreach, services and programming; and, more importantly, the improvement in the quality of the lives of Colchester's seniors.

Over the years, there were leadership changes, committees, subcommittees, task groups, open forums, and work groups. In 2017, a decision was made to purchase a property at Louis Lane for \$90,000. The money came from the Town's general fund balance, with no new taxpayer dollars and no increase to the mill rate.

In October 2019, a Senior Center Building Committee was formed. They were "charged to include: a building, related infrastructure and outdoor space that will provide for a senior center for senior services now, and in the future for seniors of all ages." Since then, the Committee has met twice a month to implement that charge. In 2020, the Committee contracted with architectural firm Silver Petrucelli & Associates, and an owners' project manager and cost estimator, Construction Solutions Group, to provide professional services.

A new senior center aligns with many of the senior services strategic plan goals including: strengthening community partnerships, attracting younger seniors, expanding programs and services designed to promote independence, health, wellness and the quality of life of Colchester seniors.



Senior Center Building Committee

Tony Tarnowski *LEED AP, Chair*

Marilynn Turner *Vice-Chair*

Kevin Hastings *Member*

Marjorie Mlodzinski *Member*

Sean Nadeau *Member*

Joseph Ruiz *Member*

Ron Silberman *Member*

Madelyn Starkey *Alternate*

Geraldine Transue *Alternate*

Rosemary Coyle

Board of Selectmen Liaison

Mike Egan

Board of Finance Liaison

Patty Watts

Director of Senior Services



Important Facts:

- The eligible age for membership for the Colchester Senior Center is **55 years old**.
- Presently, there are **1,379 members** of the Senior Center. The current facility was averaging 75 people per day who visited the Center before the Coronavirus pandemic, the maximum the current Center can accommodate on a daily basis.
- The Center provides transportation to approximately **33%** of Colchester residents who currently use the Center.
- Since 2013, membership at the Center has **increased by 137%**.



Current Colchester Senior Center located at 95 Norwich Avenue, Colchester, CT. Original structure built in 1891, addition built in the 1950s.

- Colchester's 2015 Plan of Conservation and Development indicates that 40% of Colchester's population will be **55 and over** by 2030.

Why build a new senior center to be used by both seniors and the community?

SPACE Current building/location lacks room for expansion, parking, programming, and outreach

INDEPENDENT AND SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT FOR OLDER ADULTS New Center adds programs, services, activities, and amenities

ENHANCED PROGRAMMING Multi-Purpose Rooms (meals/events), Health Office, Library, Rooms for Fitness, Art, Activities, and Making Memories (Memory Program)

COMMUNITY USE AND EVENT SPACE (Accommodates up to 300 people) connected to covered and outdoor gathering space

AMPLE PARKING Approximately 70 spaces on site and overflow to Town Hall parking

LOCATION Connects to Town Hall, central to downtown, senior housing facilities and public transportation

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA) ACCESSIBLE COMPLIANT In hallways, restrooms, meeting rooms and outdoor space

The following schematics provide a design concept of how the new building will look and function. The final design will be completed once the referendum and costs are approved by the community.



Schematics:



Floor Plan:

FITNESS CENTER Stationary equipment for workout sessions: treadmills, elliptical machines, stationary bicycles

FITNESS ROOM A variety of instructor-led fitness classes from aerobics, yoga, tai chi, seated exercise, etc.

MAKING MEMORIES PROGRAM Innovative program serving those 60+ experiencing memory challenges; safe-space classroom where friendship and learning are encouraged

ART ROOM Fine art instructor-led classes: ceramics, painting, digital photography, crafting sessions, etc.

LIBRARY Book/video lending, computer and technology education and access

CONFERENCE ROOM Private meeting space for family, support groups and Medicare counseling, and staff meetings

HEALTH OFFICE Blood pressure and foot clinics, hearing screening; possibility for community nursing hours

GAME/BILLIARDS ROOM Card games, mah-jongg and poker, billiard tournaments

ACTIVITY ROOM Bingo and games (larger attendance), movie screenings, guest speaker series

MULTI-PURPOSE ROOMS 1 & 2

- Senior nutrition program with hot lunch
- Live entertainment celebrations with meals
- Versatile-divides into 2 smaller classrooms for multiple uses
- Potential to lease out space for special events like weddings, banquets, showers and other activities that might be used beyond community use.



Town of Colchester
127 Norwich Avenue
Colchester, CT 06415

Estimated Projected Cost \$9.5M

Tax Impact for a Homeowner: The increase is approximately \$13/year or \$1.09 a month over four years for a homeowner with an average assessed value of \$165,000 (assessment is 70% of the market value of a home worth \$235,714).

Note: This increase includes the impact associated with the cost of the new fire apparatus

Timeline

2021	
Information Sharing	May – September
State and Local Reviews	April – May
Referendum	September 23rd
Finalize Building Design	October – January 2022
2022	
Preconstruction	January – March
Building Construction	March – December
2023	
Project Completion	January – March

Calendar

Meetings of the Committee will occur on the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month.



Use these QR codes to view 3D panoramic renderings of the proposed Senior Center, or visit www.colchesterct.gov/senior-center-building-project