TOWN OF LINCOLN

Community Center Feasibility Committee

FINAL REPORT
JULY 2012

Table of Contents

Preface i

Introduction 1

- Key Findings 2
- Next Steps 3

What is a Community Center? 6

Background 7

- Capital Planning in Lincoln 7
- Departmental Profiles 9

Documentation 10

- Existing Conditions 10
- Departmental Space Needs Estimates 14
- Site Studies 17
- Community Input 18

Analysis of Options 19

- Relocating One or Both Departments 19
- Summary 38
- Maintaining Status Quo 38

Appendix 41

Bibliography 59

PREFACE

In May 2011, the Board of Selectmen appointed a six-member Community Center Feasibility Committee (CCFC) to evaluate the programmatic and space needs of the Council on Aging (COA) and Parks and Recreation Department (PRD). The CCFC included a representative from the Selectmen, COA, Parks and Recreation Committee, and the Disabilities Commission, and two "at-large" volunteers. The Town Administrator, COA Director, and PRD Director served as ex officio, non-voting members. The Selectmen charged the CCFC with the following responsibilities:

- Evaluate the programmatic and space needs of the Council on Aging and Parks and Recreation Department.
- Submit a report that inventories existing programs and facilities (modeled on the work of the Facilities Coordinating Committee-FCC) and includes an assessment of options for housing these departments and programs.
- Identify any key limitations or deficiencies in the existing facilities and their siting (parking, access, safety, etc.) as well as assess the feasibility and costs of remediation.
- Review the benefits and challenges of co-locating some or all of the departments' programs in one or more facilities.
- Assess the benefits and challenges of relocating some or all programs and services to one or more existing town and/or private facilities.
- Develop a list of potential sites for a new facility and evaluate the benefits and challenges inherent in each.
- The Committee's report should be organized in a manner that enables the Board of Selectmen (and town at large) to weigh the costs, benefits, and challenges of each alternative.

We hope that we have completed the tasks outlined in the Selectmen's charge. Parenthetically, the charge did not include assessing the town's interest in a community center.

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INTRODUCTION

As part of an ongoing effort to plan for Lincoln's long-term public facility needs, the Board of Selectmen appointed an ad hoc committee in May 2011 to evaluate existing and future space needs of the Council on Aging (COA) and Parks and Recreation Department (PRD) and to explore options for meeting these needs. The Selectmen decided to group the COA and PRD for this study because:

- In a recent report on Lincoln's town facilities, the Facilities Coordinating Committee called for an evaluation of the long-term programmatic and space needs of the COA and PRD.
- The COA needs enough safe, appropriately configured space to serve the senior population. Public safety and civil rights challenges at Bemis Hall, the historic building that currently houses the senior center, make it very difficult to meet these needs.
- The PRD has administrative offices and program space at the Hartwell Pods on Ballfield Road. Though an ideal location for PRD, the Pods are essentially "borrowed" space from the Lincoln School Committee and the buildings need significant capital improvements.
- Both departments share their facilities with numerous community groups that rely on town and school buildings as gathering places. Thus, decisions about the future of the COA and PRD will affect more people than the actual participants in COA and PRD programs and services.
- Both departments depend on off-site space for some of their programs and services. For example, the COA has programs not only at Bemis Hall, but also at The Groves and St. Anne's Church. Similarly, PRD runs programs at the Pods and at Bemis Hall, the Pierce House, Ryan Estates, The Groves, and First Parish Church. The PRD and COA operate quite differently from other Town departments that have a fixed location at a designated facility.
- Senior centers and recreation departments sometimes share facilities, and this can be seen in several communities around Lincoln. It may be possible for the Town to meet COA and PRD space needs more efficiently by co-locating these departments on one site. In addition, a community center could be a better option for accommodating the many community organizations that currently use COA and PRD space. It could encourage greater intergenerational interaction and community-building activities, too.
- For the past several years, the Lincoln School Committee has been working toward plans to improve the K-8 schools. Decisions about the future of existing facilities and the location of any new facilities on the Ballfield Road campus could create opportunities for PRD and the COA or eventually displace PRD – thus creating a new space needs problem.
- Interest in a multi-generational community center surfaced during Lincoln's recent efforts to prepare a comprehensive plan and a community health needs assessment.

To carry out its responsibilities, the Community Center Feasibility Committee (CCFC) met eleven times between July and December 31, 2011 and again before the 2012 Annual Town Meeting. The CCFC considered seven possible locations for a co-located community center as well as the

advantages and disadvantages of keeping the COA and PRD in their current (or other separate) facilities. Table 1 summarizes the sites evaluated as part of this study. In addition, the CCFC sought citizen participation through a focus group with stakeholders, a public forum, and a discussion period at the State of the Town Meeting on October 29, 2011.

This report concludes the first phase of the CCFC's work. The present study describes a general policy framework for assessing the suitability of sites for a community center, with "financial cost" representing just one of many considerations. It is important to note that the construction cost estimates cited in this study are very approximate "order of magnitude" estimates only, based on recent public facility construction costs in other Massachusetts communities. The construction cost estimates offer a way of making rough comparisons between the sites the CCFC considered, yet depending on the actual scope of improvements required to reprogram existing space (or build new space), the actual variation in cost could be much greater. A summary of findings about the options as well as maintaining the status quo may be found on pages 38 to 40.

Some of the sites the CCFC reviewed would be more appropriate for a "stand-alone" senior center due to their location or the smaller amount of floor space available for reprogramming, or both. Indeed, one of the lessons learned from this study is that Lincoln has very few Town-owned sites that would be appropriate for a multi-purpose community center. So much of Lincoln's land is protected by conservation restrictions that the Town has remarkably little flexibility to site new public facilities.

Key Findings

- To serve Lincoln's present and 10-year future senior population, the COA needs about 9,700 sq. ft. of gross floor area (GFA), allocated to activity rooms, offices, a reception/ registration area, an auditorium, cooking and dining facilities, informal gathering spaces, and common areas (hallways, restrooms, storage, etc.).

- PRD needs approximately 14,600 sq. ft. GFA for existing and near-term future programming requirements. Appropriate facilities for community recreation programs include administrative offices, small classrooms, a large multi-purpose room, a fitness center, cooking facilities, an arts and crafts studio, informal gathering spaces, and common areas (hallways, restrooms, storage, etc.).

- In a co-located facility, the COA and PRD would need approximately 19,300 sq. ft. GFA instead of the 24,300 sq. ft. GFA they would need in separate locations. This reduction is achieved by the COA and PRD sharing an auditorium, multi-purpose room, and other spaces.

- Bemis Hall is not well suited for use as a senior center. It lacks the floor area and space configurations a senior center needs, the building is not fully accessible to people with disabilities, the site is not conducive to outdoor activities, and there is not enough safely located parking to serve the senior center's patrons.

- Investing in capital improvements such as finishing the basement could provide the COA with some of the additional space it needs. However, this would mean moving some functions, such

as presentations or social activities, to the basement when these uses should ideally be located on the main level for a welcoming, effective, and efficient operation of the COA.

- Ballfield Road is a great place for community recreation programs, but PRD is a tenant at will and the Hartwell Pods need attention. Though generally well maintained by the School Department, the Pods have code violations, architectural access barriers, roof deterioration, and general "wear-and-tear" problems that have already been documented in other studies. The School Department has little incentive to lead the charge for capital improvements because the Pods are not being used for educational purposes.

- The Town needs to encourage more public discussion about the program opportunities a community center could offer. Many residents who attended meetings for this study seemed unfamiliar with the rationale for a multi-purpose, intergenerational facility. People may disagree about whether Lincoln needs one, but they should at least have the same concept in mind when they debate the advantages and disadvantages.

- Whether the Town prefers separate COA and PRD sites or a shared community center, at some point – fairly soon – Lincoln will face capital costs to house these organizations in adequate and appropriate facilities. Deciding against a multi-purpose community center does not mean the Town has a "no-cost" option, even if both agencies stay in their present locations indefinitely. This is especially true for the COA.

- Lincoln residents are justifiably proud of Bemis Hall, and justifiably concerned about its future. Concerns about the fate of Bemis Hall need to be addressed through a "next steps" capital planning process in Lincoln. A valuable asset in a gateway location in Lincoln Center, Bemis Hall should not be passed from one department or organization to the next simply to keep the building occupied. The Town already knows the approximate cost to bring the facility to code because Bemis Hall has been studied before. However, Bemis Hall needs a thoughtful suitability assessment as well, i.e., what are the best uses of this special building, what will it cost to make the building functional for those uses, and how will the Town finance the requisite improvements?

- Until a decision is made about the schools, it will be very difficult for the Town to formulate plans for the COA and PRD, alone or together in a multi-purpose community center. Of the sites the CCFC chose to review, only the Hartwell area and Smith School have enough space to house both departments and the community organizations that use their existing facilities. While there are other options to relocate the COA, investing in capital improvements for a senior center would most likely bring conversations about a community center to an end, at least for the foreseeable future.

Next Steps

- The Selectmen should articulate a vision of a community center.

- The Town should determine whether residents want a community center.

- The Town should decide whether to look more closely at any of the sites reviewed for this study. If so, the Town will need to retain a registered architect for conceptual floor plans and preliminary cost estimates. The Planning Board should also consider senior center interests in the upcoming planning effort in South Lincoln.

- Alternatively, the Town could expand the list of possible locations for a community center, senior center, or new home for PRD, and study those sites following a protocol similar to that used for the present analysis.

- The Town and the COA should move ahead now with improvements to Bemis Hall in order to meet the needs of the COA in the short term and any future occupant in the longer term.

- The jurisdictional status of the Hartwell Pods should be clarified. Some residents who attended meetings for this study said that since Lincoln owns the Ballfield Road property, the Town should be able to carry out capital improvements at the Pods and keep the buildings in use for PRD. However, unless the buildings have been formally decommissioned, it appears that only the School Committee can authorize work on them.

- The public procurement requirements that apply to privately owned facilities need to be determined and clarified. Under state law, local governments cannot acquire real property (through purchase or lease) without a formal procurement process that gives potentially eligible property owners a fair and open opportunity to compete. For the right property and with the right terms and conditions, a long-term lease could be very beneficial to the Town. However, it is not clear that any of the privately owned sites in this study can do more for Lincoln than the Town's own properties could accomplish with appropriate capital improvements.

Table 1. Sites Considered by Community Center Feasibility Committee

Site	Address	Owner or Entity with Site Control	Potentially Usable Space (sq. ft.)	Site Area	Overall Conditions Assessment	Space Adequacy Assessment
Hartwell Pods[(1)(2)]	Ballfield Road	School Committee	8,125	54.4 acres	Moderate to significant renovations required	PRD, but only in part
Hartwell Building[(1)(2)(3)]	Ballfield Road	School Committee	24,269	54.4 acres	Moderate renovations required	Co-located community center
Smith School[(1)(4)]	Ballfield Road	School Committee	49,162	54.4 acres	Moderate to significant renovations required	Co-located community center
Pierce House	17 Weston Road	Town of Lincoln	3,350	26.0 acres	New construction required	N/A
The Groves[(5)]	1 Harvest Circle	The Groves in Lincoln	10,000	34.5 acres	Moderate renovations required; not appropriate for co-located facility	Senior center
First Parish	14 Bedford Road	First Parish Church	10,560	1.4 acres	Moderate to significant renovations required, and possibly new construction; not appropriate for a co-located facility	Senior center (if existing tenant space is supplemented with new construction)
Farrington Memorial	291 Cambridge Turnpike	Farrington Memorial Trust	11,100	71 acres	Significant renovations and new construction required	Senior center or PRD
Wells Road	Wells Road	The Community Builders	1,000	19.9 acres	New construction required	Needs further study

Notes:

(1) School facilities on Ballfield Rd. occupy the same tract of land.

(2) For purposes of this study, the Hartwell Building and Pods constitute a single site.

(3) Due to the amount of floor area devoted to storage and mechanical/electrical systems in the Hartwell Building's lower level, a community center would need virtually all of the remaining space, or approximately 19,500 sq. ft. (gross). There may be options for a "campus" approach that combines the Pods with space in a portion of the Hartwell building, which is why the "site" for this analysis includes both Hartwell and the Pods.

(4) If located at Smith School, a multi-purpose community center could occupy the gym and kindergarten classrooms wing, which have a combined total of 14,650± sq. ft. (net) or 17,140± GFA.

(5) Though potentially suitable space for a senior center, the building at The Groves presents some drawbacks for Lincoln. For example, a senior center would replace rental units that contribute to Lincoln's status as an "over 10%" community under Chapter 40B. If losing those units put the Town below 10%, Lincoln may be exposed to comprehensive permits.

WHAT IS A COMMUNITY CENTER?

Definition

In this report, "community center" means a public facility that provides social, leisure, cultural, and health programs and services for everyone in the community, regardless of age. Where community centers exist, they typically have multi-purpose spaces: floor plans that can double as a senior center and a recreation center. Sometimes community centers accommodate other users, too, e.g., health departments, after-school programs, early childhood education programs, a local food pantry, and community organizations.

Benefits & Challenges

There are sound philosophical, programmatic, and financial reasons for having a community center instead of a "seniors-only" center, a youth center, a recreation activities center, and so forth. Community center proponents believe that combining uses in one building can help to normalize the aging process and promote intergenerational interaction. In addition, because senior centers and recreation centers typically have opposite peak programming times, combining the uses in one facility creates the potential for cost efficiencies. However, the available literature (which is limited) and consultations with center directors in other towns suggest that opting for one multi-purpose facility mainly to save money tends to bring about less-than-satisfactory results.

There are also challenges associated with combining uses in one facility. Not all spaces can be shared easily, and some functions require dedicated space. Moreover, different population groups have needs and interests that cannot be consolidated. Sharing spaces requires coordinating schedules, which can be difficult, especially as programs grow. Staff at several community centers in Massachusetts identified scheduling issues as a constant challenge at their facilities. Having children and seniors in the same building presents safety concerns as well (e.g., children running into frail seniors), although these concerns can be mitigated through thoughtful facility design.

