

**Supplemental
Packet
April 12
2022**

Article 21. COUNCIL ON AGING AND COMMUNITY CENTER CONSTRUCTION

Proposed by: Select Board

Estimated Cost: \$11,000,000.00

To determine whether the Town of Wayland (“Town”) will vote to:

- 1) raise and appropriate, or borrow the sum of eleven million dollars (\$11,000,000) for the design, engineering, construction, equipping, and furnishing of a new Wayland Council on Aging/Community Center (“CoA/CC”) to be located at the Municipal Parcel and adjacent parcels of land located on and off Boston Post Road and Andrew Avenue in Wayland, Massachusetts shown as Lot 4-1, Lot 8-1, Lot 9-1B, Parcel R-20-1, among others, shown on a plan prepared by the Town Surveyor entitled “Plan of Land Wayland, Massachusetts Showing Proposed Municipal Parcels” dated July 21, 2015, and recorded at the Middlesex South Registry of Deeds as Plan 616 of 2015, a copy of which plan is on file in the Office of the Town Clerk, and any and all incidental and related costs, including but not limited to, site evaluation, engineering and schematic and final design services, and project management services for the design, bidding and construction, site preparation, paving, and landscaping, and to authorize the Select Board to expend these funds, without further appropriation, but with the approval of the Permanent Municipal Building Committee;
- 2) determine whether such appropriation shall be funded by taxation, by transfer from unappropriated funds, transfer from available funds already appropriated for another purpose, by borrowing under Massachusetts General Law Chapter 44 or other enabling authority, or otherwise;
- 3) authorize the Treasurer, with the approval of the Select Board, to borrow said sum pursuant to G.L. c. 44, sections 7 or 8, or any other enabling authority, and issue bonds or notes of the Town therefor;
- 4) authorize any premium received by the Town upon the sale of any bonds or notes approved by this vote, less any such premium applied to the payment of the costs of issuance of such bonds or notes, to be applied to the payment of costs approved hereunder in accordance with G.L. c. 44, section 20, thereby reducing by a like amount the amount authorized to be borrowed to pay such costs;
- 5) authorize the Town Manager to take any action necessary to carry out this program;
- 6) Provided, however, that no construction funds appropriated under this article be expended until the Town of Wayland acquires control of the named parcels.

PROPOSERS’ COMMENTS: Town Meeting has twice appropriated funds for a CoA/CC to be built at Town Center. At the 2020 Annual Town Meeting residents voted to permit monies previously allocated for feasibility, design, construction and bid documents for a multi-use Council on Aging/Community Center to be used for a facility located at an appropriate location within the Town of Wayland. The Select Board has negotiated an agreement with the current owners of the municipal parcels. This article seeks Town Meeting to appropriate monies to construct a much-needed CoA/CC on the municipal parcels.

FINANCE COMMITTEE COMMENTS: A Council on Aging/Community Center (“CoA/CC”) has been a Town priority for many years. The Council of Aging/Community Center Advisory Committee (“CoA/CCAC”) worked on a proposed project at the Wayland Town Center (“Town Center”) as far back as May 2015. Town meeting has twice appropriated funds for a CoA/CC to be built at Town Center. The project at the Town Center initially involved using the existing approximately 12,332 square foot building on the so-called “Municipal Parcel” and use of adjacent parcels. This area is at the westernmost portion of Town Center. APPENDIX G. The Town has negotiated acquisition of the Municipal Parcel and other adjacent parcels, which are needed to build/renovate an adequate facility. The Council on Aging (“CoA”) sought consideration of other locations within the Town to build a CoA/CC. Most recently, at the 2021 Annual Town Meeting, at the urging of the CoA, residents voted to authorize the Select Board to acquire

land behind the current X-Golf business at Town Center for the eventual construction of a CoACC. Those negotiations have been unsuccessful, and no agreement is expected.

Passage of this article will authorize the appropriation of \$11,000,000 to build a new CoA/CC at the municipal parcels, located on the western most portion of the Wayland Town Center. The cost of the project is expected to be no more than \$11,000,000.

The proposed CoA/CC will be a 13,000 square foot building after adding Code required vestibules.

Needs Assessment: Community centers provide people of all ages the opportunity to work, play, and, most importantly, to gather and strengthen their connections to one another. This will be especially so in the years ahead as more people will be working in their homes, due to changing habits resulting from COVID-19. Once this virus moves on, our Town will need even more spaces for us to gather.

CoA Needs: There are many Town needs unmet today due to a lack of space, including offices requiring private meeting and record storage space. The CoA has no small room meeting space for the many different types of confidential counseling, in which they engage, such as offering personal health counseling or professional tax-related advice, Medicare enrollment and fuel assistance, among other things. Consequently, Wayland residents are sent to other communities for these services or hold confidential meetings in unheated closet sized rooms. Indoor fitness and senior activities are scattered throughout the Town. Many activities are unable to be scheduled at all as a result of a lack of space. For example, the Wayland Arts Center was closed to make room for the fire department expansion at Fire Station 2, in Cochituate Village, that resulted in the cancellation of all arts-related activities there.

