

2. With regard to "location", please rank the following benefits in order of your priority: **1** being the **most** important, and **5** being the **least** important.

Proximity to Downtown	
Parking Availability	
Possible Future Expansion (for more Senior Center space or Community Center space)	
Access to Outdoor Activities	
Whether a single level or multi-level building	

3. Rank the following four potential sites in terms of overall desirability; **1** being the **most** desirable, and **4** being the **least** desirable – Also, use the "other" box for a write-in choice.

DeFazio Park Parking Lot	
Greene's Field	
Ridge Hill	
Rosemary Hill	
Other (name site)	

4. List all factors (positive / negative) that led to your decision in question 3 above.

5. Any other comments, suggestions, or concerns:

Gender	Male ()	Female ()				
Age	< 30	30-45	46-60	61-75	>75	

What happens now at the Senior Center?

(Source: Council on Aging Report FY2008)

- 313 volunteers engaged in meaningful work and donated 23,000 hours of community service time to the Council on Aging
- 549 people served by SHINE(*) counselors saving these residents nearly \$154,000 in health care costs
- 1,000 individuals participated in programs and activities
- 2,200 more people were served by the Senior Center social service staff
- 4,000 meals served at the Senior Center lunch program
- 8,000+ phone calls received - 25% for social service issues and concerns
- The majority of seniors frequenting the Needham Senior Center report arriving by vehicle
- Marshfield, Duxbury and Milford have constructed new buildings for their Senior Centers and collectively have experienced an average increase in attendance of greater than 400%

(*)(Serving the Health and Information Needs of the Elderly)

- | | |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <i>Denise Garlick, Co-Chair</i> | <i>James Healy, Co-Chair</i> |
| <i>Matthew Borrelli</i> | <i>Melinda Lombardo</i> |
| <i>Marianne Cooley</i> | <i>Lianne Relich</i> |
| <i>Larry Cummings</i> | <i>Colleen Schaller</i> |
| <i>Carol deLemos</i> | <i>Mary Elizabeth Weadock</i> |
| <i>Jay Kaplan</i> | |

*The Senior Center
Exploratory Committee*

selectmen@town.needham.ma.us



SURVEY
for a
New Building
for the
Senior Center

Please return this survey in the receptacles provided at:

- Town Hall—1471 Highland Avenue
- Library—1139 Highland Avenue
- Current Senior Center—83 Pickering Street

or mail to the

Senior Center Exploratory Committee
Needham Town Hall
1471 Highland Avenue,
Needham, MA 02492

**Return by:
April 30, 2009**

Dear Needham Neighbor:

Please **help** us with your input on the needs, size, and location of a new building to house our **Senior Center**. Your response to this survey will greatly assist the Senior Center Exploratory Committee in forming their recommendations for the Board of Selectmen, to whom a report will be made this September.

The Selectmen strongly believe in the need for a new Senior Center building. The current Center, which houses the Council on Aging (a Town Department), is located in the basement of the Stephen Palmer Apartment building at 83 Pickering Street. This building is not currently controlled by the Town, as it is the subject of a long-term lease that does not expire until 2027.

The existing below grade-level space is entirely inadequate, in terms of available square footage, modern day accessibility, and parking. It lacks space for confidential counseling and exercise, and is subject to periodic flooding. Due to space constraints, certain programs must be shipped off-site, which is difficult to program and eliminates "socialization", one of the key mental health benefits of a Center. There is no capacity to take on future needs, either programmatically or population-wise. And yes, there will be future needs. Since 1980, the general population of Needham (~ 29,000) has seen only a modest increase, but the senior population has grown steadily. In 2010, seniors are expected to account for 25% (7,250) of the Town's population.

The mission of a Senior Center has never been more important. Studies continue to show that individuals of all ages benefit from opportunities to interact with their peers, whether in a social or educational setting. With "seniors", the problem is creating the environment where this can occur. The National Council of Aging has stated that "participation in senior center programming is already leading to the effective management and delayed onset of chronic disease, as well as targeted, measurable outcomes on indicators of physical, social, spiritual, emotional, mental, and economic well-being."

