AD HOC FALMOUTH SENIOR CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

FOR SERVICES FOR

FALMOUTH'S SENIOR CITIZENS

Summary of Committee's Work

Reviewed
- Falmouth's trends, reports and plans
- Studies, including other municipal studies
- Current senior citizen services and needs

Met with
- OceanView
- Cape Elizabeth, and Cumberland senior services committees
- Southern Maine Agency on Aging (SMAA)
- Independent Transportation Network (ITN)

Visited area senior centers

Surveyed residents

Held Town Stakeholders meeting

About 20% of Falmouth's residents are senior citizens.

"At 47.8 years old, Falmouth residents are older, on average, compared to those in Cumberland County, Maine, and the United States. "

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"Falmouth has the highest percentage of residents over the age of 75 in Southern Maine. Its median age increased by more than 5 years over the last 20 years. "

The Town's 2000 Comprehensive Plan recommended the Town study **"the need for a senior center to meet the social and recreational needs of the community's growing elderly population."** Vol. II, p. 77.

The Town's 2013 Comprehensive Plan recommended the creation of a community center that could "also serve senior citizens". Vol. II, p. 7.

<u>SURVEY</u>

Q: Falmouth does not have a public Senior Center. Would you use one if it were available?

Yes: 30.69%
No: 26.98%
Maybe: 32.80%
Don't know   9.52%

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Q: If the Town decided to create a Senior Center, where should it be located?

Route 1 area: 13.33%
Route 100 area: 5.19%
Town Mason/Motz Activity Center   65.93%
Ocean View Plummer building   15.56%

Q: Do you think the Town should support expanded transportation services in addition to what is currently offered in Falmouth?

Yes	31.72%
No	31.72%
Maybe	18.82%
Don't know	17.74%

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Q: Do you think the Town should expand senior citizen support services through a Town funded coordinator to help seniors navigate available resources?

Yes:	37.43%
No:	27.27%
Maybe:	22.46%
Don't know:	12.83%

What new programs or services for seniors would you suggest the Town support?

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Card/board games:	36.72%
Coffee talks	43.75%
Educational lunch and learn	72.66%
Entertainment/music	47.66%
Health screenings	47.66%
Socializing hour	44.53%

Recommended Programs, Services, Facilities, and Funding

1. Create a Senior Center in the Town's Activity Center (former Mason/Motz School).

Renovate the Activity Center's meeting room with comfortable furniture, café tables, artwork , plants, and a kitchenette—to create an inviting Senior Center where senior residents can attend programs to learn, create, serve, be entertained and socialize.

The kitchenette is an important feature of the Center, as eating together is a valued social amenity.

Having the Senior Center at the multi-generational Activity Center will be a boon not only to seniors, but to our youth and residents of all ages.

