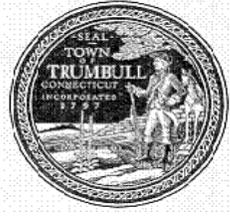


**TOWN OF TRUMBULL  
CONNECTICUT**

Town Hall  
5866 Main Street  
Trumbull, Connecticut 06611



**Public Forum**

**Senior/Community Center and Library Study Building Committee  
Friday, November 6, 2015  
11:00 am  
Trumbull Senior Center**

Mr. Joseph Pifko, Chairman of the Senior/Community Center and Library Study Building Committee opened the Public Forum at 11:07 am. He introduced himself as the Chairman of the Committee and the committee members introduced themselves – Jeannine Stauder, Rachel Yahwak, Lori Hayes-O'Brien and Richard Seaman.

Mr. Pifko noted the Town Council put together this committee and selected himself and Mr. Marconi as co-chairs. Other members of the committee were also approved and appointed by the Town Council. This is a non-bias, apolitical committee charged to do the best they can for the town with respect to gathering information on the possibility of a new senior center/community center/Library.

Mr. Pifko noted the committee has looked at the current site of the Senior Center and they have also visited other senior centers in Fairfield County to gather more information. They have seen good ideas of what could be done. The purpose of this forum is to find out what the seniors want. He noted there were two surveys – one for the general public regarding a community center and one for seniors. Also four public hearings will be held, this being the third, to hear comments.

Several positive comments have been made:

- Geographical location – perhaps closer to the center of town instead of on the edge of town
- One floor
- Large community room
- Security in the lobby to control visitors
- Large rooms for classes so that they can remain set up for another time

- Dining area and coffee shop
- On a bus route
- Ample parking
- Open weekends

A question of real estate was brought up. Mr. Pifko noted if there is any change, it would need to be a town building or on town property. The health component at the current Senior Center was discussed as to whether they would be included or separate. Mr. Pifko noted this is a viable option in a new center- perhaps on a second floor.

Discussion was held regarding the possibility of a new building or a new location. Mr. Pifko noted it is undecided at this time. The Committee is currently gathering information to make a recommendation. No consult with an architect has been done as they are not that far along in the process. It was reiterated that this is a study committee and one of the challenges is to determine the feasibility of combining the centers. At this time, nothing has been decided. It was also noted that part of the building could be built first with additional pieces constructed at a later date.

Question was raised as to the expansion of the Library and if there is enough room on that property for expansion. Mrs. Stauder, Chairman of the Library Board, noted there is a plan before the town to expand the parking. The Library is currently conducting a study on expansion/change as part of this committee.

The seniors at the forum were very adamant they did not want any combination of the senior center with a community center or a library. Mrs. Hayes-O'Brien noted the committee is looking to see what each entity is looking for and that the committee cannot look at specifics until all information has been reviewed.

The seniors are concerned about costs, specifically an increase in membership and class fees. This is not in the scope of the committee's work and the committee has nothing to do with any fees charged. There has not even been a discussion of this topic by the committee. Mr. Pifko did note there will be a cost to build the center. Some ideas have been brought forward which should be done in the private sector.

The seniors questioned what was wrong with the current building. They felt they have the amenities but just need to make improvements. Many seniors expressed that they would like to take this center and get the kitchen up and running and expand the parking which is a problem when they have programs with many in attendance. They did not want to mix with children but be able to socialize with their friends.

Discussion was held regarding what would be included in a community center. Mr. Pifko noted there is currently no plan but noted a community center is not a recreation center. He did note the possibility of

using a senior center when it is empty after hours for other activities. Mr. Pifko reviewed some of the suggestions –

- Location – current location or center of town
- Nursing staff on site
- Exercise programs
- Nursing programs
- One floor
- Increase parking
- Need a larger facility
- Larger community room

Mr. Pifko noted none of the centers visited were in the center of the town. It was noted that the Shelton center works well. It was also noted that the population of the center is not just Trumbull residents. One center is closing because they cannot afford to be in their present location.

- Safety should be more of a concern than the size
- Building needs better signage

It was noted there is a possibility of expanding the parking lot with a plan previously submitted since the problem has been resolved.

Ms. Fereira, Director of the Senior Center, noted the facility has been used in the past during the evening hours for events. She also noted that when the building was last updated, the signage was not replaced.

Discussion was held regarding the surveys and whether there are filters in place as to Trumbull residents and age. Mr. Pifko noted these two questions were asked on the surveys.

The seniors discussed the importance of the friendships they have made at the center and would not want these seniors to be left out because of the fees. Again, Mr. Pifko noted there has been no discussion of this point by the committee.

Potential locations of a new center were discussed. These include the VFW property, a location in a park, open property owned by the town or a rebuild on the current site.

Mr. Pifko noted the library is submitting their own plan to the committee to express their needs and wants. When that decision is made, then the committee will move forward. He noted that no decisions have been made and no discussions have been held regarding an increase in fees.

A timeline was discussed. Mr. Pifko noted the committee has been working on this project since April and that it meets every other week. Once all the information is gathered, then the committee will put together a proposal.

A question of how this would increase taxes for residents was raised. Mr. Pifko noted it is unknown at this time.

A question of what the community center would be used for with regard to children was raised. Mr. Pifko noted they are looking into community centers but there are not many to look at. Amenities could include day care, rooms for continuing education classes, etc.

Ms. Fereira thanked the committee members for their work on this project.

Discussion was held regarding why more seniors do not use the current center. It was noted that several seniors still continue to work or they attend other centers who offer programs they are interested in.

Mr. Pifko thanked everyone for attending and sharing their ideas. He noted there will be several options with costs included. The building would be state-of-the-art, very welcoming and would fulfill the community's needs. No money has been appropriated to the project. This is only a study committee.

Mr. Pifko closed the Public Forum at 12:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Crandall  
Clerk