

SHERMAN SENIOR CENTER

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS SEPTEMBER 29, 2025

The proposed Sherman Senior Center (“Center”) represents a significant step forward in meeting the evolving needs of our town’s residents. As we approach a referendum to secure funding for this new facility, careful planning and clear communication are essential.

This FAQ document addresses common questions about the project’s purpose, process, management, and anticipated benefits. This document will be updated as new information or questions arise.

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Definitions

The following terminology is used:

- Center** Proposed Sherman Senior Center at Colonial Park
- Committee** Sherman Senior Center Building Committee
- Project** Sherman Senior Center Building Project
- Senior Center** Existing Sherman Senior Center at Old Town Hall

Revision History

DATE	SUMMARY OF CHANGES
August 1, 2025	Initial Release
August 29, 2025	Added Committee email address, Town Forum dates, information on aging in Connecticut, links and QR code to webpages and proposed building drawings, grammar and formatting (which is not reflected as a changed FAQ)
September 29, 2025	Date changes, clarifications, new questions and statistics

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FAQ

	QUESTION	ANSWER
1.	What is this Project and how did it come about?	<p>The need for a new Senior Center was identified by engaged residents who saw that the current facility no longer provides adequate space or amenities for Sherman’s growing senior population.</p> <p>An informal group formed to research the issue, collect requirements, and explore potential locations. In May 2023, the Sherman Senior Building Committee (“Committee”) was formally established to carry the project forward.</p> <p>The new Center is envisioned as more than a replacement for the existing Senior Center: it will serve as a hub for community activities, meetings, and programs, benefiting residents of all ages.</p>
2.	How is the Project managed?	<p>The Committee manages the project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership: Chairperson, Karen Cardillo and Vice Chair, Carol Sperling • Members: Frank Barta, Tim Beatty, JodiAnn Eure, Laura Jagodzinski; Joan Laucius, Don Lowe, and Dave Seegers <p>Their mission is to thoughtfully plan, design, and oversee the development of a welcoming, accessible, and sustainable facility that meets the evolving needs of our senior population and general community. We are committed to creating a vibrant community space that fosters social connection, wellness, lifelong learning, and inclusive engagement for our valued community members and our seniors for generations to come.</p> <p>The Committee can be reached via email SSCBC39@gmail.com</p> <p>The Committee engaged professional firms, whose representatives participate in meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Architect: Maura Newell Juan AIA, Managing Principal Architect, Seventy2 Architects • Construction Manager: Charlie Van Zanten, Executive Vice President, Hawley Construction Company

3.	What is the name of the proposed building?	We are building this facility to replace our inadequate Senior Center and serve as a hub for community activities and meetings, benefiting a wide range of ages and organizations in Sherman such as Scouts, Parks and Rec, Sherman Ensemble. It will provide expanded capacity and more opportunities for community engagement, enrichment and intergenerational involvement. It is The Sherman Senior Center; naming it otherwise could imply features beyond the project's scope and budget.
4.	What is the mission of the Senior Center?	<p>The Senior Center is housed in the historic old Town Hall. The mission of the Senior Center is to improve quality of life for adults age 55 and older and disabled adults by providing a variety of programs, activities and trips for recreation, education, and health and wellness.</p> <p>Click here to access the Senior Center Page</p> <p>The FY23/24 Senior Center Annual Report can be viewed on the Senior Center Webpage. Click here to link directly to the document.</p>
5.	How is the Senior Center staffed?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinator, Suzette Berger, 30 hours per week • 2 van drivers share 25 hours per week • 2 activity assistants share 22 hours per week • Volunteers provide clerical help, office assistance, run activities and many programs are only possible through volunteers.