PROPOSED SENIOR CENTER LOCATION
IN TOWN ACTIVITY CENTER (MASON-MOTZ BUILDING)
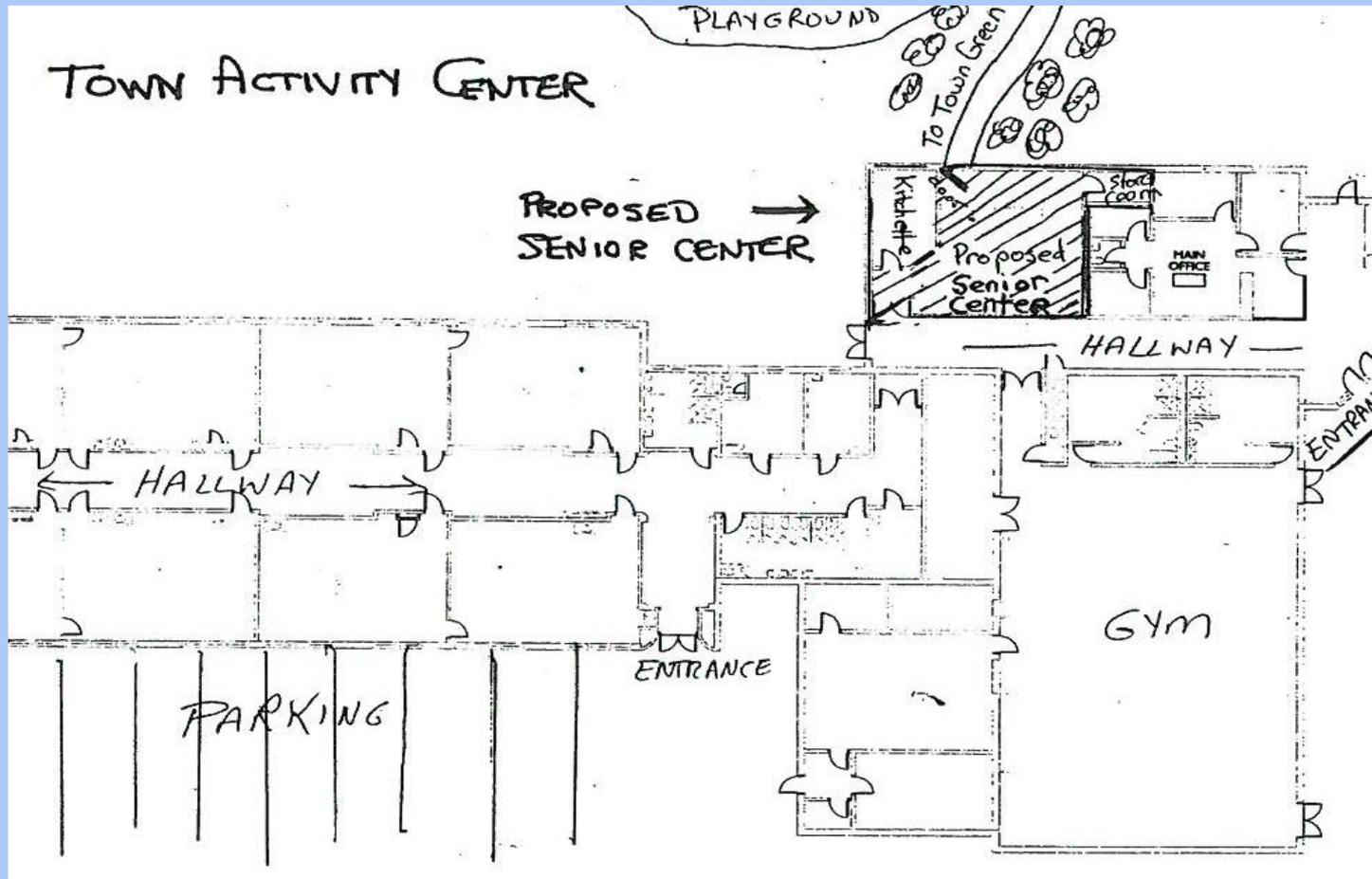
MEETING ROOM

AREA FOR KITCHEN

Hospitable Senior Center

Social Hour

Creative Arts

Create an accessible park on the Town Green next to the Senior Center with a walkway, benches, tables and shade trees.

An outdoor park extension of the Senior Center would enable seniors to enjoy outdoor socializing, programs, and walks.

The Senior Center could have a backdoor and path leading directly to the park.

Senior Center Outdoor Park on Town Green
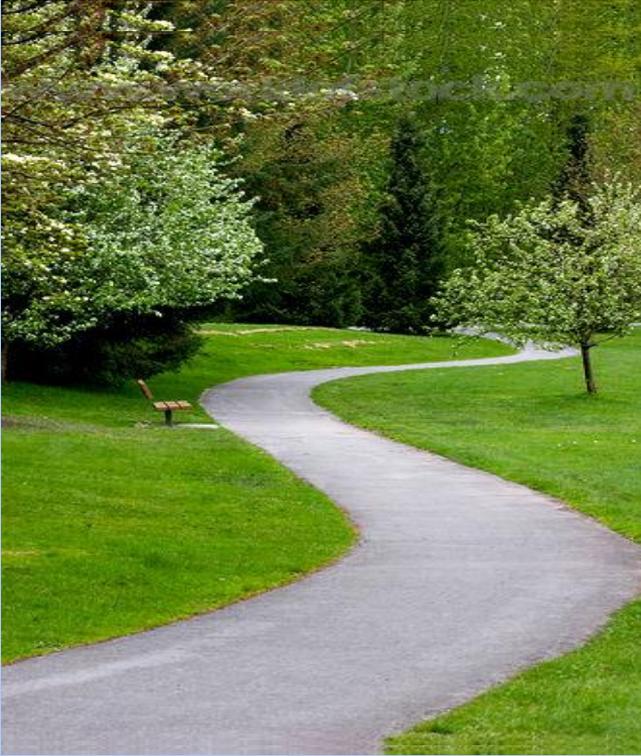
Paved walkway & shade trees