Best Practices & Lessons Learned

Several towns in Massachusetts have community centers that combine the COA with one or more other users, often the local recreation department or a portion of it. Appendix A identifies a sample of Massachusetts towns with community centers and summarizes the facilities offered in each center. Program directors at several of these facilities were contacted about their experiences. In addition, the Lincoln COA conducted site visits to community centers in Concord, Weston, Bedford, and Sudbury in March 2012. The following captures the key "lessons learned" from the site visits and conversations with program directors at shared facilities.

- **Plan for the future.** Program directors in several facilities say the popularity of their programs increased after they moved into a new facility. Space requirements for a new facility should not be based on current attendance levels and should consider changing demographic patterns (e.g., an aging population).
- **Put space sharing agreements in writing.** It is important to develop a written policy for sharing spaces to ensure transparency and provide continuity when staff and programs change.

- **Have a business plan.** Before the facility is designed and built, program directors and the community should develop a business plan that addresses facility operations, management, and finances. If the facility or a portion of the facility will be available to rent (as most are), towns should research the competition for similar spaces and think about a marketing strategy.

- **Be thoughtful about design.** Good design is paramount to a successful community center. Program directors in shared facilities consistently emphasized the importance of design at all scales and in every feature of the building. To be successful, a community center needs to support multiple interests by design. The COA director in Harwich says one of the best design decisions her town made was to provide a direct exit to the parking lot from the medical equipment room, thereby eliminating the need to lug bulky equipment through the rest of the building. When programmed to meet the needs of a variety of users and provide both for "organic" and structured interactions between them, community centers offer a supportive environment for social, physical, educational, and spiritual growth.

BACKGROUND

Capital Planning in Lincoln

Municipal Facilities

Lincoln has carried out several capital planning initiatives in the past decade. In 2006, architects from McKinley Gaslow & Associates (MK&A) completed an assessment of six town-owned buildings. For each building, MK&A evaluated the building envelope, structure, accessibility and code compliance, mechanical system, and electrical system. They also prepared preliminary cost estimates for the repairs and upgrades needed to address code and safety requirements, but their scope of work did not include an assessment of long-term programmatic and community needs.[1] In 2008, Lincoln hired architect Michael Rosenfeld for a comprehensive look at the Town Office Building and Bemis Hall. Rosenfield provided updated cost estimates from 2006, planning options for both buildings, and cost estimates for each option. For Bemis Hall, his report centers on one option: a complete renovation priced at $3.6 million.[2] Approximately two years later (2010), Lincoln voters appropriated funds to renovate the Town Office Building.

While the 2008 study was underway, the Lincoln Planning Board initiated work on a comprehensive plan and created several subcommittees to help guide the project. After reviewing the Town's core municipal buildings and consulting with Town staff, the Facilities and Circulation and Transportation Subcommittee (FACTS) echoed the basic findings and conclusions of the building needs studies. FACTS recommended changing Lincoln's approach to managing public facilities, notably by centralizing basic management functions and instituting a planned preventive maintenance (PPM) program. In addition, the committee stressed that Lincoln would face significant capital expenditures in the future due to the age and condition of key Lincoln Center buildings such

[1] McGinley Kalsow & Associates (MKA), *Town of Lincoln Building Needs Assessment* (July 24 2006).

[2] Michael Rosenfeld, Inc. *Building Needs Assessment and Comprehensive Planning Options Report* (2008). The study estimated the cost of full renovation to be $1.49 million more than if the work were completed incrementally.

as the Town Offices, Bemis Hall, and the Pierce House.[3] One of Lincoln's great challenges is that residents revere their historic municipal buildings, yet caring for those buildings requires a willingness to accept costly trade-offs.

Following these studies, the Board of Selectmen created a Facilities Coordinating Committee (FCC) in 2010. The FCC's work came at the heels of Lincoln's then-recently completed Comprehensive Plan (2009), which examined public facility and services needs and recommended a longer-range capital plan. Further, the FCC's work coincided with plans to renovate the Town Offices and a feasibility study for a new K-8 school. To fulfill its charge, the FCC developed a space inventory for the public facilities used by Town boards and community organizations, and identified both space shortages and excess capacity in each municipal facility. The present Community Center Study responds to one of the FCC's recommendations: a more detailed look "at the evolving needs of the COA, the Schools, and the Parks and Recreation Department."[4]

Planning for K-8 School Facilities

The Lincoln Public Schools is a K-8 school district serving the Town of Lincoln.[5] Its compound on Ballfield Road includes school buildings; a gym, an auditorium, and other core facilities; playgrounds and playing fields; and former school structures that remain under the School Committee's jurisdiction but currently serve for other purposes, including offices and program space for PRD. In 2006-2007, the Lincoln School Committee completed a master plan study for the Ballfield Road campus. The study included evaluations of existing school buildings, including buildings discussed later in this report: the Hartwell school administration building, the Hartwell Pods, and the Smith Building. For each building, the master plan evaluated site considerations, accessibility, building systems and assemblies, exterior envelope, interior finishes, plumbing system, automatic fire suppression system, heating and ventilation system, and electrical system. The evaluation included recommendations to improve these components.[6]

A year later (2008), the School Committee filed a "Statement of Interest" with the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA), which is an important step in the process of qualifying for school construction financial assistance. The MSBA subsequently invited Lincoln to participate in a feasibility study to determine options for addressing the Town's school space needs. The feasibility study produced a preferred development option that combines existing space renovations with new construction for a K-8 facility to serve 660 students. The School Committee and School Building Committee have been conducting meetings to present the preferred development option and seek input from residents. The preferred option has an impact on the potential sites for a multi-purpose community center, as discussed later in this report. The School Building Committee anticipates asking for funds for the project in 2012.

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[3] *Lincoln Comprehensive Plan* (2009), 207-235 *passim*.

[4] Town of Lincoln, *Facilities Coordinating Committee Summary Report* (July 2010), 13.

[5] The district also has administrative responsibility for the K-8 schools at Hanscom Air Force Base (AFB).

[6] Symmes Maini & McKee Associates (SMMA), *Lincoln Public Schools K-8 Master Plan Study* (October 2007).

Departmental Profiles

Council on Aging

Massachusetts cities and towns have authority to establish a Council on Aging (COA) under G.L. c. 40, § 8B. The Lincoln COA provides social services to people 60 years and older, their families and caregivers, and people with disabilities regardless of age. In Lincoln and most small towns, the COA is the only social services agency operating under the purview of local government. Though focused primarily on senior services, the COA also acts as a referral and information resource for non-elders seeking various types of public assistance. Since the Lincoln COA has such a small staff, its programs depend on the support of approximately 150 volunteers. Most of the COA's senior programs and activities take place during the day, mainly at Bemis Hall, the COA's present home.

Overseen by a board appointed by the Board of Selectmen, the COA offers a range of activities such as educational presentations on medical, legal and other issues; health clinics; fitness classes; social events and recreational activities; small support and discussion groups; and outings. These programs and others operate with two goals in mind: to make life more enjoyable for senior citizens, and to help seniors remain independent. The primary benefit of senior center activities, however, is to provide social support and a sense of community, which are inextricably linked to physical, cognitive, and emotional well-being and to reduction in morbidity and mortality. In addition, the COA provides significant support for elders who need assistance to remain safely in the community. These services include care and crisis management, information and referral, transportation, medical equipment loans, home safety evaluations, well being check-ins, financial emergency and benefits assistance for residents of all ages, health benefits counseling, tax counseling, and more.

Consistent with national demographic trends, Lincoln's senior population has grown significantly in recent years. When the COA moved into Bemis Hall in 1983, the Town had 1,019 residents 60 years and older. Since then, the number of older residents has grown to at least 1,506, an increase of 48 percent.[7] Participation in COA events has increased, too. Between FY07 and FY11, the number of visits increased 51 percent, from 5,640 to 8,552 visits. According to the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC), Lincoln's senior population will continue to grow, with the number of older residents projected to reach 2,094 by 2020 and 2,524 by 2030.[8]

Parks & Recreation

PRD aims "to promote the benefits of parks and recreation to the community by providing quality opportunities for people of all ages to develop interests, skills, healthy lifestyles, and socialization."[9] Toward these ends, PRD offers a wide range of programs for adults, school-age children, and preschoolers. Its programs include summer camps, fitness classes, arts and crafts, ballroom dancing, adult education, trips, special events such as school dances and the Lincoln Winter Carnival, and

[7] Source of current senior population estimate: Census 2010, Demographic Profile, Middlesex County Census Tract 3602 (Residential Lincoln). Other sources report different estimates. For example, the local census estimate is 1,699 people 60+ years. See *Annual Town Report 2010*, 83.

[8] MAPC, Lincoln Demographic Projections.

[9] Town of Lincoln, "Parks & Recreation Department," http://www.lincolntown.org/depts/rec.htm.

coordination with the Town's various athletic leagues. In addition, PRD maintains Lincoln's parks and athletic fields, and coordinates scheduling for athletic facilities and the school gyms (after school hours). PRD is run by a staff of three, with support from paid and volunteer program instructors and seasonal employees. Overall policy direction comes from a Parks and Recreation board composed of elected and appointed members. Unlike the COA, the PRD runs programs during the day, but mainly in the late afternoon, evenings, and on weekends.

DOCUMENTATION

Existing Conditions

Council on Aging

Bemis Hall, an impressive historic building in Lincoln Center, contains the COA's administrative offices and most of its program space, though some COA events take place at other locations. Constructed in 1892, the two-story Bemis Hall served as Lincoln's town hall until the 1980s, when it became home for the PRD and other town departments and later, the COA and other community uses. The COA's offices, social or "drop-in" space, a kitchen, two activity rooms, and one small computer training room/office are located on the first floor. The second floor holds a large auditorium used for COA and town events, including the endowed Bemis lecture series. PRD, the Friends of the Library, and community groups use the auditorium, too. The basement is used for storage (some storage space is being used by the town offices and other organizations during the town hall renovations project).

Exterior of Bemis Hall

Bemis Hall basement stairs

Bemis Hall side entrance

The net floor area in Bemis Hall is approximately 7,290 net sq. ft.,[10] of which the COA currently uses 4,270 sq. ft.[11] Other town departments and organizations use the remaining space, or it is space that is

[10] Office of Michael Rosenfeld, Inc., *Town of Lincoln Building Needs Assessment Updated and Comprehensive Planning Options: Bemis Hall and Town Offices* (February 2008).

not usable for programming. To support current and future program requirements, the COA needs 7,750 sq. ft. of space: significantly more than the space available in Bemis Hall. However, the difference is larger than it appears, for the COA's projected space need of 7,750 sq. ft. does not include common areas such as restrooms, utility rooms, and hallways. Expressed as an estimate of gross floor area (GFA) that would account for common space, the COA needs about 9,700 sq. ft.

Bemis Hall has many structural and access deficiencies that make it unsuitable – in its current state – for a senior center. The 2006 MK&A study identifies numerous essential repairs to Bemis Hall, including major repairs such as replacing the roof.[12] At the time, MK&A estimated the total cost of these repairs at $1.36 million (in 2006 dollars). In 2008, Michael Rosenfeld reported that a full renovation of Bemis Hall would run approximately $3.6 million (in 2008 dollars). He identified the following major improvements: "providing a fully accessible front entry, improved handicapped parking and a safety island for persons crossing Bedford Road, a second egress from the lower level, accessible restrooms for both genders, new mechanical and electrical systems, and thermally efficient and architectural replacement windows."[13] A 2011 safety evaluation of Bemis Hall recommended several additional improvements, including new furniture, use of contrast paint at doors and stairs, extended handrails, and brighter lighting at the accessible entrance.[14] The site also lacks adequate parking, both under existing conditions and for the COA's anticipated long-term needs.

Bemis Hall faces Bedford Road, a major thoroughfare. The building's central location and frontage on a major street encourage spontaneous visits and make Bemis Hall a convenient location for many seniors in Lincoln. A small parking lot extends between the front of the building and the street. The parking lot's proximity to Bedford Road poses a significant constraint for vehicle circulation, for there is not enough space for a dedicated entrance or exit to the parking lot and very limited space for cars to maneuver into and out of parking spaces. This is a particular concern for exiting vehicles because they cannot turn around without entering the roadway. A walking path on Bedford Road provides pedestrian access to the site from other parts of Lincoln.

Since 2008, Lincoln has installed a new roof at Bemis Hall, repaired the cupola, removed the old emergency generator, and demolished the old generator's enclosure. In addition, the Town is currently improving access at the front entrance, and parking and pedestrian safety improvements are scheduled for completion in 2012. While recent renovations have addressed some of Bemis Hall's accessibility and safety needs, many significant issues remain. First, the only accessible entrance is a side entrance, which has a ramp but not an automatic door.[15] Entering Bemis Hall through the side requires patrons to go through an activity room in order to access other parts of the building. Second, although Bemis Hall has been retrofitted to include a new stairway and elevator, using the second floor or the basement presents safety concerns because in an emergency, patrons with disabilities

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[11] Carolyn Bottum, COA Director, to Community Opportunities Group, Inc., September 2011.

[12] MKA, Bemis Hall Cost Estimates, *Building Needs Assessment*, (July 24, 2006).

[13] Rosenfeld, *Building Needs Assessment* (2008), 2.

[14] Visiting Nurse Community Health Safety Evaluation, (March 29, 2011.)

[15] The main entrance to Bemis Hall is being retrofitted for partial access.

may not be able to use the stairs to exit the building. Emergency egress from the second floor is a particular concern given the large number of occupants the auditorium can accommodate. Third, the auditorium stage, stairs, and landing railings do not comply with state architectural access regulations, and there is no accessible women's restroom. Finally, the inadequate parking (nine spaces) in front of Bemis Hall requires many patrons to park across the street at First Parish Church and walk across busy Bedford Road. Although there is a crosswalk and signage, crossing Bedford Road is dangerous, especially after sunset.