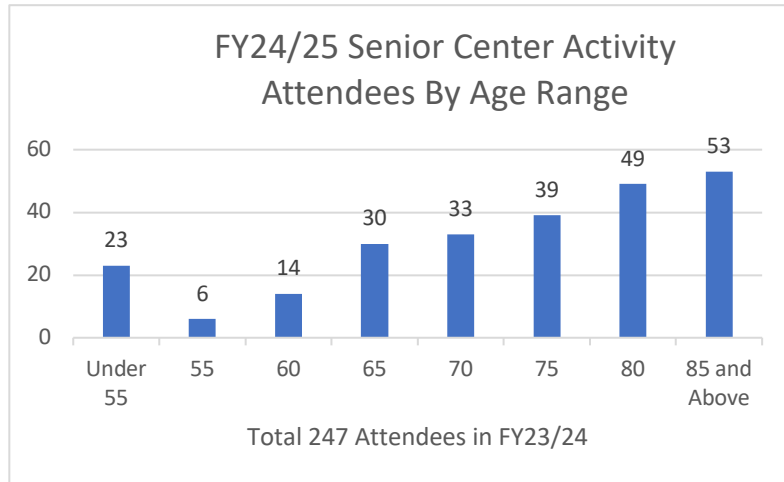
6.	What services does the Senior Center offer?	<p>The Senior Center offers Programs & Events as well as other services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fitness and Health: group exercise, chair yoga, Tai Chi, Health/Wellness programs, Blood Pressure Screenings, Health Assessments • Entertainment: Live Music, Holiday parties, Monthly Birthday Party, Trips (movies, shows, etc.) • Classes and Games: computer, crafts, brain games, Bingo Wii Bowling, Cornhole, Bridge Club, Pinochle Club • Shopping: Weekly/Monthly trips to Sherman town center, New Milford, Danbury • Events: Breakfast at American Pie, Weekly Lunch, Guest Speakers, Intergenerational programs with the Sherman School • Services: appointments for Tech Help and Probate Judge, cooling and warming center, educational forums, advocacy, transportation for all trips, most events and other instances, referral services, guest speakers
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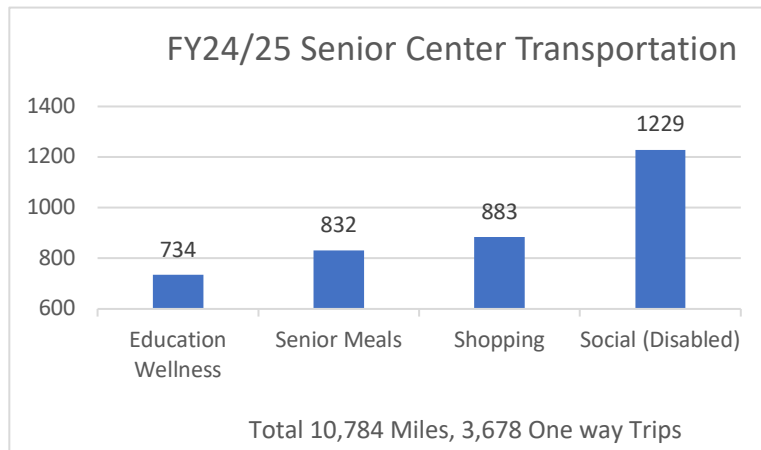
How well is the Senior Center attended?

The Senior Center is well attended. Stats for last fiscal year include:

- 3-5 activities offered each day Monday thru Friday
- 25-35 clients attend per day, with Wednesday the busiest averaging 41 clients
- Annual attendance was over 6,700 which is an 8% increase from prior fiscal year
- 247 individuals attended activities, an 8% increase



- 45% of attendees were over the age of 80 (up 4%); and may they require accommodation in transportation, registration and program design
- Transportation vehicles logged 10,784 miles, 3,678 one-way trips (up 8%)



- 1,631 meals were provided through weekly lunch and twice weekly Senior Dine discounted breakfast at American Pie. Increase of 23%.

8.	What's wrong with the current Senior Center?	<p>Inadequate parking on site: There are 2 handicap and 5 regular designated spots which are shared with the Historical Society and Social Services. Inconvenient parking leads to seniors leaving and despite a crosswalk on RT 37, distracted driving makes it dangerous for staff, volunteers and clients to cross the road. The single lane driveway can be blocked by emergency vehicles, forcing seniors to walk down the road to meet caregivers or causing delay in their departures.</p> <p>Inadequate space: There are only two bathrooms, no private space for confidential services such as health screenings or counseling, and storage space is in the attic which is accessed via a crawl space in Coordinator's office. There is no outdoor activity space. Unlike other Senior Centers, particularly during Covid, Sherman can not offer outdoor programs such as yoga which today are provided via trips.</p> <p>Unprofessional environment: The single office is inaccessible to seniors due to steep stairs to access it, resulting in confidential conversations occurring in open spaces that can be overhead.</p>
9.	Why do we need a new Senior Center now?	<p>Growing Senior Population: Sherman's senior population is increasing, in line with national and local trends (See FAQ #10). The Center needs to accommodate more people now and in the future. As seniors live longer and more independently demand for social, wellness, and support services is higher than ever.</p> <p>Health, Wellness, and Social Connection: The Center plays a critical role in preventing isolation, which is linked to physical and mental health issues. Access to fitness classes, nutrition programs, mental health support, and health screenings can reduce emergency services and long-term healthcare costs.</p> <p>Community Value: A vibrant senior center enhances Sherman's quality of life, attracting families and retirees. It fosters intergenerational engagement, making it a true community asset.</p>