Recreation Department Needs: The CoA/CCAC coordinated with the Recreation Department, the CoA, and other departments in order to determine the number and sizes of various multi-purpose rooms that may be used by a variety of participants throughout a typical day. Two art rooms will be available to replace the Art Center that was closed at Station 2.

Other indoor recreational activities are currently scattered throughout the Town building as space becomes available. Many other programs that are offered in peer communities simply cannot be offered due to lack of available space.

General Community Use: The Town also needs more space for organized group activities that continue to rise, especially among younger residents and children. Some examples are the Girl and Boy Scouts, veterans, various athletic groups, and the Wayland Children and Parents Association (WCPA). All Wayland residents and groups will be able to use the Community Center for a nominal fee to cover costs of the utilities, supervision and maintenance on a pro rata basis. New policies and procedures related to the booking of the facility will be similar to the booking of other Town space and part of the Town calendar.

Alternative Site Studies: The Council on Aging/Community Center Advisory Committee (CoA/CCAC) retained an independent consultant to conduct an Alternative Site Analysis of the appropriate town-owned parcels that could be used for a community center, including the existing Wayland Town Building, Alpine Road, Orchard Lane, the high school, Claypit Hill School, the Paine Estate, and the former Department of Public Works site at the Middle School. The report revealed appreciable challenges with each of these other alternative sites. The report and can be reviewed at [//www.wayland.ma.us/council-aging-board](http://www.wayland.ma.us/council-aging-board).

Temporarily leasing space at the Town Center for a CoA/CC was considered and discussed by Town officials and the CoA Committee. However, it was decided that the space does not address the long-term needs of the town and would merely increase the cost of the overall project and possibly delay it even

further. Because the space needs of a community center and the CoA are not simply generic, but rather unique to that use, interior build-out of any leased space will be required. This will add to the cost and delay the eventual occupancy of a permanent structure. Further, the cost to build out and lease, according to the CoA, could very well equal the cost of owning the proposed structure at the Municipal Parcels over the term of a 20-year lease.

The need for space for the CoA is acute and growing. Wayland's senior population is expected to continue to grow until 2030. Already more than twenty-seven percent of Wayland residents are 60+ years old and eligible for local, state, and federal programs and services. Residents also use the CoA to understand and seek services for their aging parents. State guidelines recommend provision of 5-6 sq. ft. per senior, while Wayland's underserved seniors are squeezed into 2,800 sq. ft. in the Wayland Town Building, plus a patchwork of other spaces. The CoA is actually made up of 2,128 sq. ft. of hallway and 772 sq. ft. of offices. This gives the Town .74 sq. ft. per senior. Many of our surrounding peer towns have new or are planning expansions to their centers to better meet state guidelines.

The Wayland Real Asset Planning Committee (WRAP) reported that the Municipal parcel is centrally located to the privately-owned Town Center development, zoning is in place for municipal use, utilities are stubbed to the property line, and wastewater capacity of 3,000 gpd is available.

Site Suitability: Some residents have raised concerns about past environmental issues at this site, including chlorinated solvents. Previous environmental studies determined that there were PCB levels at a portion of the site that were above reportable levels set forth by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection ("DEP"). More recent testing in 2015 determined that PCB levels were below DEP reportable levels. That report states:

"In other words, the identified concentration of PCBs in soil would not pose a significant risk of harm to human health, public welfare, safety, or the environment under any current or reasonable foreseeable future scenario of unrestricted use (including recreational, day care, or gardening use of the Site.)"

Some residents have expressed concern with the proximity of the building to the Sudbury River. This project will proceed through the standard permitting with town boards. The CoA/CC working group will work with the Conservation Commission to ensure that future improvements to the property are in compliance with wetlands and riverfront setback requirements. The site design includes adding trails with the guidance and approval of the Conservation Commission to connect the municipal pad to the river, the Rail trail, and existing trails to the north, completing the concept of an "emerald bracelet" on Wayland's riverfront.

The CoA/CCAC also coordinated with the Recreation Department, the CoA, and other departments, and submitted a final report proposing an affordable, flexible, and efficient facility. In 2015, their final report concluded that the Town Center location was the optimal site for this project.

The Town Center location is ideal because it is central to Wayland, and is located in a walkable retail area, along the popular bike path, which makes it user-friendly for seniors, families and residents alike. Locating the Community Center at the Town Center will encourage the everyday connections with neighbors and friends that make a small town like Wayland a great place to live.

Financing: The Town has appropriated \$890,000 at prior Town Meetings (\$150K + \$740K) and has spent \$74,567 to date to secure a site and develop bid documents for a Community Center at the Town Center. The current architects and designers have not submitted invoices for their current work as of this writing.

