

Public Comments – Meeting #2

- What could the funding source be?
- Congressional delegation.
- Were furnishings included?
- No, not included. This is an unknown.
- Pilgrim Park site: no improvements to existing pool or buildings at Anderson Fields.
- Gym for Rec. Dept. would have bleacher seating for 250 people.
- “FFE” means Furniture, Fixture, & Equipment. “Fit-up” items are those that are moveable.
- Could corporate sponsorship be considered?
- Yes. All sources could be considered.
- Why is proposed gym a full-size gym with 250 seats / bleacher seating?
- Full size gym (high school regulation) can be used for tournaments & other events.
- Butler St. already has a lot of activity.
- Could Community Center be in Waterbury Center?
- Concern about lack of proximity to Downtown and other facilities like the pool.
- Are we looking at upgrading existing facilities & bolstering those facilities? Could we use Crossett Brook gym?
- Crossett Brook gym is already overbooked.
- Using shared spaces is the current operation method for the Rec. Dept. programs. They use shared spaces such as the Methodist Church, Thatcher Brook gym, and others.
- Have we looked at existing buildings such as the Pool house?
- All existing facilities were toured as part of the initial study.
- Have we done a Master Plan for Waterbury village?
- Waterbury in Motion did a master plan that looked at the pedestrian & bike connectivity.
- Does the Senior Center own their space?
- No - Downstreet Housing & Community Development owns the building. Senior Center rents space.
- How much would the construction of this project increase our taxes?
- It would depend on the final funding model for the project.
- Why were the three programs chosen (Rec. Dept., Senior Center, Children's Room)?
- All three programs have limited facility resources and serve, in part, low and moderate income people.
- Fundraising options will be looked at.
- We would like to minimize the use of tax dollars.
- The footprint of this size takes up a lot of the Anderson Fields site. Could the tennis courts be moved?
- It would be very expensive to move the tennis courts and the associated lighting.
- We can't afford this project; we should utilize the facilities we have.
- Can we work backwards from a budget?
- Final facility design would do this.
- We should avoid over-designing a facility.
- It is easy to look at every need and try to fulfill it.
- There is economy of shared spaces with three programs in one building.
- What have the architects seen in other communities?
- Middlebury Rec. Center: multi-function facility with gym. Serves seniors with activities.
- Connectivity is a big asset.
- What value would this bring to the community?
- What is the down side if we don't do anything?
- Are these programs (Rec. Dept., Senior Center, Children's Room) vulnerable?

- What happens to these programs if we chose not to do anything?
- Is there an option of partnering with other organizations like the YMCA/YWCA?
- Which site is preferable?
 - Pilgrim Park location is more central, less congested.
 - Roundabout (at Anderson Fields location) area can be very congested.
- What can we afford?
 - We can't be a hub for everyone in the surrounding area.
 - Would support a pared down project.
 - Are funding mechanisms guaranteed?
 - Could the project be phased starting smaller and being added on to?
 - This may not be cost effective because future construction costs could increase dramatically.
- Cost of paving roads is a big challenge, future bridge costs, keeping up with financial demands is tough. This is true at a personal level too as people age.
- We can never fully afford what we want.
- We have to be able to maintain what we have for facilities.
- We have a good mix of dreaming and realism in our community.
- Pilgrim Park site is industrial. Is this proposed Community Center compatible with the truck traffic or not?
- Pilgrim Park site is disconnected from downtown now.
- Important to dream. We need new blood. We need to be able to attract families to our community.
- Need to balance dreaming with practicality.
- Anderson Field is crowded and claustrophobic.
- Pilgrim Park site has breathing room.
- How would we integrate two sites?
- Traffic going in and out of Pilgrim Park is sometimes problematic with access via residential streets.
- Bonding \$14 million (full cost).
 - \$700,000/yr. to bond.
 - Translates to a 19 cent property tax rate increase – a 10% increase.
- Could reduce tax impact due to operating cost by user fees/income.
- Operating costs to consider. Building maintenance and staffing.
- Pool, Recreation, Admin., Parks: currently has a \$400,000 annual budget for these four programs.
- \$170,000 currently generated annually in fees for pool and recreation programs to offset these costs.
- Communities are dynamic and change over time.
- This is not likely to be a near-term project.
- Childcare is a huge issue for many families.
- Anderson Field: Plus to have direct access from roundabout.
- Having everything in one place is a big advantage of the Anderson Fields site.
- How would this project benefit the three programs?
 - Children's Room is currently very limited. Could expand to do more play groups.
 - They have demand for larger programs / events that need a large gym space.
 - The Children's Room is not a childcare facility.
 - Senior Center is now maxed out at 70 people for a meal or event.
 - Meal program is expanding dramatically. Current kitchen is very inadequate.
- Could the Ice Center's existing mezzanine be used for Rec. programs?

- This site was looked at. Decision was made that it was not a fit – it is isolated from other facilities.
- Anderson Fields site is a concern for the neighborhood.
- If Rec. program is moved to Pilgrim Park, Anderson Field could languish.
- Anderson Field: visibility important to draw people.
- If roundabout used: could be one-way in to Anderson Field and a Community Center.
- Vote for not using Butler St. from a resident of the neighborhood.
- Traffic at roundabout is already high at times. How would it be with more traffic?