Of equal concern, though beyond the scope of Lincoln's earlier facility studies, is that Bemis Hall lacks appropriately configured floor space, which in turn reduces the quantity and quality of programs and services the COA can provide. For example, Bemis Hall's three activity rooms often support multiple events per day. This results in frequently setting up and taking down room configurations, limiting the time activities can take place, and pushing people out who would like to socialize after an event.

Bemis Hall activity room

Bemis Hall drop-in space

The core of senior centers, both architecturally and programmatically, should be "social space," sometimes called "drop-in space," given the many benefits of social contact. To be effective, "drop-in" space needs to be large, though proportionate to the senior population, centrally-located within the senior center, and comfortable. In addition, the center needs a variety of program spaces to accommodate a range of activities: fitness rooms with appropriate floors in order to avoid injuries, small rooms for discussion groups and larger rooms for presentations, and art rooms with a water source. A senior center needs enough of these spaces so that activities can be scheduled in a way that encourages participation and meets the demand for a range of activities by an increasingly diverse senior population. A senior center also needs to be designed to accommodate those with impaired mobility. The spaces have to be welcoming and logical, especially for those with cognitive impairments. Having natural light and adequate acoustics are important for people with sensory impairments. Bemis Hall offers some of these features in some spaces, but will never be able to meet many of the needs presented by the senior center's patrons.

Space for social services also needs to be configured to ensure confidentiality, not only to meet professional ethics requirements, but also so that those who most need COA services are not deterred from using them. Currently those wishing to speak with the COA's social worker must enter through the frequently crowded lobby (or activity rooms, if they use the side entrance), and state their purpose for the visit in front of others, many of whom may be friends and neighbors. The social worker's office is directly adjacent to an activity space and the hallway leading to it, and conversations between the social worker and clients can be overheard. The small office used for confidential tax counseling and health benefits counseling is directly off the lobby.

The 2008 Building Needs Assessment Update determined through meetings with user groups and Town staff that "Bemis Hall [should] not be the long-term home of the COA."[16] Still, despite the significant challenges of operating a senior center at Bemis Hall, many residents think the COA should stay there and the Town should make improvements to the building. At the public forum on November 17, 2011, participants suggested that the basement could be renovated to become a drop-in center for both seniors and teens, providing a space for casual, intergenerational interaction.[17] The COA Board and the Friends of the COA Board, at their joint meeting in April 2012, supported and voted to move ahead with planning for a co-located community center. The growing number of seniors in Lincoln and the COA's goal of helping seniors stay in their own homes as long as possible mean that Bemis will not be adequate for the COA's needs in the long term. However, the boards recognize that the Town is considering a number of capital projects and that, realistically, the COA will be in Bemis for at least the next five to seven years. Therefore, they strongly urge moving ahead now with the recommended improvements to Bemis Hall to meet our growing needs in the short term.

Parks & Recreation

The PRD occupies two "pods" in the Hartwell area of the Lincoln Public School complex. The one-story pods served as temporary classrooms in the 1950s and 1960s. Each building was designed to hold four classrooms that could be subdivided with an accordion partition, along with two restrooms and office space. PRD currently occupies Pod A (the school budget includes funding for utilities and maintenance). One-third of Pod B serves as a maintenance shop for the adjacent school. The other two-thirds of Pod B have been retrofitted to house municipal offices during the Town Office

Hartwell Pod A

[16] Rosenfield, *Building Needs Assessment* (2008), 8.

[17] The 2008 Building Needs Assessment Update included a modified design program for Bemis Hall that included finishing part of the basement, which would require the installation of a new emergency egress.

Building renovations project. PRD formerly used this space and expects to use it again when other departments return to the Town Office Building. The space PRD typically occupies in Pods A and B is 8,125 sq. ft., although more than a third of this space, 2,785 sq. ft., is community use space.[18] The Lincoln Extended-day Activities Program (LEAP) currently occupies Pod C. LEAP is expected to remain in this location for the foreseeable future.

PRD is very happy with its current location. There is enough space for most of its activities, and being located close to the school, preschools, and after-school program has many advantages for PRD's clientele. When PRD moved from Bemis Hall to the public school campus, its programming blossomed. However, the Town lacks full control of the Pods because the School Committee has jurisdiction over the facilities on the Ballfield Road campus. As a result, the Town cannot remediate building deficiencies and does not have control over building maintenance. Also, because the Town does not control PRD's facility, there is some uncertainty as to how long PRD will be able to use the Pods. While the 2006 Lincoln Public Schools Master Plan found the Pods to be structurally sound, the study identified several building deficiencies. Major problems include leaking roofs that have considerably passed their design lifetime, degraded interior finishes, asbestos-containing materials (ceiling tiles and flooring), pests, inadequate lighting systems, and the lack of a fire suppression system. The Pods also have accessibility deficiencies, including non-compliant door hardware, inaccessible restrooms, and inadequate signage.[19] The Pods have insufficient parking as well.

Use of Facilities by Local Organizations

Several community organizations use the facilities occupied and managed by PRD and the COA. As in other towns, groups such as Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts, 4-H, the Garden Club, the Lincoln Family Association, and the Lincoln Minute Men regularly meet in Lincoln's municipal and school buildings. Similarly, local athletic leagues regularly use Lincoln's indoor and outdoor recreation facilities. PRD handles scheduling of the Brooks and Smith School gyms during after-school hours and weekends. Appendix B contains a list of the private organizations that use town-owned buildings and facilities.

Departmental Space Needs Estimates

As part of the Community Center Feasibility Study process, the COA and PRD estimated their space requirements based on existing programming, with an allowance for some expansion in the next ten years. The requirements are based on knowledge of the spaces currently used and the experiences of other senior centers and community centers. The COA's estimates assume that programs will run only on weekdays and end by 4:30 p.m. though the trend in senior centers is to add evening and weekend programming as well. In addition, the PRD's estimates assume that recreation activities currently held in school gyms will remain there and camp programs will be housed in recreation-designated spaces.

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[18] Community use space refers to space used primarily by community groups. Although these groups might also use PRD space, they know to ask to reserve the community space first.

[19] SMMA, *Lincoln Public Schools Master Plan Study* (September 29, 2006), 2.6A/1-2.6C/4, 2.6C/1-2.6/C-2.

The requirements were estimated as COA-designated space, PRD-designated space, shared common program space, and community use space. "Designated space" means space that each department will need exclusively or will have priority use of, while "common program space" refers to space that could be shared equally by both departments. "Common program space" is required by at least one department and is also either required or would be used by the other department if available, but may not be required by both. However, both departments assume that designated spaces will also be shared, though to a lesser extent. Community use space is space used primarily by non-Town organizations.

Table 2. Estimated COA and PRD Space Needs, Co-Located Facility

Use	Size (sq. ft)	Use	Size (sq. ft)
COA-Designated Space		Community Use Space	
Director's Office	150	Small Classroom with Flooring	900
Asst. Director's Office	200	Small Classroom with Flooring	900
General Volunteer Office	100	Storage	500
Social Service Volunteer Office	100	Subtotal	2,300
Staff/Volunteer Workspace	200		
Confidential Waiting Area	100	Common Program Space	
Storage	1,000	Reception Space	500
Presentation Room	800	Multipurpose/Drop-in Room/Auditorium	2,000
Support Group Discussion Room	400	Attached Teaching Kitchen	500
Computer Training/Reading Room	600	Art Studio/Tech/Crafts Room	600
Health Clinic	100	Fitness Room	2,500
Subtotal	3,750	Flex Space (room to grow)	1,000
		Subtotal	7,100
PRD-Designated Space			
Office & Meeting Space	900	Total	15,450
Storage	500	With Common Area at 25% (rounded)	19,300
Small Classroom with Carpeting	900		
Subtotal	2,300		

Note: "Common Area" includes space for hallways, restrooms, utilities, custodial storage, etc.

Table 2 outlines the estimated space requirements for the COA and PRD in a co-located facility, while Table 2A summarizes the space that each department actually needs if housed in separate facilities. These space requirements can be compared with applicable state standards or comparable facilities. The Massachusetts Office of Elder Affairs (MOEA) recommends 5 to 6 sq. ft. GFA of senior center space per senior. Using this guideline, 8,500 to 10,200 sq. ft. GFA of senior center space would be needed to serve Lincoln's current population of 1,700 seniors (using the local census estimate). The estimated space requirement for Lincoln's COA, including dedicated space and shared space, is 9,700 sq. ft. GFA, which falls within the state's guideline. No state or national guidelines exist for sizing recreation facilities. However, the space PRD requires, 14,600 sq. ft. GFA (including both dedicated and shared space), is equal to about 2 sq. ft. of space per resident, which is comparable to other public recreation facilities in Massachusetts.

Table 2a. Estimated Space Needs, Stand-Alone Facility

PRD/Use	Size (sq. ft)	COA/Use	Size (sq. ft)
PRD-Designated Space		Director's Office	150
Office & Meeting Space	900	Asst. Director's Office	200
Storage	500	General Volunteer Office	100
Small Classroom with Carpeting	900	Social Service Volunteer Office	100
Reception Space	500	Staff/Volunteer Workspace	200
Multipurpose/Drop-in Room/Auditorium	2,000	Confidential Waiting Area	100
Attached Teaching Kitchen	500	Storage	1,000
Art Studio/Tech/Crafts Room	600	Presentation Room	800
Fitness Room	2,500	Support Group Discussion Room	400
Flex Space (room to grow)	1,000	Computer Training/Reading Room	600
		Health Clinic	100
Community Use Space		Reception Space	500
Small Classroom with Flooring	900	Multipurpose/Drop-in Room/Auditorium	2,000
Small Classroom with Flooring	900	Attached Teaching Kitchen	500
Storage	500	Fitness Room	1,000
Subtotal	11,700	Subtotal	7,750
With Common Area at 25% (rounded)	14,600	With Common Area at 25% (rounded)	9,700

Note: "Common Area" includes space for hallways, restrooms, utilities, custodial storage, etc.

ISSUES

- **Existing Space Deficits.** The existing facilities for both the COA and PRD are smaller than the space they require in order to meet their current and near-term needs. The current program space in Bemis Hall is over 3,000 net sq. ft smaller than the space required by the COA (7,290 sq. ft., of which only 4,270 sq. ft. is available to the COA, compared to 7,750 net sq. ft.), while the space in Hartwell Pods A and B is over 3,000 sq. ft smaller than the space required by PRD (8,125 sq. ft compared with 11,700 sq. ft. net).

- **Projected Space Deficits.** The existing space deficits for COA and PRD will increase in the future as programs expand and Lincoln's population ages. MAPC predicts that the number of seniors (persons over 60) in Lincoln will rise to 2,094 by 2020, a 39 percent increase over 2010 levels.[20] According to state guidelines and the projected senior population in 2020, Lincoln's senior center should be between 10,470 sq. ft. and 12,564 sq. ft. GFA to adequately support this population of seniors.

[20] MAPC, Lincoln Demographic Projections.

Site Studies

In meetings conducted for this study, the CCFC and Lincoln residents identified several sites in Lincoln as possible locations for the COA, PRD, or a co-located facility. The sites include:

- Hartwell Area (the school administration building and pods)
- Smith Building
- Pierce House
- The Groves
- Farrington Memorial
- First Parish Church
- Wells Road
- DeCordova Museum
- Lewis Street

These sites include a mix of public and private properties. The Town contacted the owners of privately owned sites to determine their interest in being included in the study. Representatives of DeCordova Museum had concerns about the feasibility of supporting a sustained community presence other than joint arts-related programming. As a result, the museum was not evaluated. A site inspection was conducted at all the other sites except Lewis Street, where the Lincoln DPW occupies town-owned property. Initially, Lewis Street was not considered because using the land for a community center would require relocating the DPW, which in turn requires site suitability studies that go beyond the scope of the CCFC's charge. As this report was being completed, however, the Planning Board initiated a planning process for the South Lincoln Business District. The plan may include Lewis Street and the DPW site, and it will most likely focus on mixed-use development, including housing and commercial facilities. Since the site is not near the school complex, it may not be ideal for PRD or a co-located facility. However, it could be appropriate for the COA alone, though the required number of parking spaces would reduce the area available for development. It may be appropriate for the Planning Board to include such analysis in its upcoming planning process.

The remaining identified sites were evaluated against a set of evaluation criteria chosen by the Committee. The criteria include:

- **Location.** Location is a critical concern for both the COA and PRD. A central location matters to the COA because the facility needs to be easily accessible to all seniors in Lincoln. For PRD, being located near the school is of paramount importance so that children can walk safely to after-school activities. The ease of providing town services such as emergency services and snow clearing was also taken into consideration when site locations were evaluated.

- **Adaptability of Existing Structures.** Existing structures were evaluated based on how easily the structures could be adapted to COA or PRD uses, e.g., whether the structure could be retrofitted to fit the 2,000 sq. ft. and 2,500 sq. ft. spaces a co-located facility would require. When available, building floor plans were used as part of this evaluation.

- **Financial Costs.** This study was not designed to produce detailed cost estimates to retrofit existing structures or build new facilities, so financial cost had to be considered generally. Previous building needs assessments and conversations with property owners and managers were used to determine major structural and buildings systems issues, and construction costs for recently built senior centers and similar facilities in other towns were used as a guide.

- **Access, Circulation, Parking.** This criterion evaluated the vehicular and pedestrian circulation and accessibility of each site as well as the site's accessibility to people with disabilities. In addition, existing parking capacity was compared to the parking required by each use (estimated at 40-80 parking spots for a COA facility, 20 parking spots for PRD facility, and 60-100 for a co-located facility).

The CCFC identified **location**, **adaptability of existing structures**, and **financial costs** as the most important criteria. The site evaluations also considered potential environmental impacts, regulatory constraints (e.g., whether a site lies in the historic district), and other factors related to new construction. While these concerns were initially classified as evaluation criteria as well, the CCFC decided that they, along with building code considerations, were essentially "non-issues" because any site will have to comply with environmental, zoning, and building code regulations.

