

**Lincoln Select Board**  
**Statement Regarding the Community Center Building Project**  
**March 5, 2024**

At its meeting on Monday, March 4<sup>th</sup>, the Lincoln Select Board (“Board”) voted unanimously to support the Community Center building project, and to encourage the residents of Lincoln to do the same at the Annual Town Meeting on March 23<sup>rd</sup>, and at the ballot on March 25<sup>th</sup>.

It is with careful consideration of current building conditions along with an understanding of the limitations of the current spaces to address the needs of our Parks and Recreation Department (“PRD”) and Council on Aging and Human Services (“COA&HS”), that the Select Board supports the need to build a community center that will meet the needs of residents of all ages for decades to come.

In arriving at this conclusion, the Board considered many factors:

- Multiple Town committees’ thoughtful and careful adherence to Town process for more than a decade.
- Prior reports beginning in 2010 with an analysis of Lincoln’s public spaces and their over or under utilization. This inventory report advised that the conditions of Bemis Hall are “imperfectly suited for any of its main tenants” and further expressed safety concerns with parking. This was supported and substantiated by additional studies of Bemis Hall in the following years.
- There were also subsequent reports and analysis of the Pods, specifically in 2012, that emphasized their deteriorating conditions and an acknowledgment that they have clearly outlived their useful lives and require significant refurbishment. The Pods are where PRD and LEAP, Lincoln’s After School Program, currently reside.
- Financial considerations were evaluated. A comparison of the costs associated with renovating Bemis Hall and the Pods to continue to serve COA&HS, PRD and LEAP in their current programmatic capacity (“stay in place”) versus the cost of a new Community Center building. The renovation cost is ~\$14.4 million as compared to \$24.02 million for new construction.
- Additional financial consideration was given to the costs of further delay. The current architects hired by the CCBC estimate a 7% annual escalation rate for the next several years.
- In addition, the CCBC held a Special Town Meeting in December to allow residents to choose which of the 3 community center projects at different price points best represented our shared values. The 100% Courtyard option with a budget of \$24.02 million was chosen for further design and a bonding vote.
- Finally, the Board supports the collective vision of the community, as evidenced by the December 2<sup>nd</sup> Special Town Meeting vote, to build a new community center that provides opportunity to have diverse and expanded programming while also fostering intergenerational relationships and health and well-being for our residents.

The Board acknowledges the tax implications this building project will have for our residents and appreciates the significant investment we have made, as a community, to renovate our public buildings. The Board would like to recognize the Ogden Codman Trust for their generous donation of \$500,000 to the Community Center Building Project and the fundraising efforts of the Friends of the Council on Aging who have, currently, contributed \$1 million dollars to lessening the financial burden of this project on our residents.

We thank all our residents for their enthusiastic engagement and contributions to the Community Center Building Project process and hope to see you at the March 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual Town Meeting.

Sincerely,  
Jim Hutchinson, Chair  
Jennifer Glass  
Kim Bodnar