

# Public weighs in on senior center sustainability, use, design

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**GREENFIELD** — When it comes to the town's new senior center, sustainability, potential use by youth and the community, and the physical design of the new building are on the minds of the public.

About 30 residents of wide-ranging ages voiced their ideas at an informational meeting Wednesday night, which featured presentations by Jerry Moore, chairman of the Senior Center Building Committee, as well as Daniel Pallotta of P3 Inc., the owner's project manager.

Pallotta discussed the schematic design of the planned 12,127-square-foot building, which will be built on the former Davis Street School lot, explaining how the designers used the building program to draw up potential interior designs based on factors such as what the space will be used for and how much room exists.

He added there were some specific mandates from the mayor that had to be kept in mind during the planning process, such as keeping the community gardens on the site and including a community component in the new building, but said the committee also wants to hear what the public wants.

"We want your input, we're not trying to do this in a vacuum," he said.

Resident Jim Meehleder said he'd like to see the new building be as sustainable as possible, saying the town should "grab the low-hanging

fruit" and "get the most bang out of your buck."

Pallotta said sustainability will be a priority and features like solar energy are being considered, but the details haven't been hashed out yet. The current design also includes a rain garden to help with drainage.

"We expect the energy uses to be really, really low," he said.

Pallotta added the building will be fully wired and equipped with the latest technology, and part of the building will also be able to be closed off and used after hours.

"If there's one thing that's lacking in Greenfield, it's meeting space," he said, adding the new building will rectify that.

Patti Williams, whose Davis Street home abuts the property, said she's thrilled it's going to be a new senior center, but questioned how late the community-use portion of the building could be used at night.

"We like our sleep," she said.

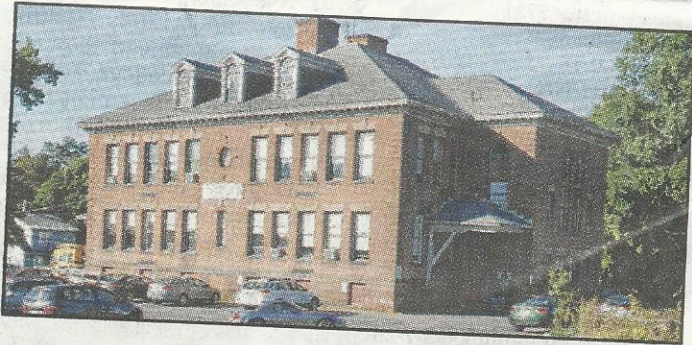
Opinions about whether the new building should also be used as a youth center varied during the meeting.

At-Large Town Councilor Penny Ricketts said she didn't like the idea, saying the new building shouldn't be the catalyst for interaction between seniors and youth.

Town Council Vice President Isaac Mass disagreed, saying it makes sense for as many uses, such as a youth center and veteran services, to be consolidated into the building as possible.

Pallotta said the current design could be changed to incorporate a youth component, but that the committee was not charged with doing that.

"Would it be the end of the world? No. It could be done," he said. "We're at a point where we need to make a decision on next steps for this project and next steps for this site."



Recorder file photo/Paul Franz

Greenfield is planning to use the property that now houses the town's school administration offices and community gardens as a new home for the town's senior center. The offices will be moved to the Greenfield Middle School.

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