Community Input

The CCFC sponsored two discussion meetings and made a presentation, followed by discussion, at Lincoln's State of the Town meeting on Oct. 29, 2011. The first discussion meeting, a focus group for stakeholders from community organizations that use COA and PRD space, took place on Oct. 4, 2011 at Bemis Hall. Though not well attended, the focus group provided useful information about space needs from the perspective of local groups. One concern mentioned at the focus group was the importance of having access to free space, for many of the very small, informally organized groups have no resources for space rentals or user fees. Overall, participants seemed content with the spaces they currently use, though some expressed concerns about parking and public safety at Bemis Hall.

A public forum on Nov. 17, 2011 attracted approximately twenty-five residents. The meeting began with a brief presentation of the project, followed by a facilitated discussion, during which participants were asked for feedback on the need for a community center, possible locations for a community center, and the criteria that should be used to evaluate sites. Most of the discussion focused on whether Lincoln needs a community center at all. Some residents said they like the present arrangement, with COA at Bemis Hall and PRD near the schools, while others said the existing facilities are inadequate and there is value in co-locating the two departments. Overall, those in attendance agreed that before the Town decides to propose a co-located community center, there must be a vision for it. Some participants expressed concern about the fate of Bemis Hall if the COA

moved to another facility. Public forum participants also suggested two additional sites to evaluate: Farrington Memorial, and the First Parish Church.

ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS

Relocating One or Both Departments

Hartwell Area

	School Administration Building	Pods
Address	Ballfield Road	Ballfield Road
Year Constructed	1957	Pod A: 1957 Pod B: 1959 Pod C: 1963
Size (or Available Space)	Ground floor: 6,413 sq. ft. Second floor: 17,856 sq. ft.	Each pod is 4,898 sq. ft.
Current Use	School administration offices, Lincoln Preschool, Magic Garden Children's Center	Pod A: Parks & Recreation Department Pod B: School maintenance shop (1/3), Parks & Recreation/ temporary town offices (2/3) Pod C: LEAP

Source: 2006 Lincoln Public Schools Master Plan Study.

BACKGROUND/GENERAL INFORMATION

The Hartwell area includes a school administration building (which houses school administration offices, a public preschool, and a private preschool) and three "pods." The School Committee has site control of all of these buildings. The school administration building was constructed in 1957, and the pods were built in the 1950s and 1960s as temporary classrooms. Each pod was designed to hold four classrooms, which could be subdivided with an accordion partition, along with two restrooms and office space. Currently, PRD occupies Pod A, with the school department paying for utilities and maintenance. One-third of Pod B serves as a maintenance shop for the adjacent school. The rest of Pod B has been retrofitted as temporary office space for several town departments during renovations of the town office building. PRD previously used this space and expects to use it again in a few years when the town offices project is finished. Pod C houses the Lincoln Extended-Day Activities Program (LEAP), an after-school program. LEAP expects to remain in this location for the foreseeable future.

PRD appreciates its current location in the Hartwell Pods. It has enough space for most of its activities, and being located close to the school, preschools, and after-school program has many advantages. However, the Town does not have full control over this facility because it is under the School Committee's jurisdiction. The Pods have cosmetic, structural, and building systems issues, but because the Town does not own or control the buildings, it cannot address them.

There are three possible scenarios that could accommodate a community center at the Hartwell buildings:

- **School administration offices relocate.** The school administration offices could relocate, freeing up their portion of the Hartwell school administration building. The school administration has indicated that it is willing to relocate, but relocation is not part of the new school proposals that have been put forward thus far. There has been no indication to date that the preschools, especially the private preschool, would also relocate. Therefore, in this scenario, PRD could only take over the school administration portion of the building (the Department formerly occupied space in this building). While this would likely provide sufficient space for recreation activities, it would not provide enough space for a co-located facility.

- **School administration offices and public preschool relocate.** If both the school administration offices and the public preschool relocate, there would likely be enough space in the school administration building for a co-located facility. The building, which was formerly classrooms, has several large spaces (e.g., preschool classrooms, school board meeting room) as well as offices and could be retrofitted relatively easily for both PRD and COA uses.

- **School department decommissions Pods, and they continue to be home to PRD and maybe also home to a co-located facility.** The space that PRD typically occupies in Pods A and B is sufficient for its activities (with the town offices in Pod B, the Department has had to be creative with its scheduling to fit all its activities into Pod A). The space is less than half the amount required for a co-located facility, however. Because Pod C is expected to remain occupied by LEAP, a co-located facility at the Hartwell Pods would require an addition or new construction to meet COA and PRD space needs.

Hartwell school administration building

Hartwell pods

SITE ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

- **Location.** The Hartwell area offers close proximity to the schools, which matters for PRD's programs because children can walk safely between school and recreation activities. Most of PRD's playing fields are also located in the school complex, and there are playgrounds on site as well. In addition, the Hartwell area already has two preschools and an after-school program.

The Hartwell area is located in the center of Lincoln, roughly one mile from the existing COA facility in Bemis Hall. Being located near the center of town is important for the COA, too, because a central location encourages more spontaneous visits. The Hartwell area is closer than Bemis Hall to two housing developments—Lincoln Woods and the Ryan Estate—which both have concentrations of seniors; a COA facility at Hartwell would be walkable for some of these seniors. Unlike Bemis Hall, which is situated on a main road, the Hartwell area lies along a short access road, Ballfield Road. Given its location adjacent to the schools and close to the center of Lincoln, the Hartwell area offers advantages in terms of convenient access to other town services.

Pod B interior

- **Adaptability of Existing Structures.** Based on available information, the Hartwell building could be retrofitted for use by PRD or COA or as a co-located facility, although an elevator would have to be installed. The building's classrooms and other large spaces could be repurposed, and the existing offices could be turned into administrative space and small meeting rooms for PRD and the COA.

  Since the Pods already function as the home for PRD and the space there seems sufficient, modest adaptation (outside of improvements to the physical structures noted previously) would be required if the Pods continue as home for PRD only. If the Pods became home for a co-located facility, some structural modifications would be required as the available space is less than half of the space required. While the Pod interiors could be reconfigured relatively easily to meet the COA's needs, an addition or new building would be required to meet the space requirements of a co-located facility. One option is to create an addition in the form of a connection between Pod A and Pod B. Another approach would devote portions of the Hartwell building and Pods to a campus-style community center, which offers the possibility of shared facilities as well as some degree of separation.

- **Financial Cost.** The 2006 Lincoln Public Schools Master Plan identified several issues with the Hartwell building that should be addressed if the building is to be repurposed as a facility for PRD or a co-located facility. Specific issues included exterior envelope deficiencies, asbestos-containing finish materials, HVAC equipment that has exceeded its useful life, accessibility deficiencies, and lack of a fire suppression system.[21]

  The Pods were found to be structurally sound, but the Master Plan study identified several building deficiencies that will need to be addressed whether the Pods remain PRD space or become part of a co-located facility. Major problems include leaking roofs that have considerably passed their design lifetime, degraded interior finishes, asbestos-containing materials (ceiling

[21] SMMA, *Lincoln Public Schools Master Plan* (September 29, 2006), 2.5A/1-2.5C/5.

tiles and flooring), pests, limited accessibility, inadequate lighting systems, and the lack of a fire suppression system.[22] It is unclear how many of these issues have been addressed since the Master Plan was completed. Further investigation will be required to determine if it makes sense to invest in these structures. If not, a new structure could be built on the site of the Pods, but this would involve a significant expenditure. The Plan also noted that due to the proximity of wetlands to the Hartwell area, upgrades to the storm drainage system would likely be required if significant site work was proposed and that utility services will need to be further evaluated to determine whether they are adequate for future expansion.[23]

Given recent public facility construction costs in other Massachusetts communities, Lincoln could expect to spend $6M to $7.6M to renovate the Hartwell building and reconfigure existing space (approximately 19,500 sq. ft.) for community center use. Renovating Pods A and B could range from $2.5M to $3.3M, not including any new construction that may be required to connect or expand the buildings. Pods A and B do not have enough floor area to support co-location.

- **Access, Circulation, Parking.** The Hartwell area is accessed from Ballfield Road, a side street off Lincoln Road, one of the town's main roads. Unlike Bemis Hall, the Hartwell buildings are not oriented to or visible from the street. Vehicular and pedestrian circulation on-site is adequate, although there are no sidewalks connecting the schools and the Hartwell area. A roadside path connects the Hartwell buildings to Lincoln Road; the path continues along Lincoln Road in both directions.

  The parking lot that serves the Hartwell buildings (including the Pods) has 59 parking spaces, along with five spaces designated as parent drop-off/pick-up spots. There are four handicap parking spaces in the lot. Additional parking is available along Ballfield Road (62 parking spaces). The school parking lots (about 160 spaces) could potentially be used after school hours. However, the limited sidewalks along Ballfield Road should be expanded if a community center in the Hartwell area relied on the school lots. The available parking is sufficient for PRD, but additional parking would be required for a co-located facility. Midday on the day of the site visit, the parking lot in front of the Hartwell area was roughly at 80 percent capacity, suggesting there would be insufficient daytime parking to meet the COA's needs.

  Both the Hartwell building and the Pods have significant accessibility deficiencies. The school administration building has two stories, but because of site grading, there are ground-level entrances at both levels. There is no elevator, but a lift is installed on the main staircase. The Master Plan report summarizes issues in the Hartwell building as follows:

  > The building is not fully accessible… The existing stair lift is a fold-down type that makes the stair unusable when lift is in use. This type of lift is no longer deemed acceptable by the Massachusetts Architecture Access Board (MAAB). There is need for an elevator or limited use vertical lift to connect the ground floor entrance and

[22] Ibid, 2.6A/1-2.6C/4.

[23] Ibid, 2.5C/1.

> multi-purpose areas with the upper floor without shutting down use of the stairs. Most of the door hardware needs to be replaced. Refinishing or replacement of the doors should also be considered if hardware replacement were done. The stairway risers need modification to eliminate nosing projection, and the handrails and guards need to be replaced or modified. All of the toilet rooms should be made compliant with MAAB regulations. Appropriate accessibility signage should be installed throughout the building and site. Any substantial renovation will require complete accessibility within the school consistent with new construction.[24]

The one-story Pods facilitate access for people with disabilities and egress in the event of an emergency. However, there are several MAAB compliance issues with these structures. The 2006 Public School Master Plan noted:

> The buildings generally have limited accessibility… Most of the door hardware needs to be replaced. Refinishing or replacement of the doors should also be considered… All of the toilet rooms should be made compliant with MAAB regulations. Appropriate accessibility signage should be installed throughout the building and site. Any substantial renovation will require complete accessibility within the Pods consistent with new construction.[25]

- **Other Considerations.** Any new construction in this area will be constrained by the multiple wetlands on the site.

Smith Building

Address	Ballfield Road
Year Constructed	1948 (additions in 1952, 1955, 1994)
Size	Basement: 920 sq. ft. Ground Floor: 48,242 sq. ft.
Current Use	K-4 classrooms, gymnasium/auditorium, small cafeteria
Other	N/A

Source: 2006 Lincoln Public Schools Master Plan Study.

BACKGROUND/GENERAL INFORMATION

The Smith Building is part of the Lincoln K-8 public school complex. It has classrooms for grades K-4, a gymnasium/auditorium, and a small cafeteria. The original building was constructed in 1948 and it has had three small classroom additions since then (1952, 1955, and 1994). The current proposal for new school facilities on Ballfield Road calls for demolishing the Smith Building and constructing a playing field in its place. The playing field will replace an existing one that will be eliminated by construction of the new school building. Replacing the lost playing field is a critical concern for PRD.

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[24] Ibid, 2.5C/2.

[25] SMMA, *Master Plan Study* (2006), 2.6C/1-2.6/C-2.

If the Smith Building is repurposed as a co-located facility and the lost playing field is not replaced, Lincoln has few options for siting a new playing field in another location.

SITE ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

- **Location.** The Smith Building is located on the existing K-8 school complex on Ballfield Road. The locational considerations for a reuse of Smith Building are the same as those listed previously for the Hartwell area.

- **Adaptability of Existing Structures.** The existing building should be easily adaptable to meet the needs of both PRD and the COA, and there is likely enough existing space for both programs. The school has a gym/auditorium that could be used as a large function room, and the classrooms could be reconfigured and subdivided as offices and activity rooms.

Smith Building exterior

Smith Building interior

Smith Building exterior

Smith Building gym

- **Financial Costs.** The 2007 K-8 Master Plan Study identified many issues with the Smith Building including insufficient storm drainage system, lack of fire suppression system, leaking building envelope, flooding of the basement/mechanical room during heavy rain, need for a new domestic

water heater, and asbestos-containing materials.[26] These issues will have to be addressed if the building is renovated to support a new use. In addition, the Master Plan noted that Smith School may require extensive septic system upgrades if the population served by the system increases or a larger cafeteria is installed.[27] It is beyond the scope of the present study to determine the adequacy of the existing septic system for both the school facilities and a community center. Setting aside wastewater disposal issues that need to be explored further, the Town could spend $5.3M to $7.1M to renovate and reconfigure the gym and kindergarten wing of the Smith School (assuming approximately 17,140 sq. ft. GFA).

- **Access, Circulation, and Parking.** The Smith Building, like the Hartwell area, is accessed from Ballfield Road. Vehicular and pedestrian circulation is adequate. There is an 84-space parking lot adjacent to the Smith Building. The lot is probably adequate for a community center, especially since there would be some spillover parking available elsewhere in the school complex. However, under the proposed K-8 school plan, this parking lot would become playing fields, and if it remains parking lot, the Town will need to find alternative space for the replacement fields.

  The building is a one-story facility with no stairs and several exits. While generally accessible to disabled persons, the Smith Building does not comply with some MAAB regulations. Accessibility issues included non-conforming doors and hardware, inaccessible toilet rooms, and inadequate length of access ramp for auditorium stage.[28] It is unclear if these issues have since been addressed.

