

FACT SHEET

CENTER FOR ACTIVE LIVING PROJECT

Town Hall Options

TIME LINE

April 2020

- The Senior Center Building Committee was formed by vote at Town Meeting to evaluate long-term space needs for the Senior Center.

April 2020 – April 2023

- The Building Committee undertook early feasibility work focused on exploring locations including Town Hall. This feasibility work included:
 - A needs assessment and gerontology assessment
 - Review of space, accessibility, and operational requirements
- The Building Committee engaged with consultants to better understand current and future needs of older adults. During discussions related to a new Public Safety Building, the possibility of locating the Senior Center in vacated Police Department space at Town Hall was raised and explored as a potential option.

April 2023

- After years of study of Town Hall-based options, the Building Committee determined that limiting the project to a single location constrained the ability to meet identified needs.
- Town Meeting approved a warrant article allowing the Committee to expand its evaluation to include additional town owned buildings and properties.

August 2023

- The results of the comprehensive exploration of multiple alternative locations were presented to the Hingham Select Board.
- The Select Board voted to continue feasibility analysis focused on two primary locations:
 - Town Hall
 - Bare Cove Park Drive

August 2023 – December 2024

- The Town's professional design team (edmSTUDIO), working with senior-center specific design consultants, evaluated seven total options across the two locations:
 - Three options at Town Hall (detailed below), each with multiple parking and location scenarios
 - Four options at Bare Cove Park Drive, including multiple site configurations
- Each option underwent site analysis, program fit review, parking analysis, accessibility review, and feasibility assessment.
- Through this process, several options were eliminated due to program, access, or site constraints.

December 2024

- Four remaining feasible options were presented to the Select Board with detailed side-by-side analysis outlining advantages and challenges of each.
- After reviewing the findings, the Select Board **unanimously** voted to move forward with the Bare Cove Park Drive location.

Option 1: Renovation of Town Hall Space

Overview: Renovation of existing Town Hall spaces.

Scenarios Presented: On-site parking by modifying front of building space; Remote parking at Haley field and town owned wooded lot south of Sanborn Street.

Pros

- Retains the existing location
- Access to existing utilities
- Potential reuse of some Town Hall amenities

Cons

- Parking deficits without reliance on remote lots
- Multi-level building configuration
- Wouldn't meet all of the programming needs
- Displacement of Center programming for 18-24 months
- Accessibility challenges for older adults
- Significant disruption to Town Hall operations during construction
- Limited outdoor programming space
- Remote parking located beyond preferred walking distance

Option 2: Renovation and New Construction of Town Hall Space

Overview: Combination of renovation, addition, and new construction elements.

Scenarios Presented: On-site parking by modifying front of building space; Remote parking at Haley field and town owned wooded lot south of Sanborn Street.

Pros

- Allows flexibility in layout
- Access to existing utilities
- Potential use of some Town Hall amenities

Cons

- Does not fully accommodate program needs
- Parking requirements not fully met
- Multi-level configuration not preferred
- Higher complexity and cost relative to benefit
- Continued operational disruption during construction
- Addition would cover existing office windows

Option 3: New Construction Adjacent to Town Hall (Cronin Field/Haley Field)

Overview: Construction of a new Center building near Town Hall using adjacent land.

Scenarios Presented: New construction on Haley Field; Multiple configurations on Cronin Field with different traffic patterns.

Pros

- Proximity to Town Hall and other municipal uses
- Opportunity to meet some program needs
- Minimal displacement

Cons

- Loss of existing recreational fields, summer rec camp
- Would require Recreation Department to give up deeded land and get passed at State House. Rec summer camp would need new location
- Heavy resistance from baseball league and parents.
- Traffic and circulation concerns
- Two-story configuration required
- Limited outdoor space adjacent to the building
- Construction impacts near residential areas

Summary

Town Hall and other locations around town were evaluated over several years through multiple studies and feasibility analyses. Each presented limitations that would require significant compromises to accessibility, programming, parking, or operations. A comparative analysis was done using 21 factors rating each one using a +2 (very positive) to -2 (very negative scale). The results were overwhelmingly in favor of the Bare Cove Park Drive site with +24 points, followed by new stand alone construction on Cronin Field (+12), and any option which included renovations came in last (-12). The Bare Cove Park Drive site was selected because it could fully support the Center for Active Living program based on documented criteria and public decision-making.

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