

The Senior Center

Ashfield • Buckland • Shelburne

February 1, 2020

The Honorable Natalie Blais
The State House, 134
24 Beacon St.
Boston, MA 02133

The Honorable Adam Hinds
The State House, Room 309
24 Beacon St.
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Representative Blais and Senator Hinds,

As you are keenly aware The Senior Center primarily serving Ashfield, Buckland and Shelburne seniors has a growing senior population that needs, and desires, additional programs and services. It has outgrown the space we currently occupy on Main Street in Shelburne Falls and the Senior Center Expansion Committee has been very actively engaged in seeking a solution to the situation.

Two main achievements this year have been determining preferred site(s) and hiring professional services to guide the project. For details of presentations by Jones Whitsett Architects this fall, please see www.the-senior-center.org. The two preferred sites identified are the Masonic Building (our current location) and the Buckland Police Station.

In addition, the Senior Center Board of Directors, through Philanthropy Resources, conducted a program survey where we learned how wonderful our staff are (which we already knew) and that many people did not realize all of the programs and services and activities available for the elders in the three communities. There's an interest too in more activities for the increasing number of younger seniors in addition to our "established" seniors. The public presentations and surveys this fall have led to increased awareness and activity at our center. We don't want to lose that interest, support and momentum.

The Senior Center Foundation is also an active partner in the Expansion Project. The board has been actively preparing for a soft launch of a capital campaign. Technology has been upgraded with donor software installed and operational. There is an active donation button on the website for one-time and ongoing gifts to the Foundation.

We sincerely appreciate the work you did in securing the Commonwealth's FY2020 \$25,000 budgetary support for our project and are using the appropriation in conjunction with municipal funds and a Senior Center Foundation contribution to work with P3, Inc., Program Planning Professionals to bring our project to the next level. We request \$100,000 for FY2021 support to continue the Expansion Project. Our current emphasis is determining our ownership model which is the goal at annual town meetings this year.

We respectfully request an earmark in line item 9110-9002 as follows:

"provided further, that not less than \$100,000 shall be expended by The Senior Center Consortium representing the towns of Ashfield, Buckland and Shelburne and the western Franklin County region for

the project management and design of the renovation and expansion of The Senior Center in Shelburne Falls to meet the regional needs of the growing senior population;”

We are available to have further discussion with you and hope you will look favorably upon our request.

Respectfully yours,

Sylvia Smith
Sr. Center Expansion Committee Chair

Donna Liebl
Sr. Center Board Chair

Cathy Buntin
Sr. Center Director

Douglas Field
Ashfield COA Chair

Ellen Eller
Buckland COA Chair

Penny Spearance
Shelburne COA Chair

Copy:
Ashfield Selectboard and Finance Committee
Buckland Selectboard and Finance Committee
Shelburne Selectboard and Finance Committee
The Senior Center Foundation