- **Other Considerations.** Because the Smith Building is an existing school, converting it to a new public use should not trigger direct environmental impacts.

Pierce House

Address	17 Weston Road
Year Constructed	1900
Size	Approximately 2,700 sq. ft. on first floor and second floors (and approximately 650 sq. ft. on the third floor)
Current Use	Event space, community meeting space
Other?	

Source: Floor plan provided by the Pierce House

BACKGROUND/GENERAL INFORMATION

The Pierce House is a stunning Georgian mansion built by John Pierce in 1900 and given to the Town by the Pierce family in 1964. The house currently serves as a meeting and function facility, with a focus on weddings. It sits on approximately 26 acres, including open lawns, gardens, forests, a

[26] SMMA, *Lincoln Public Schools Master Plan Study* (October 23, 2007), 2.1A/1-2.1C/6

[27] Ibid, 2.1C/1.

[28] Ibid, 2.1C/2-2.1C/3.

network of trails, and a pond. Residents at the November 17, 2011 public meeting said the building is underused. In addition, Lincoln's 2008 Open Space Plan recommended that town explore "opportunities for sponsoring recreational-based activities out of the Pierce House."[29]

In 2007, a team of Bentley College graduate students completed an analysis of the Pierce House. The analysis concluded that "to remain competitive, the Pierce House must expand its indoor occupancy (change current floor plan by either knocking down walls, building an addition, or building a separate indoor facility on the current grounds consistent with the historic character), as well as update amenities and décor to increase the appeal to potential customers."[30]

Pierce House exterior

Pierce House entryway

Pierce House interior

SITE ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

- **Location.** Pierce House is located on Weston Road near the "Five Corners" intersection of Bedford/Lincoln Road, Trapelo Road, Weston Road, and Sandy Pond Road. The property lies within the Lincoln Center Historic District about one half-mile from Bemis Hall and one mile from the Lincoln Public Schools complex. Given the site's central location, there should be no issues with providing town services to the property.

- **Adaptability of Existing Structures.** The Pierce House has three stories. On the first floor, there is a large entry hall, four main rooms (roughly 14' x 18'), a commercial kitchen, and one small bathroom. The second floor has several smaller offices and rooms, the living quarters for the house manager, and men's and women's bathrooms. The third floor contains storage space and one bathroom. The existing configuration of rooms does not meet the needs of either PRD or the COA. The rooms are too small for most uses except office space, and there is no large function room. Even if the rooms were reconfigured, which would compromise the historic character of the interior, there would not be enough space for the current uses of either PRD or COA. Thus, a PRD, COA, or co-located facility on this site would require construction of an addition or a separate building.

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[29] Lincoln Open Space Committee, *An Open Space and Recreation Plan for the Town of Lincoln* (March 2008), 58.

[30] Kristin McKeon Blake, et al., *Pierce House Consulting Report* (2007), 3.

- **Financial Costs.** The 2006 Lincoln Building Needs Assessment noted several building deficiencies that would have to be addressed at the Pierce House in order for it to serve as a co-located facility. The estimated cost of these repairs was $1.2 million (2006 dollars).[31] It is unclear how many of the repairs have been made. A PRD, COA, or co-located facility on this site would require construction of an addition or a new, separate building, which could be quite costly. For new construction of a facility with approximately 18,700 sq. ft. GFA – a facility that would meet both the individual and shared space needs of the COA and PRD – the Town could spend anywhere from $5.8M to $6.5M. Given the property's sensitive location, it would not be surprising if new construction cost even more simply because of the architectural treatments that may be necessary in order to make a new building compatible with the Pierce House.

- **Access, Circulation, and Parking.** The Pierce House is not easily accessible from the Lincoln Public Schools. The school complex is located one mile away, and pedestrian access between the two sites would require walking along Lincoln Road, one of the busiest streets in Lincoln. While there are some roadside paths along Lincoln Road, there are no paths or sidewalks on Weston Road. The Pierce House is accessed from a long driveway off Weston Road. There is a gravel parking lot with space for 50-60 cars. Vehicular and pedestrian circulation on site is adequate, although there are no sidewalks.

  The Pierce House has significant accessibility deficiencies. First, while there is a ramp to the main entrance of the building, part of the ramp does not have railings on both sides and there is a 6-inch step at the front door. Although a portable ramp is available to help navigate the 6-inch step, a fully accessible entrance needs to be constructed. In addition, the building has no elevator, and the main bathrooms are located on the second floor. Finally, there are no bathrooms accessible to people with disabilities.

- **Other Considerations.** The addition or new building required to make the Pierce House viable for a PRD, COA, or a co-located facility would affect the historic character of the estate. Since the building is located in a local historic district, construction would require review and approval by the Historic District Commission. In its review, the Commission considers, among other things:

  > The historic and architectural value and significance of the site, building, or structure, the general design, arrangement, texture, and material of the features involved, and the relation of such features to similar features of buildings and structures in the surrounding area. In the case of new construction of additions to existing buildings or structures, the commission shall consider the appropriateness of the size and shape of the building or structure, both in relation to the land area upon which the building or structure is situated, and to buildings and structures in the vicinity, and the Commission may, in appropriate cases, impose dimensional and set-back requirements in addition to those required by applicable by-law.[32]

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[31] McGinley Kalsow & Associates, Pierce House Cost Estimates (July 24, 2006).

[32] Town of Lincoln, Town Bylaws, Historic District Bylaw, Section 5.1.

Any modifications to the building's interior would *also* affect its historic character. The Commission does not consider building interiors not subject to public view, but since the interior of the Pierce House is a public space, interior renovations to the Pierce House may require Commission review.

- **Other Considerations Related to New Construction.** An addition or new facility would have to be in keeping with the historic character of the estate.

The Groves

Address	1 Harvest Circle
Year Constructed	2010
Size	Up to 10,000 sq. ft. available
Current Use	Senior rental apartments (mostly vacant)

Source: Communication with Robert Fallon (Executive Director of The Groves), November 22, 2011.

BACKGROUND/GENERAL INFORMATION

The Groves is a privately owned retirement community in Lincoln. The facility opened in 2010 and currently it has about 100 residents. When fully occupied, The Groves will house between 220 and 250 residents. The campus features cottages, a building of rental units, and a main building. The main building has apartments as well as many amenities including a large event room/movie theater, restaurant, café, library, fitness center, etc.

The Groves main building

The Groves was explored as an option for a COA facility because the owners expressed interest in leasing space in the apartment building (the Flint Building) to the COA. The Groves could convert several of the first-floor apartments to fit the needs of the COA. Each apartment has between 800 and 1,000 sq. ft., and there are 10 apartments on the first floor. There is also a possibility to build a new facility for the COA on the undeveloped portion of The Groves campus in the future. If the COA became a tenant at The Groves, the COA would have access to The Groves' amenities and spaces for activities and events. As a result, a COA facility at The Groves may require less dedicated space.

SITE ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

- **Location.** The Groves is located on the northern edge of Lincoln, over 2 miles from Bemis Hall. It is located off Sandy Pond Road, a narrow, winding road. Given its location on the outskirts of Lincoln, The Groves is less accessible to town services than other potential sites (although the campus is close to Route 2). However, The Groves does have some on-site medical facilities and staff who could assist in a medical emergency.

At the Groves, the COA would be near a significant number of its patrons. However, this represents only a fraction of the seniors in Lincoln. Locating a senior center at The Groves would likely reduce visits from seniors who do not live there.

- **Adaptability of Existing Structures.** Although the first floor of Flint Building is currently configured as apartments, The Groves is open to reconfiguring the space to meet the COA's needs. Existing facilities on The Groves site will meet some of the COA's requirements (e.g., large function room) though use of at least some of these facilities would need to be carefully scheduled so as not to overlap with use by The Groves residents.

- **Financial Costs.** It is unclear how costs for the tenant fit-out would be split between the COA and The Groves. The COA would have to pay rent for its space, which is not a requirement at Bemis Hall. Renting space to the Town could affect The Groves' tax assessment, too. However, depending on how the space improvements are financed, the cost to retrofit space in the Flint Building could be quite a bit less than in other locations if state prevailing wage rates do not apply. Assuming a public construction contract (which would be subject to G.L. c. 149), the Town's cost to reconfigure about 10,000 sq. ft. of space for senior center use could range from $3.1M to $3.9M.

- **Access, Circulation, and Parking.** Approximately 20 parking spots near the Flint Building could be dedicated for the COA. Additional parking is available elsewhere on the campus, and The Groves could provide a shuttle from the satellite parking to the COA facility. As new construction, the facility complies with the most current accessibility requirements. The COA facility would be on the ground floor. COA patrons would have to walk to the main building to attend events held there, however, making these events less accessible to people with disabilities.

- **Other Considerations.** Because the apartments at The Groves count towards Lincoln's supply of Chapter 40B-eligible housing, converting apartments into space for the COA would reduce the Town's percentage of "counted" affordable units.

First Parish in Lincoln Church (Stone Church)

Address	14 Bedford Road
Year Constructed	1891
Size	Approximately 10,560 sq. ft. total (approximately 3,300 sq. ft. dedicated space for tenant)
Current Use	Church, nursery school

BACKGROUND/GENERAL INFORMATION

The First Parish in Lincoln Church is located in central Lincoln, across the street from Bemis Hall; the church's parking lot currently serves as overflow parking for the COA. The two story main church building was built in 1891 in the Romanesque revival style. A two-story addition was added to the back of the main church building at a later date. The ground level of the main building houses the church assembly room and several smaller church meeting rooms, while the upstairs has been converted into space for the church's tenant, the Lincoln Nursery School. The second story of the addition—which connects with the ground level of the main building due to the site's topography—

houses the parish administration offices as well as additional meeting rooms. The ground level of the addition is currently rented by the Lincoln Nursery School. The nursery school may be leaving the site in the near future, and thus the space it occupies will be available for another tenant. Given this, the site was suggested as a possible site by community members at the public forum and the State of the Town Meeting in October. The church has also expressed interest in having the town use the space if it becomes available.

While the main space available for COA, PRD, or a co-located facility is the space currently occupied by the nursery school (i.e., the ground floor of the rear portion of the church and the second floor of the main church building), other rooms in the church such as the main meeting hall and the smaller meeting rooms would be available when not being used by the church. In addition, the church will need to access the tenant spaces on Sunday mornings, and these spaces must be accessible to young children and adults.

SITE ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

- **Location.** The First Parish Church is located at 14 Bedford Road in the center of Lincoln. The church is across the street from the COA's current home at Bemis Hall, and the church parking lot is currently used as overflow space for COA patrons. If the COA moved to the church, it would reduce the need for patrons to cross busy Bedford Road. The church is approximately one mile from the school complex. Given the location of First Parish Church, there should be no issues providing town services to the site. The town currently provides snow removal services to the site.

First Parish Church

- **Adaptability of Existing Structures.** The pre-school's main program area—the ground level of the rear portion of the church—has been converted from smaller rooms to larger, more open rooms, which could be relatively easily modified to meet the needs of either the COA or PRD. Some aspects of the space will need to be retrofitted, notably the bathrooms, which are sized for children. However, because the church needs to use the space for Sunday school classes, the space must be able to accommodate children and adults. The nursery school's space on the second floor of the main church building will be more difficult to adapt to a COA or PRD use because the space is not accessible (there is no elevator to this level). Conceivably, this space could be configured into an activity room or offices, although it would be removed from the main program space. A new bathroom will have to be installed, as the existing bathroom—a converted closet sized for toddlers—is inadequate for another use.

  The tenant space in the church (approximately 3,300 sq. ft.) is smaller than the amount of space required by either the COA or PRD, and thus significantly smaller than the space needed for a co-located facility. However, because the tenant will have access to other spaces in the church, a smaller dedicated space may be acceptable. That said, the entire church complex is still smaller

than the amount of space required for a co-located facility. Accommodating both COA and PRD on this site would require new construction. If the COA were to occupy the First Parish, an elevator would need to be built between the lower level and the upper level of the addition so that persons requiring it could get from the lower level primary COA space to the upper level of the auditorium and kitchen shared by the COA and the church. In addition, an upgraded entrance at the rear of the church addition and any construction might impinge on the parsonage behind the church addition.

- **Financial Costs.** Some renovations would be necessary to convert the nursery school space to another use, including installing new bathrooms and fully accessible entrances. As with The Groves, it is unclear how renovation costs would be divided between the church and Town. In addition, the Town would pay a lease to the church for the use of the space. A co-located facility on the First Parish Church site would require an addition or new building to be constructed, which would be expensive. Assuming a public construction contract limited to improving the *existing* tenant space – without any regard for future growth - the Town's cost could range from $1.1M to $1.4M.

- **Access, Circulation, and Parking.** Although the church is located on a busy road in Lincoln, the site's vehicular access and circulation works well. Vehicles enter through a dedicated entrance on Bedford Road. The one-way driveway continues around and behind the church, and vehicles exit through a dedicated exit. Pedestrian access to the site is via a walking path that runs along Bedford Road. Pedestrian circulation on the site is adequate.

  Approximately 42 parking spots (including two handicap spots) are located along the driveway on the sides and back of the church. Five additional parking spots are located along Bedford Road. This parking is adequate for PRD and although it is likely adequate for the COA's normal use, it is inadequate for a large event or if two events were held simultaneously. The church has indicated that it may be able to build additional parking, if necessary.

  The church complex is relatively accessible to people with disabilities. The main floor of the church and second floor of the rear addition are accessible by a ramp adjacent to the church's main entrance on the side of the building. The ground floor of the addition is partially accessible through a rear doorway, which has a ramp but an approximately 6-inch step at the doorway. There is also an entrance through the nursery school playground, but the path leading to the door is not paved. The building does not have an elevator, so the second floor of the main building is not handicap accessible. In addition, several bathrooms are not accessible.

- **Other Considerations.** Unless an addition is built, locating the COA or PRD at the First Parish in Lincoln church would require sharing several spaces, including the kitchen and the auditorium, with the church. Sharing these spaces would require coordinating schedules with the church and may limit the activities that could be offered by the COA or PRD.