The Finance Committee recommends funding this project in a debt exclusion. Under Proposition 2½, the town’s taxes cannot exceed the levy limit. A debt exclusion allows raising funds beyond the levy limit to pay for bonds associated with a project. The ability to raise the extra levy expires when the debt associated with the project is paid off.

The cost to service the debt for the CoA/CC construction will cause the average tax bill to increase in the year 2024 by \$265, or 33 cents per \$1000 of home valuation. The average tax rate impact over time will go down as principal and debt service is reduced. This assumes the Town retaining a 20-year bonding at an effective interest rate of 4.5%.

Summary of the projected construction cost: The construction cost numbers include building costs projected to the construction period ending in November of 2023, including site development costs for a new parking lot for 90-100 cars. The following is a more detailed summary of costs that may be anticipated for the bidding, design and construction of the renovation of an existing building for a CoA Community Center in Wayland.

Once an agreement with Twenty Wayland, LLC was announced regarding transfer of ownership of the Town Center municipal parcels to the Town of Wayland, in January 2022, the Town Administrator formed a CoA/CC working group to review the building and site concepts that were prepared by the former CoA/CC Advisory Committee. The Wayland Energy and Climate Committee has also recommended implementing Net Zero Energy goals for any CoA/CC to be renovated or built, based on a This following the 2018 Annual Town Meeting resolution to seek effective design and construction of all new municipal building.

So, again, the working group has recommended renovating the current building located at the western end of the Wayland Town Center. As of this writing, the total building and site costs, including overhead, profit, mark-up, and contingencies, are estimated by the architect to be:

• General Conditions, Site Work, including Selective Demolition	\$2,272,400
• Building Renovations, including Concrete and Steel	\$2,317,000
• Mechanical, Electrical, Plumbing and Fire Protection	\$1,475,000
• General Contractor Fee, Inflation and Contingencies	<u>\$2,338,381</u>
Subtotal	\$8,402,781

However, adding a factor of 1.30 for added project development and other costs that may be anticipated for the bidding, design and construction of the new Community Center is prudent. Thus, the total building and site cost is expected not to exceed **\$11,000,000**.

The Town’s Permanent Municipal Building Committee has considered the architect’s and the working group’s work to date. That committee will have an opportunity to provide its view of the project’s cost, and other related topics, prior to the 2022 Annual Town Meeting.

The new building will require increased custodial care at an anticipated annual cost of one salaried staff person once the building is finished. Total operating expenses, including utilities and maintenance associated with the new building, are estimated to be \$170,000 per year. This is a conservative estimate because while it does not include actual inflation/escalation it also does not take into account the savings from the increased insulation and solar panels. No other staff hires are expected due the building’s construction. Any revenue obtained by renting out the facility will only be used to offset maintenance costs associated with the rental.

The Select Board Recommends approval. Vote: 4-0-0

ARGUMENTS IN FAVOR: The Council on Aging (CoA) has been requesting additional space for their operations for many years and it has been shown that the facilities currently available to them are significantly less than other towns of comparable size to Wayland.

The need for more space for the CoA is acute and growing. Wayland's senior population continues to grow, which entails many programs that just cannot be supported today. The Town should address the needs as soon as possible.

Many residents in Wayland have actively pursued a Community Center in Wayland and have held events to demonstrate such support for a facility that is available in many of Wayland's peer towns.

This use would be consistent with the goals of the Town in acquiring the Town Center municipal parcel.

The existing building at the municipal pad represents a unique opportunity for the Town to take advantage of an existing building that studies have shown is in relatively good condition and can be renovated at a cost that is significantly less than the cost of constructing a new building on that part of the site.

This facility can be designed as flexible space that will serve citizens of all ages by managing program schedules. Close coordination of shared space and resources, so that the rooms and spaces are used to their full potential, can be coordinated between the CoA and the Recreation Department, thereby creating operating efficiencies for the Town.

New indoor recreation space will create play space for young children sought by the Wayland Children and Parents Association and a number of other sports organizations.

Constructing a Council on Aging/Community Center facility at the Town Center Municipal pad is consistent with the Town's plan for a mixed-use intergenerational environment at Town Center.

ARGUMENTS OPPOSED: Opponents have opined that putting the CoA/Community center is not the best use of this parcel of land.

The Town cannot afford to spend money on a significant new facility at a time when our debt service is at the top of the Finance Committee's recommended maximum debt service level (10% of Total Spending).

Some may argue that the CoA has ample space to conduct its programs in its current space. In addition, providing better indoor facilities for recreation is not a priority at this time.

It has been suggested that we should not renovate an old building but build a new facility.

Opponents suggest that the Town should not be undertaking new projects at this time but focus on the ones already in the works.

Some fear that the site selected may still have environmental issues or be too close to the Sudbury River, or infringe on riverfront setbacks.

RECOMMENDATION: The Finance Committee recommends approval. Vote: 4-0-0

QUANTUM OF VOTE: Two-thirds – see G.L. Chapter 44, Sections 2, 7 and 8.

For more information about this article, contact Acting Town Manager Stephen Crane at scrane@wayland.ma.us