Outdoor tables & benches

Window to convert to back door

Path to Park from back door

SAMPLE PLAN OF
PROPOSED LANDSCAPING/WALKWAY/BENCHES
FOR
ACCESSIBLE PARK EXTENSION
OF THE SENIOR CENTER
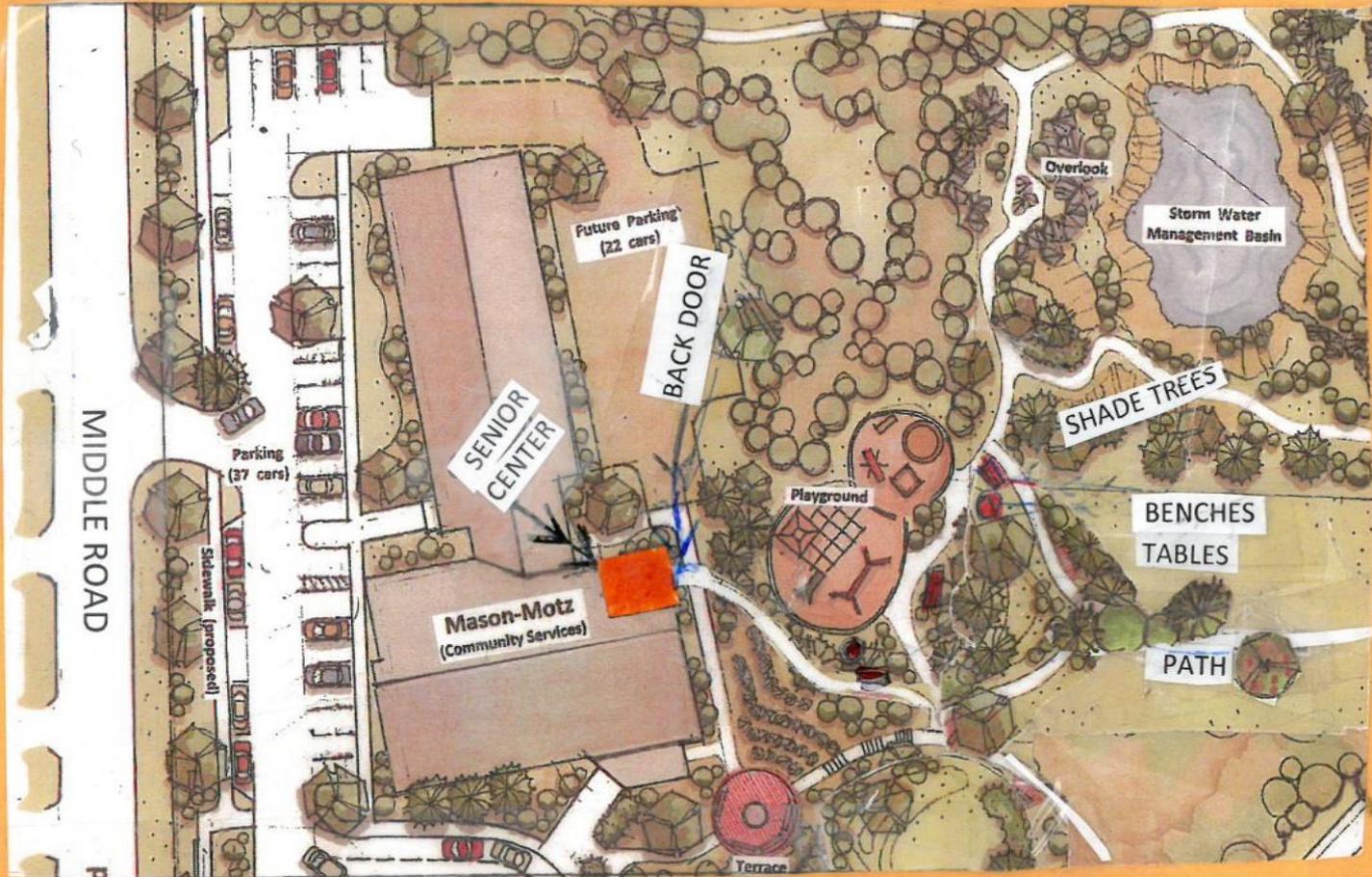
2. **Provide Programs at the Senior Center**

Consistent with the Survey, provide at the Senior Center educational lunch and learn programs, cards and board games, musical entertainment, and coffee socials.