Farrington Memorial

Address	291 Cambridge Turnpike
Year Constructed	Early 1900s
Size	Approximately 9,600 sq. ft. (first and second floors combined); (there is some space in basement also available, est. 1,500 sq. ft.)
Current Use	Vacant

BACKGROUND/GENERAL INFORMATION

Farrington Memorial is a 75-acre site located on the eastern edge of Lincoln off of Route 2. The historic property, which is managed by a non-profit organization, features a large brick building (initially constructed as a hospital/dormitory for urban children recovering from illness), a farmhouse (currently rented to two tenants), and various agricultural buildings. The site features a mix of open fields and forests as well as wetlands, a pond, and a garden. There is a network of trails on the property. Although the site is predominantly open space, the land is not currently protected with a conservation restriction. Given this, the town's 2007 At-Risk Properties Report identified the property as one of six properties in Lincoln under development pressure.[33] Lincoln's 2008 Open Space Plan identifies the property as the second largest parcel of unprotected land in Lincoln.[34]

Farrington Memorial exterior

Farrington Memorial was established by Charles Farrington in the early 1900s to honor his parents, Ebenezer Trescott Farrington and Eliza Delano Farrington with a goal of maintaining an "unsectarian philanthropic resource for enriching the lives of urban children."[35] The property was first used as a place for "undernourished girls" to recuperate; after World War II, the City Missionary Society ran various programs to benefit children and adults on the property, and from 1977 to 2004 a community residence for young adults was run on the estate. Currently, Farrington Memorial is used for summer programs where culturally diverse urban youth from Boston and Cambridge can learn about farming and the natural environment, a use that directly fulfills the Farrington Memorial mission "to enhance the well-being of children from low-income communities through a connection with the natural

[33] Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc. and Community Opportunities Group, Inc. *At-Risk Properties Analysis* (November 18, 2005).

[34] Lincoln Open Space Committee. Lincoln 2008 Open Space and Recreation Plan. (March 2008), 33.

[35] Farrington Nature Linc. "Farrington History." http://farringtonnaturelinc.org/about-us/farrington-history/.

world."[36] The organization is hoping to expand its programs to include family programs on weekends and other year-round offerings.

The site was identified as a potential location for a community center at the November public forum. Independently, the Farrington Board of Trustees had also identified a community or town use for the old dormitory building on the site. The facility opened in 1912 and put to various uses until 2005, when it was shuttered because of issues identified during a building inspection. Although the building is structurally sound, it needs a new boiler, a fire sprinkler system (the fire department is requiring this because of the property's distance from the fire department), and several modifications to meet accessibility requirements. The Farrington Board would like to rehabilitate the building and has commissioned a series of assessments of different levels of repairs. The Board is also actively exploring new uses for the building and is considering uses that would use the entire building or a portion of the building. Any use must complement Farrington Memorial's mission; the Board considers a COA or PRD use complementary.

SITE ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

- **Location.** Farrington Memorial is located off Route 2 on the edge of Lincoln, over two miles from both the school complex and Bemis Hall. This degree of separation from the "heart" of town is a concern for either a COA or PRD use on the site. The Farrington property's location could make it difficult to provide some town services to the site. In fact, the Lincoln Fire Department has already expressed concerns about its ability to service the site, which is why they requested that a sprinkler system be installed before the dormitory can be inhabited.

- **Adaptability of Existing Structures.** The dormitory building has three levels. The ground floor has several large rooms, which could meet a variety of COA or PRD needs. The lower level has an old kitchen, storage, and smaller rooms that could be used for offices. The building's second story is all small rooms (formerly the dormitory rooms), which could be used for small meeting rooms or offices. The spaces could also be reconfigured to form larger spaces. There is no elevator in the building, so the second story is only accessible via stairs. In addition, the Farrington grounds could be used for PRD activities; the property already has nature trails and a ropes course.

  The available space (if the basement is included) is adequate for the COA and is almost large enough for the PRD, but is insufficient for a shared facility. Thus, co-locating COA and PRD on the site would require an addition to the dormitory building.

Farrington Memorial

[36] Farrington Nature Linc. "Who we are." http://farringtonnaturelinc.org/about-us/who-we-are. The summer programs occur over six weeks each summer; during those weeks the property is used from approximately 10:00am to 3:30pm.

- **Financial Costs.** The financial costs associated with renovating the dormitory are likely extensive, as many building upgrades, including building systems and cosmetic upgrade, are required. In addition, many site improvements are required including widening the access road and constructing a parking lot. It has not been determined how the cost of these improvements would be split between the town and Farrington Memorial. Assuming a public construction contract to improve the 11,100 sq. ft. of available space, the Town's cost could range from $3.8M to $4.5M.

- **Access, Circulation, and Parking.** There are several access concerns with the Farrington Memorial site. The property has one entrance, a narrow driveway off of Route 2 east. Route 2 is a heavily trafficked road, with morning peak hour volume estimated at about 2,400.[37] The heavy traffic and sharp turn into and out of the site is a concern, especially for COA patrons. Furthermore, traffic arriving from the east must make a U-turn at the jug handle at the Bedford Road traffic signal. Similarly, traffic exiting to the west must make a U-turn at the I-95 interchange, nearly a mile down the road. The property's driveway is also very narrow, only wide enough for one car to pass at a time. The entrance and driveway would have to be widened if a new use were to locate on the property.[38] There is no pedestrian access to the site at this time.

  Since the Farrington property does not have a parking lot, cars park along the side of the driveway. The Board is open to constructing a parking lot, and there is some flat land close to the dormitory building on which a parking lot could be built.

  The dormitory building is not currently ADA accessible. The biggest accessibility issues include the lack of a ramp to the front door, lack of an elevator, and lack of accessible bathrooms.

- **Other Considerations.** Reusing the Farrington dormitory would have some environmental impacts as a parking lot would need to be constructed on existing open space, and the driveway would need to be widened. This construction would reduce the site's open space while increasing impervious surfaces. Although the loss of open space would be minimal compared to the overall property, it could be challenging as the property is one of the last large open spaces in town, and the 2008 Open Space Plan urged the town to work with the estate to place the property under a conservation restriction.[39]

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[37] Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc. and Community Opportunities Group, Inc. At-Risk Properties Analysis. (November 18, 2005), 1-6.

[38] Although a second access point is desirable, Farrington Memorial has said it is not possible to construct a new vehicular access point; the organization is open to constructing a pedestrian path to an adjacent neighborhood, however.

[39] Lincoln Open Space Committee. Lincoln 2008 Open Space and Recreation Plan. (March 2008), 65.

Lincoln Woods/Wells Road

Address	Wells Road
Year Constructed	1970s
Size	Currently only available space is the 1,000sq. ft. resident common room; an additional use on the site would require an addition or new construction
Current Use	Rental housing

BACKGROUND/GENERAL INFORMATION

Lincoln Woods is a 125-unit housing complex located along Wells Road, adjacent to the Mall at Lincoln Station in southern Lincoln. Constructed in the 1970s as mixed-income co-operative housing, Lincoln Woods was recently acquired by The Community Builders (TCB), which has converted the complex to a rental community. The complex is composed of several two-story buildings, which contain one-, two-, and three-bedroom units, and a one-story community building that has management offices, a library, a meeting room, a small kitchen, and laundry facilities. Lincoln Woods currently partners with the Town to provide nursing clinics on site.

Lincoln Woods community room

Lincoln Woods/Wells Road was suggested as a possible location for a community center or new home for the COA at community meetings. One community member has put forth a proposal to renovate Lincoln Woods that includes adding a third story to some of the residential buildings, adding two stories to the community building, and constructing a new three-story building adjacent to the community building. Under this proposal, a senior center would be located on site.

TCB is currently seeking federal funding for much-needed renovations at Lincoln Woods. The renovations are expected to cost over $22 million. Although TCB is open to partnering with the Town and incorporating public uses on site, it is difficult for TCB to commit to a plan at this time with the renovations and funding still pending. In addition, TCB's priority is to its residents, who may not support locating a new use on the site. Another consideration is that TCB would have to get approval

from MassHousing, the mortgage and regulatory authority, to have other uses located on the property.

SITE ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

- **Location.** Lincoln Woods is centrally located, on a side street off Lincoln Road, in the commercial heart of Lincoln. Because of its central location, there should be no problems providing town services to the site. The development is approximately 1.5 miles from Bemis Hall and 0.7 miles from the Lincoln public school complex. Lincoln Woods is adjacent to the Mall at Lincoln Station, a shopping complex next to the Lincoln MBTA Commuter Rail station. The Mall contains a supermarket, bank, a post office, coffee shop, restaurant, and other service and retail tenants. Lincoln Woods' proximity to commercial uses and transit is a more important consideration for a COA use than for a PRD use, as the PRD's primary concern is proximity to the school. In addition, the site is close to a large population of seniors, including those living in the Lincoln Woods development and those living across the street at the Ryan Estate, a senior living condominium complex. A community center at the Lincoln Woods development would likely be located on Wells Road, a side street, and thus would not have frontage along a major road.

- **Adaptability of Existing Structures.** The only available space for community use on the Lincoln Woods property is the resident common room, a 1,000 sq. ft. space. This space is far too small for any permanent COA or PRD use and must remain available to Lincoln Woods residents. Thus, incorporating a permanent COA or PRD use on site would require the construction of a new building or a substantial renovation of existing buildings. New space could be created by adding floors to the community building, although this would have a high cost due to the need to install an elevator. It is also unclear if, structurally, the existing building could support the additional floors. Another option is to construct a new building. While it has been suggested that the new building could be located on a small piece of green space adjacent to the community building and two residential buildings, a more feasible location is on the site of the existing playground and basketball court in the northwest corner of the site.

- **Financial Costs.** Locating any new uses on the Lincoln Woods property would require new construction or substantial renovation, both with significant upfront costs. If subject to public construction and prevailing wage requirements, the construction cost for a new facility could range from $6.5M to $7.7M.

- **Access, Circulation, and Parking.** Lincoln Woods is accessed via Wells Road, a side street off Lincoln Road. The complex's residential buildings are situated along Wells Road, a narrow two-way street with several speed bumps. Accessing a community center here would require patrons to drive past the residential buildings, potentially endangering pedestrians. An increase in traffic due to new uses on the site would likely be met with resistance from Lincoln Woods residents. Wells Road has sidewalks, which connect to the sidewalks along Lincoln Road. Despite its proximity to the mall and MBTA station, there is no dedicated pedestrian access between Lincoln Woods and these adjacent uses.

  Parking is a critical issue at the Lincoln Woods site. According to TCB, the complex has inadequate parking for its current uses. As part of the upcoming renovations, Lincoln Woods will have to add additional handicap parking spaces to meet accessibility requirements. If a COA or

co-located facility were constructed at Lincoln Woods, a substantial number of new parking spots would have to be installed. There may be the possibility to dedicate some parking in the MBTA commuter lot or mall parking lots to a new use at Lincoln Woods although locating parking in these areas would require patrons to walk to the Lincoln Woods site. Adequate pedestrian pathways between any off-site parking and a community center would have to be installed and maintained. It is unclear at this time if additional parking lots could be constructed on the Lincoln Woods property, although any new parking lots would likely be at the loss of open space and/or residential units.

- **Other Considerations.** Locating a new use on the Lincoln Woods complex would require new construction, which would have environmental impacts. For example, a new building built on the existing playing fields/playground would replace pervious open space with impervious surfaces. In addition, if additional parking and new parking lots were required, further environmental impacts would be sustained. The site is home to an existing sewage treatment plant that may have the capacity to accommodate a community center.

Summary

The following chart summarizes the preceding assessment of seven potential locations for a new COA, PRD, or co-located facility. Based on the assessment presented in this report, this chart assigns a ranking of "excellent," "good," or "poor" to the location; adaptability of existing structures; financial costs; and access, circulation, and parking for a COA, PRD, or co-located facility at each of the seven sites.

Site	Use	Location	Adaptability of Existing Structures	Financial Costs	Access, Circulation, Parking
Hartwell	COA	⭘	⭘	⭘	⭘
	PRD	★	⭘	⭘	⭘
	Co-Locate	⭘	⭘	⭘	⭘
Smith	COA	⭘	⭘	⭘	⭘
	PRD	★	⭘	⭘	⭘
	Co-Locate	⭘	⭘	⭘	⭘
Pierce House	COA	⭘	❍	❍	❍
	PRD	❍	❍	❍	❍
	Co-Locate	❍	❍	❍	❍
The Groves	COA	❍	⭘	?	⭘
	PRD	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Co-Locate	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
First Parish	COA	★	⭘	?	⭘
	PRD	❍	❍	?	⭘
	Co-Locate	❍	❍	?	⭘
Farrington	COA	❍	⭘	?	❍
	PRD	❍	⭘	?	❍
	Co-Locate	❍	⭘	?	❍
Wells Road	COA	⭘	❍	?	❍
	PRD	❍	❍	?	❍
	Co-Locate	❍	❍	?	❍

Key: ★ Excellent; ⭘ Good; ❍ Poor; ? Needs Further Study

Maintaining Status Quo

There is no urgency for Lincoln to relocate the PRD or COA. The Town may want to retain separate facilities for these departments, with the COA at Bemis Hall and PRD at the Hartwell Pods, at least in the near term. Doing so would avoid the capital cost of a new or substantially renovated facility elsewhere, yet the Town will still face capital costs even to keep the COA and PRD in their present locations. Furthermore, there may be higher annual operating costs for one or both organizations, for

the "status quo" is a decentralized network of "headquarters" space at Bemis and the Pods and satellite locations for several programs and services, as shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Decentralized Network of Programmed Spaces for COA, PRD

COA Off-Campus/Satellite Sites		PRD Off-Campus/Satellite Sites	
Existing	**Potential Future**	**Existing**	**Potential Future**
B Pods	St. Anne's*	Bemis Hall	St. Anne's
Pierce House	Masonic Temple	Pierce House	Masonic Temple
The Groves	Drumlin Farm	The Groves	Drumlin Farm
St. Anne's	Public Safety Building	Ryan Estates	Public Safety Building
Ryan Estates	Ryan Estates*	First Parish Church	The Groves*
	First Parish Church	Codman Farm	Ryan Estates*
	Water Department		First Parish Church*
	Battle Road Farm		Water Department
	Pierce House*		Battle Road Farm
	The Groves*		
	Pods*		

Sources: Dan Pereira, Parks & Recreation Director, and Carolyn Bottum, COA Director.

