

History on the Indoor Facility Needs of the Moultonborough Recreation Dept.

The dates on this are not exact, but the timing is, in essence, correct

The future need for a small recreation (community) center was first addressed in the Town's first master plan in 1982.

From mid 80's – 90's at least 3 "Community Center Committees" were convened by organizations other than the Recreation Dept., but included the Recreation Dept. Variety of reasons: included, but were not limited to; prevention for drug and alcohol abuse for teens, adequate gym space for existing programs, safe places for children in the out of school time and programming for seniors.

Before the gym addition was built on to the Elementary School, The Moultonborough School Board –approached the BOS with a proposal to sell the current school building to the town as a town hall – including space for the Recreation Dept. – the current multi-purpose room, and the area below it for the Recreation Dept. gym, program, office and storage space. Then a new school would be built. This was refused by the BOS – because of concerns on the adequacies of the furnace and "too much space".

A Building Committee appointed by the Board of Selectmen in the early 1990's – assessed all building needs in town and came up with a recommendation that included a new town hall (accomplished); a public safety building (accomplished); additions to the Library (accomplished) and a building for the Recreation Dept. to be constructed in 1999 (obviously not accomplished); then extended to 2004 (still not accomplished).

In the 1991 Master Plan again a community center/recreation dept. building was mentioned.

In 1994 (?) at the Town meeting a warrant article to purchase the old Troop E building for use by the Recreation Dept. as a community center – was narrowly (by literally a handful of votes) defeated because of concerns about the septic system not the lack of need.

A year later with the Town Administrator and BOS, explored the possibility of turning the Methodist Church parsonage into a community center. The building was not adequate and was in poor shape. The building was torn down.

In the late 1990's/early 2000's I was informed by then Town Administrator that the Recreation Dept. building was being "jumped" because of other capital/building issues i.e. – waste management facility, salt shed and Highway Dept. In meetings with me it was expressed that the needs of the Recreation Dept. are still viable and that "a little more patience was needed"

In 1999, with the knowledge of the Town Administrator a Strategic Plan Committee was formed to look at the future needs of the Recreation Dept. This was a community wide group including parents, teens, and adults. Their recommendation was to construct a community center with a gym, program spaces, storage and offices. This report was submitted to the TA and BOS in 2001.

Also in 1999 – a senior needs committee was established and that group completed a survey in 2001 that established a need for additional senior programs. They also completed a feasibility study that showed the need for a senior center.

After the Public Safety building was constructed, The Recreation Dept. using all donated materials and time (except for two full time Recreation staff members) turned the former town hall/police department in to a very small recreation department building. When advocating for the building to the BOS, I stated that there were many requests in town for a community center for the Recreation Dept. to have a building/community center, we could see what – without a lot of investment – the need is for such a building. This is where the Recreation Dept. has been housed since.

In 2003 an anti-drug and alcohol forum convened at Moultonborough Academy under a drug and alcohol prevention grant recommended a community center/teen center with after-school and teen programming. This was comprised of school staff, parents, students and interested community members.

The following programs are run in the current Rec. Dept. building: adult yoga, adult Zumba, adult tai-chi; children's art programs, toddler and parent programs, a daily drop in program geared to middle school youth, teen programs, we hold trainings, host meetings, host bridge club, host Mah Jong, a music camp, a theater camp and run classes. We were one of two sites for the Community Services Fair. We have had successful, revenue producing programs such as Jazzercise leave our facility because of the inadequacies of the space and outdoor space. We are unable to meet the needs and requests of the community for indoor recreation space.

In 2003, as part of the Recreation Director's work evaluation, town administrator, Chuck Connell requested an updated Recreation Dept. Strategic Plan. This committee began meeting in 2004, their full and complete work was presented to the BOS in a public meeting on October 25, 2007. The recommendation, among others, was to construct a community/senior center on the Lion's Club property.

At the 2006 Town Meeting \$50,000.00 was approved for a feasibility study for the development and/or expansion of Town recreation facilities.

At the 2007 Town Meeting, the community voted to purchase the Lion's Club property. Among the reasons given for the purchase was the possible construction of a community/senior center.

At the 2008 Town Meeting the proposal for the Community Center/Senior Center was defeated with 100,000.00 approved for further study and engineering of the project.

The Recreation Strategic Plan Report was included in the most updated and completed Town Master Plan

In 2010, a Blue Ribbon Commission was convened and appointed by the Board of Selectmen to look at the building needs of the Community Services Team (Recreation, Visiting Nurse Service and Health and Human Services Dept.). Their independent report was to construct a Recreation

Dept. building on or adjacent to the School grounds with a gym, program space and storage space.

At the 2013 Town Meeting the following warrant article was passed in the affirmative: “To see if the Town will vote that it is the ‘Sense of Meeting’ that, as recommended by the Blue Ribbon Commission on Community Services and Facilities, the Town should ‘...pursue development of a facility that includes an indoor gymnasium, Recreation Department office, program and storage space that would be on existing school land or property adjacent to school facilities...’” After the 2013 Town Meeting the Recreation Staff – under the direction of the Town Administrator - created a rough drawing of a building to meet their needs, in keeping with the Recommendation of the Blue Ribbon Commission.

On 4/16/13 the Town Administrator and I presented the rough sketch of the building to the members of the Blue Ribbon Commission along with an explanation etc. Feedback was provided that included: increasing the size of the gym, reducing by one designated area the program space to get a more professional drawing completed. When asked the question if this general plan was in keeping with their vision as presented in their final report the answer was yes.

On 5/23/13 the presentation was made to the Board of Selectmen and they agreed that the proposed concept was in keeping with the recommendations of the BRC and voted to move forward with getting a “more professional” drawing completed.

The Recreation Director has consistently included a study for the building as described in the report of the BRC in her CIPC requests and has consistently ranked the importance as high

The current building that houses the Recreation Dept. is in poor shape with “old building” issues