Games

Lunch and Learn Programs

3. DEVELOP A VOLUNTEER TRANSPORTATION ASSISTANCE NETWORK

Foster a volunteer transportation network for residents who need transport to the Senior Center, medical appointments, food shopping and other basic needs, in coordination with ITN (Independent Transportation Network) or other towns.

4. **Hire a Senior Services Coordinator**

A Senior Services Coordinator would:

- Distribute information to seniors
- Contact seniors about services and programs
- Assist with Senior Center programming
- Coordinate Town senior citizen services, including volunteer transportation and assistance networks
- Help obtain grants
- Solicit community contributions

5. **Extend the term of the Committee to September 2016 to:**

- Advise Town Council on the implementation of its approved Recommendations;
- Help develop a senior citizen volunteer network;
- Research other senior resident concerns;
- Make further recommendations on:
    - ❖ Regionalized services;
    - ❖ Public-private partnerships;
    - ❖ Tax relief measures for seniors;
    - ❖ Fuel and meals assistance for seniors; and,
    - ❖ Affordable senior housing.

The Committee's five recommendations:

- *Are consistent with the Comprehensive Plan;*

- *Are consistent with the Committee's Survey;*

- *Are consistent with senior services studies; and,*

- *Have been unanimously endorsed by the Town Stakeholders.*

<u>Funding:</u>

The Committee proposes the Council allocate at least $150,000 to:

- Paint, decorate and furnish the Senior Center in the Activity Center's meeting room;

- Install a kitchenette;

- Create a backdoor from one of the windows, and a walkway to the Center's park on the Town Green;

- Fund a Senior Services Coordinator position.

The Park should be at no cost or little cost to the Town as, in 2012, OceanView offered and agreed to pay to construct a public park on the Town Green.

In 2012, OceanView entered into a contract with the Town to buy the Plummer and Lunt buildings. As part of its bid contract, it offered and agreed to pay for the construction and maintenance of a park on the land retained by the Town, called the Town Green.

Section 10 of OceanView's 2012 Contract with the Town states that OceanView will

> "*work cooperatively with the Town regarding the design of the Town Green Lot ... to include...a playground, gazebo, and a green suitable for meetings, concerts, a farmer's market and winter holiday tree and lighting ceremony, and* **OceanView shall construct and maintain the Town Green at OceanView's expense**".

Therefore, installation and maintenance of the walkway, benches, shade trees and tables should be at no cost to the Town.

Note: The park would be for everyone of all ages to use, including OceanView residents.

Proposed Implementation Strategies/Schedule:

October 2015: Council accepts SCAC's Report and Recommendations.

November 2015: Council holds public hearing and approves Recommendations, allocating funds for an implementation design, plan and budget ("Plan"), to be overseen by the Town Manager, including consultation with OceanView on funding construction of the park.

December 2015-January 2016: Town Manager presents Implementation Plan and budget, for 16/17 fiscal year.

February – April 2016: Council holds a public forum/hearing and approves or amends the Plan and budget.

May - June 2016: Town hires a Senior Services Coordinator and retains contractors to complete the Plan, and OceanView funds the work to complete construction of the park.

September 2016: Town hosts open house for the Senior Center and Park.

Modest expenditures by the Town can provide great benefits to our seniors.

Seniors have long supported:

- our youth with good schools and playgrounds, and
- recreating families with conserved land, and
- businesses with business district renewal.

Likewise, they deserve some municipal support for their needs.

CONCLUSION

We need to honor and lend assistance to the senior citizens in our Town for whom life is often lonely and difficult. We need to continue to explore ways to help those who need the help.

What a wonderful future we can see for our older population that continues to grow as we, as a Town, commit reasonable resources that acknowledge their contributions to our community.