*Means the facilities are currently used for off-site programming and may have capacity to house additional programming in the future.

COA

There are some advantages in keeping the COA at Bemis Hall:

- The basement allows for expansion of the COA. Still, relocation of the furnace would be critical for maximum use of Bemis Hall. This should be considered when making repairs and upgrades to the furnace.
- The incremental cost of remaining at Bemis may be much less than the cost of new construction elsewhere.
- The building is a beautiful facility.

There are some disadvantages, too:

- The public safety issues at Bemis Hall cannot be solved easily, and they are *real* issues.
- Adequate parking is a significant, serious constraint. There may be an opportunity to add parking spaces through a cooperative arrangement with First Parish, which owns 2.7 acres of land uphill from the main parcel of the Stone Church. There is a 25-foot wide strip of land between the main parcel and the 2.7-acre parcel, allowing the church to park cars and landscape as long as access rights are maintained for the lot behind.
- Renovating the basement would create additional program space, but even with a finished basement, Bemis Hall is not large enough to meet the space needs of the COA and is not appropriately configured for confidentiality of social and other services. Also, while renovating

the basement will give the COA some of the additional space it needs, this will necessitate moving some of the activity functions to the basement (e.g., presentations or social activities). These spaces should be on the main level in order to present a welcoming space that will attract users and increase the effectiveness of COA programs.

- As the senior population grows, the inadequacies of Bemis Hall will be increasingly apparent. The challenge to provide adequate programs and services will become more complicated for the COA, as additional programs move to satellite (and fully accessible) facilities. There are administrative burdens involved with arranging, scheduling, and operating multiple programs in off-site locations, and a municipal liability as well.

Regardless of whether the COA stays at Bemis Hall, eventually Lincoln will need to invest $3.6M (or more) to upgrade the building and reduce or eliminate the existing code violations (some of these upgrades have already been completed). Townspeople care about Bemis Hall because of its historical nature, and they want to maintain it in good repair.

PRD

Keeping PRD in its existing headquarters at the Pods has several advantages:

- The location benefits a majority of PRD's participants and helps to concentrate the Town's recreation programs.
- The Pods could be a more viable long-term option for PRD if the Town assumed site control.
- The Pods do not offer quite as much space as PRD actually needs, so an addition may become necessary in the future anyway, even without the extra space demands of a shared facility.
- The distributed program model – i.e., programs located both at the Pods and in off-site locations – appeals to some Lincoln residents. At the November public meeting, residents said that having activities spread out around town makes the most of community resources and encourages intergenerational contact in an "organic," unstructured way.
- At most times, the number of parking spaces on site is adequate for PRD's needs.
- The School Department pays for the utilities.

Some disadvantages include:

- The Pods offer limited opportunities for intergenerational interaction.
- There is no opportunity for the operating efficiencies that would come with a shared facility.
- There would still be no budget for capital improvements, and PRD would still be operating in "borrowed space" that it cannot control.

APPENDIX

A. Massachusetts Towns with Community Centers (Sample)

B. Local Organizations Currently Using COA/PRD Facilities

C. CCFC Charge from Board of Selectman

D. MAPC Demographic Projections

E. CCFC Meeting Minutes

F. Public Forum Notes

APPENDIX A

Massachusetts Towns with Community Centers (Sample)

	Co-Located Departments	Other Notes
Ashland	COA Recreation Department Youth and Family Services Ashland Food Pantry	
Bedford*	COA Recreation Department Board of Health Bedford Youth and Family Services Bedford Chamber of Commerce Bedford Community Table/Pantry, Inc. Minuteman Senior Services	Managed by Town, operations handled by consultant
Bourne	COA PRD Human Resources OTHER?	
Concord*	COA PRD preschool	Renovated elementary school
Fairhaven	COA Recreation	
Harwich	COA Recreation Department Emergency Management Channel 18	
Sudbury*	COA PRD Commission on Disability Inclusive and Adaptive Sudbury Public Schools Teen Center Youth Coordinator	Renovated elementary school Pool
Weston*	COA Recreation Department	Located on school campus

* Lincoln COA site visits.

APPENDIX B
Local Organizations Currently Using COA/PRD Facilities

ORGANIZATIONS USING COA FACILITIES IN 2011

- Lincoln Parks & Recreation Department (yoga, ballroom dancing, middle school dances, winter carnival, math team)
- Agricultural Commission
- Private parties, memorial services, recitals, concerts, etc.
- Green Tech Committee
- Bemis Lectures
- Valley Pond Board
- Lincoln Historical Society
- Lincoln Garden Club
- Lincoln Minute Men
- Lincoln-Sudbury High School Cross Country Ski Team
- Lincoln Conservation Commission
- Codman Community Farm
- Friends of the Library (book sales, concert)
- Lincoln Family Association
- Lincoln Extended Activities Program (LEAP)
- Lincoln Public Schools (8th grade graduation party)
- Lincoln Ridge Association
- Worldview Education
- Friends of the COA
- Community Center Feasibility Committee Public Forum
- Lincoln Zoning Department
- Says You radio show

- Farrar Pond Village Association
- Old Town Hall Exchange
- School Robotics Team

ORGANIZATIONS CURRENTLY USING PRD FACILITIES

- Lincoln Cub Scouts
- Lincoln Boy Scouts
- Lincoln Brownies
- Lincoln Girl Scouts
- Lincoln Minute Men
- Lincoln Garden Club
- Lincoln Family Association
- Lincoln Youth Soccer
- Friends of the Lincoln Library
- Lincoln Extended Activities Program (LEAP)
- Magic Garden Preschool
- Lincoln Public Schools Math Club
- Lincoln Council on Aging

APPENDIX C
CCFC Charge from Board of Selectmen

PURPOSE:

- The Board of Selectmen will appoint a Committee to evaluate the programmatic and space needs of the Council on Aging and Parks and Recreation Department.
- The Committee will submit a report that inventories existing programs and facilities (modeled on the work of the Facilities Coordinating Committee- FCC) and will include an assessment of options for housing these departments and programs.
- The Committee will identify any key limitations or deficiencies in the existing facilities and their siting (parking, access, safety, etc.) as well as assess the feasibility and costs of remediation.
- The Committee will review the benefits and challenges of co-locating some or all of the departments' programs in one or more facilities.
- The Committee will assess the benefits and challenges of relocating some or all programs and services to one or more existing town and/or private facilities.
- The Committee will develop a list of potential sites for a new facility and evaluate the benefits and challenges inherent in each.
- The Committee's report should be organized in a manner that enables the Board of Selectmen (and town at large) to weigh the costs, benefits, and challenges of each alternative.

MEMBERSHIP:

The Committee shall be made up of 6 members, all appointed by the Board of Selectmen comprised of the following:

- 1 representative of the Board of Selectmen
- 1 representative of the Council on Aging
- 1 representative of the Parks and Recreation Committee
- 1 representative of the Disabilities Committee
- Two at-large members from the community
- The Town Administrator will serve as a nonvoting ex-officio member
- The Directors of COA and Parks and Recreation will also serve as nonvoting ex-officio members

TIMETABLE:

- The Committee shall issue its report to the Board of Selectmen on or before December 31, 2011.
- Given the potential that one or more options may be located on the Lincoln School campus, the Committee should communicate with the School Building Committee.

OPEN MEETING LAW & PUBLIC RECORDS

- The Community Center Feasibility Committee is a sub-committee of the Board of Selectmen and is therefore subject to the requirements of the Open Meeting Law (e.g., advance notice of meetings, agendas, minutes, production of documents when requested, etc.).

COMMITTEE SUPPORT & RESOURCES

- The ex-officio members will attend committee meetings and provide support in organizing meetings and following-up as required.
- In addition, the Town Meeting appropriated the sum of $45,000 to fund "the completion of a feasibility study for the COA and Recreation Committee regarding future needs and facility options for a community center serving residents of all ages, including costs incidental and related thereto." These funds are available to hire consultants or to assist the effort in other ways.

Issued By the Board:

Sara A. Mattes, Chairman

D. Noah Eckhouse

Peter Braun

Date: May 31, 2011

APPENDIX D
MAPC Demographic Projections

Metropolitan Area Planning Council Projections

	Ages	1990	2000	2010	2020	2030	2035
Lincoln	00-04	815	768	238	190	162	163
Lincoln	05-09	718	742	574	504	504	509
Lincoln	10-14	503	677	785	736	757	766
Lincoln	15-19	373	393	569	520	493	496
Lincoln	20-24	340	327	420	401	383	381
Lincoln	25-29	685	495	472	529	486	462
Lincoln	30-34	773	577	434	472	441	416
Lincoln	35-39	748	737	590	540	616	640
Lincoln	40-44	631	703	782	640	725	765
Lincoln	45-49	450	578	766	629	585	585
Lincoln	50-54	332	530	767	738	619	567
Lincoln	55-59	313	384	690	814	734	652
Lincoln	60-64	283	257	623	793	830	804
Lincoln	65-69	273	266	367	508	584	626
Lincoln	70-74	165	235	213	337	410	461
Lincoln	75-79	134	197	176	234	370	436
Lincoln	80-85	83	123	121	125	219	276
Lincoln	85+	47	67	96	96	112	132
60+		985	1,145	1,595	2,094	2,524	2,736
% Increase over last			16	39	31	20	
Younger residents		6,681	6,911	7,088	6,712	6,506	
% Increase over last			3	2	-5	-3	

Note: MAPC prepared these projections on a region-wide basis for transportation planning purposes. They are presented here for general information only and may not provide a reliable basis for public facilities planning. The base population for Lincoln includes Hanscom.

APPENDIX E
CCFC Meeting Minutes

COMMUNITY CENTER FEASIBILITY COMMITTEE

Minutes: Committee Meeting, June 30, 2011 8:00am Donaldson Room

Attending: Carolyn Bottum, Susie Collins, Noah Eckhouse, Tim Higgins, Dan Pereira

1) Committee Member Introductions:

-Project history was reviewed

2) Review Selectmen's Charge:

-Committee membership was discussed and priority was assigned to recruiting At-Large Members.

-Dan, Carolyn and Tim will reorganize raw data into a consistent format for committee members and consultant.

3) Project Timetable:

-Timetable was discussed. Multiple organizational meetings are needed early on to confirm the following tasks:

a) Conservation should be contacted to confirm any potential new construction sites for center.
b) Tim to contact Judi Barrett at Community Opportunities Group to inquire about consulting services.
c) Dan and Carolyn to recruit At-Large Members

-Meetings on July 12 or 14th, as well as a meeting the week of July 18 were discussed.

4) Consulting Contract:

-Tim presented contract draft for review.

COMMUNITY CENTER FEASIBILITY COMMITTEE

Minutes July 21, 2011

Attending: Carolyn Bottum, Susie Collins, Tim Higgins, Cathy Long, Dan Pereira, Nancy Torti in person and John Ritz and Bob Sutherland by phone, plus Judi Barrett, consultant, as guest.

We are now at the conceptual stage. We are not ruling out any options.

We have much data gathered by Carolyn Bottum at the COA and Dan Pereira at Parks and Recreation, that is available separately.

Judi Barrett, consultant, was invited to the meeting. She and her firm have done various projects for the Town, including preparation of the Master Plan.

At this point we do not plan to undertake a full blown feasibility study. Instead we wish an independent review by a consultant of the facility needs of current and projected programming of the COA, Parks and Recreation, and community groups. We need standards of review and evaluation criteria. We need an evaluation of possible alternatives and sites with possible elimination of some sites. The sites most frequently mentioned include Bemis Hall, Pierce House, Hartwell complex (possibly including a repurposed Smith), Lincoln Woods, and The Groves. We plan to propose a footprint of the facilities to meet these needs. Such footprint may be integrated with the current school project.

A community center, if any, will come after the Town Office and School projects, at least 3 to 5 years in the future.

The State of the Town meeting is planned for October 29. We plan to be prepared to make a presentation at that meeting of our thoughts for a community center. We plan to hold a community meeting after the State of the Town, but, hopefully, before Thanksgiving to solicit additional citizen input.

This Committee will make its report and recommendation to the Board of Selectmen and the Capital Planning Committee by December 31.

We have asked Judi Barrett to make a proposal for consulting services to assist us in accomplishing the tasks outlined above. She plans to make a proposal this coming Monday.

Our expectation is that the scope of services will be modest and not be subject to bidding requirements.

Our next meeting will be at 7:30 AM on July 28 at the Parks and Recreation office.

Minutes submitted by Bob Sutherland

COMMUNITY CENTER FEASIBILITY COMMITTEE

Minutes: Committee Meeting, July 28, 2011, at 7:30 AM at Parks and Recreation Office

Attending: Susie Collins, Tim Higgins, Dan Pereira, John Ritz, and Nancy Torti in person and Bob Sutherland by phone.

Tim Higgins emailed to all before the meeting a proposed scope of services from Judi Barrett, Director of Planning at Community Opportunities, Inc., submitted after our meeting with her a week ago. Tim also emailed to us a Proposed Timetable beginning with working with a consultant in August, preparation for State of The Town meeting on October 29, public meetings in November, and final report deadline of the week of December 12.

If we might propose a community center at the school complex, such potential options need to be presented this fall so that such can be considered in school building proposals.

The proposal is for Judi Barrett to work based on hourly rates and an amount not to exceed, likely to be about $10,000, such amount to be decided after the scope is finalized.