Our Exploratory Committee has been meeting since November 2008, and focusing on the key issues of design/size, location, and cost. With respect to **design/size**, we have toured numerous Senior Centers in similarly situated Towns, we have reviewed possible program and space needs, and we have learned that a successful Center for a senior population such as Needham's requires between 15,000 - 20,000 square feet (the current Center is only 6,700).

On **location**, we have examined the pros/cons for all available Town-owned land that was previously identified in the Facility Master Plan. The Committee has **not** voted to recommend any

one site at this time because this issue warrants much discussion among all citizens and Town officials and it will be influenced by the results of a planned Feasibility Study.

However the Committee currently favors four potential sites (listed in alphabetical order): DeFazio Park parking lot (Dedham Avenue) – adjacent to newly constructed fields and a track with abundant parking, but may also be the site of a future Elementary School (if needed), the "tot lot" would have to be moved to the Carleton Pavilion area, and paving the dirt parking lot could be costly; Greene's Field (Pickering Street) – closest to the downtown and may someday be linked with the Stephen Palmer building, but would take up diminishing open space in the downtown area, would have to relocate/remove a playground structure and playing field, and parking would be problematic; Ridge Hill (Charles River Street) – spacious site with walking trails, garden, and ample parking, but also the furthest away from the downtown and could be the most costly to construct, unless the plan contemplates tearing down the existing Morse-Bradley house; Rosemary Hill (Rosemary Street, next to Rosemary Pool) – overlooking scenic Rosemary Pond and close to Library, grocery market, new fields at Memorial and a business district, but topography and wetlands may increase cost to construct.

The Committee does not favor other possible sites including: developing other areas of Ridge Hill or the Town Forest (eliminates open space and may require acquisition of replacement space); Parcel 74 off Greendale Avenue and near Cheney St. (critical buffer between Route 128 and the adjacent neighborhood and topography would make construction costly); Needham Housing Authority property at Linden/Chambers (not enough available land and would require lengthy dealings with the Federal and State government); Perry Park off Beaufort Ave. (too small and too residential); Needham Golf Club land off Green St. (the only significant amount of open space in the Town's interior, already has an existing beneficial use, frequented by many seniors, and may require acquisition of replacement space); Nike Site off Pine St. (very difficult – and costly – to access; other uses are being studied and neighboring Ridge Hill is better alternative).

We estimate that the total **cost** to design and construct this building will approximate \$5.5 - \$6.0 million. Of this amount, the Town Manager and Board of Selectmen have included in the Town's Capital Improvement Plan \$4 million of funding for a new building to house our Senior Center. Use of these funds would **not** require a Prop, 2 ½ override vote. That would then require private fundraising of \$1.5 - \$2 million, on which our Committee and the Friends of Needham Elderly are ready to begin working. PLEASE HELP US BY ANSWERING THE FOLLOWING:

1: Design / Size – Design of the new facility is guided by State recommendations, the senior population, and space needs for existing and desired activities, programs and services. **Please check (✓) how important the following functions would be to you in a new Senior Center building:**

Confidential space for financial, legal and medical counseling

Not Important	Neutral	Important	Very Important
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Space for interaction between younger and older generations

Not Important	Neutral	Important	Very Important
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Space for exercise, fitness and recreation

Not Important	Neutral	Important	Very Important
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Classrooms for life-long learning (computers, cultural, etc.)

Not Important	Neutral	Important	Very Important
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Kitchen and dining area for nutritional meals program

Not Important	Neutral	Important	Very Important
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Space for creative classes (i.e. art and music)

Not Important	Neutral	Important	Very Important
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Space for volunteers and their work

Not Important	Neutral	Important	Very Important
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Space for job counseling

Not Important	Neutral	Important	Very Important
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Space for senior networking

Not Important	Neutral	Important	Very Important
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