We expect that most data required will be gathered by Carolyn Bottum and Dan Pereira, and that the consultant will not be required to gather much data.

We propose asking Judi Barrett to be the consultant because of her expertise and her performance on prior Town projects, one recent project being the development of the Town Master Plan.

Carolyn Bottum and Dan Pereira have gathered much data on programming and space needs of the Council on Aging and Parks and Recreation Departments. We expect that they will need to gather information of how other towns have addressed these issues and gather information on the several possible options for Lincoln.

Our next meeting is scheduled for Monday or Wednesday, August 8 or 10, at 10 AM, based on Judi Barrett's availability, with August 8 preferred. The meeting will include a tour of the school campus and a review of the draft programming and space needs of the Council on Aging and Parks and Recreation Departments.

Minutes submitted by Bob Sutherland

COMMUNITY CENTER FEASIBILITY COMMITTEE
Proposed Timetable

Date	Milestone	Notes
Week of June 27th	Committee's Initial Meeting	Organize Effort
July/August	Committee review existing data and assessments and determine what else is needed	
August	Finalize consulting services scope of work and undertake bidding	
August	Select consultant and begin work	
September	Present progress report to BOS	Attend BOS meeting to help publicize the process
October	Prepare Presentation for SOTT	Focus on needs more than solutions
October 29th (Saturday morning)	State of the Town Meeting	Overview report
Early -November	Committee Facilitated Public Hearing	
Week of December 12th	Present Final Report	

COMMUNITY CENTER FEASIBILITY COMMITTEE
August 8, 2011
MINUTES

Attending: Susie Collins, Tim Higgins, Dan Pereira, John Ritz, Cathy Long, Carolyn Bottum, Bob Sutherland, and Judi Barrett, consultant, as guest.

The meeting began at 1:05 PM.

Tim Higgins reviewed the timetable he had previously distributed. This included a September meeting with the Selectmen, preparation for the State of the Town Meeting, a Public Meeting in November, and the final report due date of December 31. The committee reviewed the distributed scope of service. No changes were needed.

The committee discussed whether the DPW site on Lewis Street should be considered as an option. Tim Higgins noted that the Town had considered moving the DPW to north Lincoln, which would free up the Lewis Street site. However, since this has not occurred and is not currently planned, the site is not available. In addition, the site had been considered for commercial development as a smart growth, transit-adjacent project or as a site to expand housing options in Lincoln. It was determined, however, that a paragraph outlining the committee's discussion and conclusions should be added to the final report.

Judi initiated a discussion of whether the town will support a community center. The committee agreed that there do not appear to be residents who would be opposed to the idea of a community center outside of the potential cost. However, the committee cautioned that plans for a shared space community center must be realistic in terms of how much space can actually be shared and the logistical challenges of scheduling shared space. Carolyn noted that the space estimates assume that COA programming will be over by 4:30 each day and not run on weekends while the current trend is to add evening and weekend programs for working elders and caregivers. Dan also mentioned that we must build enough space for community groups who are used to having access to space as they need it.

The committee determined that we should hold a focus group meeting with community groups who will be using the community center to help create and refine the criteria by which each site will be evaluated. The meeting will be held on October 4 at 7:30 PM in the Bemis Hall Map Room. Before the meeting, Judi will create and send a short survey to those who will be invited. The public hearing will be November 17 at 7:30 PM in the Hartwell Building Multi-purpose Room.

Bob expressed an interest in touring Lincoln Woods since this site has also been raised as an option. Tim will contact the new management to see if they would be interested in being considered as a potential site from whom space could be leased. The committee also noted concerns about leasing space from a private development and the safety of having programs and services for those with disabilities on a second floor should there be a fire or power outage. The date, time, and place for the next meeting is to be determined, but will be the week of September 12.

Minutes submitted by Carolyn Bottum.

COMMUNITY CENTER FEASIBILITY COMMITTEE
September 15, 2011
MINUTES

Present: Susie Collins, Dan Pereira, Nancy Torti, Cathy Long, Bob Sutherland, Tim Higgins, Judi Barrett, Carolyn Bottum

In Attendance: Crawley Cooper

The meeting was called to order at 3:40 pm

Minutes: The minutes of July 21, July 28 and August 8 were approved with the correction of the date on the August 8 minutes.

Capital Plans: Tim will prepare a memo to the CPC for the committee's approval with the plans summarizing the committee's progress to date and indicating that more information regarding potential costs and timetables will be available once the committee's report is complete in December.

Updates on Potential Sites:

Tim updated us on the current situation with the School and how their plans and timetable could affect ours. Dan will invite Mickey to the next meeting to discuss the situation in more detail. Carolyn reviewed a discussion she had with the Groves regarding options for a community center there. Leasing of land or renting of existing space were both discussed on a conceptual level. Tim indicated that he had reached out to the new management of Lincoln Woods to gauge their interest in pursuing a community center at their site but has not yet heard back from them.

Crawley Cooper urged the Committee to consider renovating the Bemis basement for the COA and working with the church to across the street to improve parking capacity for the entire area. He also questioned the future use of Bemis Hall should the COA relocate elsewhere. The committee agreed that these were good questions to consider.

Update to Selectmen: The committee will update the Selectmen on September 26 at 7:30 pm. Judi and Bob should attend as well as any other available committee members.

Focus Group: The focus group of community users will be held on October 4 at 7:30 pm at Bemis Hall. Judi will draft an invitation which Dan will mail out.

State of the Town: At the State of the Town meeting on October 29, the Selectmen are requesting a very brief update from the committee, including a Powerpoint outline which Judi will prepare. Powerpoint is due October 6. Judi will prepare this after the focus group on October 4.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:50 pm.
Documents:

Minutes of July 21, July 28, and August 8

COMMUNITY CENTER FEASIBILITY COMMITTEE
October 13, 2011
MINUTES

Present: Dan Pereira, Nancy Torti, Cathy Long, Bob Sutherland, Tim Higgins, Judi Barrett, Carolyn Bottum

In Attendance: Mickey Brandmeyer, School Superintendent

The meeting was called to order at 3:35 pm.

Minutes: Minutes were not reviewed

Lincoln School Building Project: Supt. Brandmeyer updated the committee on the project design (5.E-1) and timeline. The project would not go before Town Meeting vote until Fall 2012. Committee discussion centered around potential Ballfield Road layouts that could accommodate the Lincoln Preschool, Lincoln School administration, Council on Aging, Parks and Recreation, leasing agencies (LEAP and Magic Garden) and community groups.

State of the Town Presentation Preparation: The committee discussed the intentions of the presentation, and agreed that a brief synopsis (What is driving this? What are our needs? How did we get to this point?) followed by participatory opportunities would be best. Judi to deliver PPT presentation for review.

Community Center Public Forum: Forum time and location confirmed as 11/17/11 at 7:30 pm in the Hartwell A Pod Fitness Room. Carolyn to generate publicity campaign, Judi to deliver color posters.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:50 pm.

Documents:

Lincoln School Project site plan layouts

COMMUNITY CENTER FEASIBILITY COMMITTEE
November 2, 2011
MINUTES

Present: Dan Pereira, Cathy Long, Susie Collins, Bob Sutherland, Carolyn Bottum, John Ritz

The meeting was called to order at 3:40 pm.

Minutes: Minutes were not ready for review.

State of the Town Presentation Review: The committee felt the presentation was well received and gave special praise to Judi Barrett for her power point and public presentation. Specific comments discussed:

Owen Beenhouwer: cited parallels between the community center project and the current school building project, and referenced the Mass. School Building Authority's favorable change in perception of community access in school building projects.

Dennis Picker: asked us to consider the impact of such a center on the towns operating budget and urged us to explore renting or leasing space as an option.

Sheila Webber: made general supportive comments and asked for more detail on space needs.

Jennie Morris(?): commented that co-location of programs would stimulate further community participation in all town wide events.

Ruth Ann Hendrickson: urged the committee to consider the importance of the athletic fields in our conversation, especially as it pertains to the layout of the Ballfield Road Campus.

Unidentified Resident: urged the committee to coordinate with de Cordova as they make future plans as well.

Community Center Public Forum:

Publicity: Carolyn completed the publicity campaign. Parks and Recreation to use email database to broadcast information. Dan will ask Chuck Miller to broadcast information to the Town wide email distribution list.

Agenda: Committee proposes an agenda that mirrors the entire process: 1) Orient the meeting using the SOTT power point, 2) Discuss the pros and cons of having a community center, 3) Discuss the assessment criteria needed, 4) Discuss the locations being considered, including staying put, and 5) apply the assessment criteria to the locations. Carolyn and Dan will meet with Judi later in the week to review agenda and the remaining project timeline.

Next Meeting: 11/30/11, 12/1/11 or 12/7/11 at 3:30pm were discussed and will be confirmed via email.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:45 pm.

COMMUNITY CENTER FEASIBILITY COMMITTEE
December 1, 2011
MINUTES

Present: Judi Barrett (COG), Carolyn Bottum, Susie Collins, Caroline Edwards (COG), Cathy Long, Dan Pereira (Minutes), John Ritz, Bob Sutherland, Nancy Torti

Minutes: Minutes from October 13 and November 2 meeting were reviewed and approved.

Public Forum Review: The committee felt the forum was moderately well attended (approx. 25 people) with the discussion primarily focused on three points:

- The Community was interested in hearing about our *vision* for the community center.
- *Universal inclusion* should be added to our list of criteria.
- We reviewed our *assessment criteria* based on feedback from the public forum and made modest adjustments.

Sites:

Visits Update: Caroline updated the committee on the status of the recommended sites for review: deCordova, Farrington Memorial, Wells Road, First Parish Church.

Analysis of Ballfield Road Plans: Conversation centered on the Ballfield Road Plans with specific discussion of the layout of the Smith School Building.

Report:

- *Timeline and tasks:* Report is due by end of the month, but since a new location was added for review (after the Public Forum), the report may be delayed by a few weeks. Committee was more concerned with quality than deadlines, as there was still ample time to review and prepare the report for publication.
- *Other:* Reviewed potential layout and site rating system of report.

Other:

- *None*

Date and Time of Next Meeting: TBD when final report is scheduled to be delivered.

Meetings were held on March 6, 2012, May 17, 2012, and June 20, 2012, to carry out the editing process.

APPENDIX F
Public Forum Notes

LINCOLN COMMUNITY CENTER FEASIBILITY PUBLIC FORUM

November 17, 2011

Community Feedback

- *Need for community center, concept*
  - We don't need a dedicated community center. We need to keep taking care of our historic buildings. We like using lots of different locations.
  - Like the idea of using existing buildings.
  - P&R needs athletic fields.
    - Maybe new fields could be built behind Donelans?
  - There is a need for intergenerational interaction.
    - Facilities need to be accessible to kids, need to be accessible without a car.
  - There are inherent issues with Bemis Hall (architecture, traffic); it will be hard to reuse.
  - Need to coordinate Bemis Hall activities with the First Parish church.
  - It's important to have space for ad hoc interactions; this used to happen in the Bemis Hall basement.
  - Don't see the marriage of P&R and COA. A community center needs to have a concept and vision.
  - There is a need for a senior drop-in center.
    - Seniors could use the center in the day, teens at night.
    - See Bedford's senior center.
  - Could have a drop-in center for all ages; would allow for casual intergenerational interaction.
  - Major issue with Bemis Hall is that there is no space for casual interaction.
  - Report on community center should not be used to legitimize reuse of Smith School; report needs to address/score several locations, not just choose one location.
  - Need space for tutoring that is safely accessible for kids.
  - Think about ways to use facilities more hours of the day—could save on operating/cleaning costs.
    - Schools are already used after-hours; the schools absorb the extra costs on weekdays.
  - What is intergenerational programming?
    - In Bedford the shared building facilitates intergenerational activities.
  - Lincoln Family Association is interested in intergenerational interaction. Wants to partner with COA but there is no space to do so.
  - Community center is a way to bring people together.
  - Programs should stay put; believe in beautiful decentralization.
  - Look at the Bentley study on the Pierce House—recommended enlarging the facility to accommodate more events.
  - Pierce House is underused.
    - Needs AC installed.
    - Close to preschool.
    - Convenient location for COA, challenging for P&R.

- With the new school, the town cannot afford a centralized facility.
- Hartwell school buildings.
  - School district would have to decommission.
  - Could eminent domain be used to gain control?
  - Does town already own?
- Need to consider after-school programs and preschools in location decision. Now P&R is located close to the Magic Garden Children's Center and the Lincoln Extended-day Activities Program (LEAP) after-school program, and there are advantages to this co-location.
- Look at centers in Bedford, Lexington.
- Would like a community center, but it needs a business plan; now the idea is too fragmented.
- Town needs new energy; needs a way to bring together people of all ages.
- Facilities could be a collection of buildings that are close together.

♦ *Additional locations to consider*
- First Parish church is likely to lose a tenant (nursery school); could be a possible location to consider.
- Bemis Hall basement (although has steep steps).
- Farrington Memorial. Needs work, but community center could fit with Trustees' mission.

♦ *Criteria for assessing locations*
- Need to establish a vision for the project before you establish criteria for evaluating the site. But the uncertainty about the future makes visioning difficult.
- Are we looking at whether a site is good for co-locating? What does "co-locating" mean?
- Is the vision to have some COA space, some P&R space, and lots of shared space? This could lead to cost savings and intergenerational interaction.
- Think about the current issues/needs of each organization and then the new programs that each organization wants.
  - P&R needs: control over facilities.
- Articulate vision, current deficiencies, new desired programs for each organization and see where there is overlap. Report should separate needs for current programs and desired programs.
- When thinking about how much space is needed, COA is looking at state guidelines, program expansion. Still keep some activities in other locations.
- Need to start with needs and use those to inform facility decisions.
- P&R is tied to the school.
- The school is part of the solution; a way to bring people together.

♦ *Other*
- Put presentations and reports on the web.
- Alternative energy (e.g., solar panels on facilities) could bring down operational costs.

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