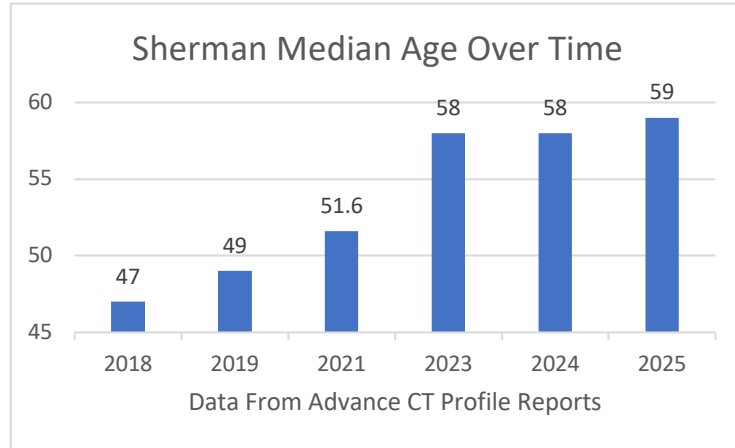
10.

What is the senior population of Sherman?

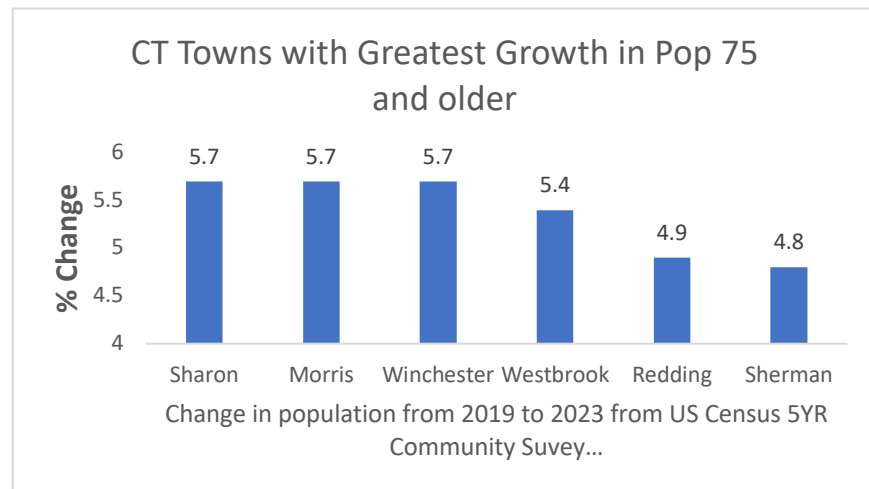
Population 60 years or older

- 53.7% of Sherman households
- 33% of Sherman population; 25% of Connecticut population

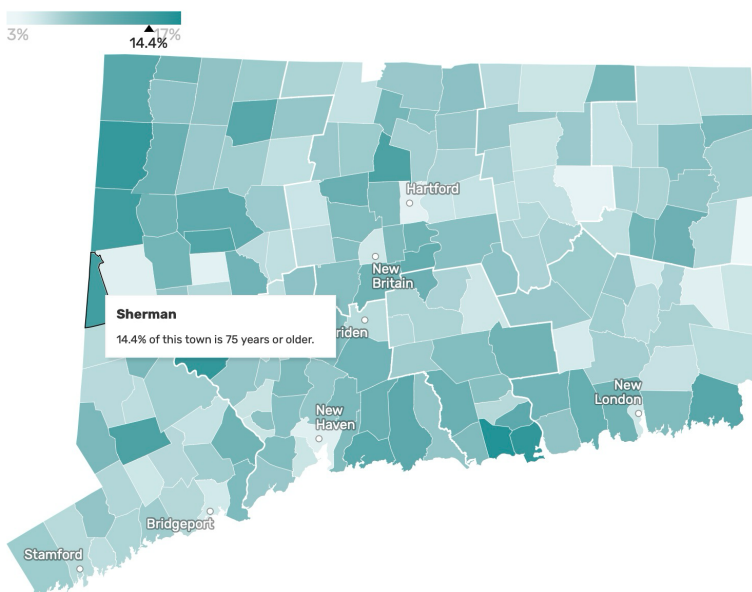
Median Age of Sherman is 59, and Connecticut is 41



According to the CT Insider Magazine August 10, 2025 issue, Sherman is the 6th fastest aging town with over half the towns experiencing growth in their population of residents 75 and older between 2019 and 2023. [ctinsider.com](https://www.ctinsider.com)



Overall, the older adult population (75 years or older) is greatest around the northwestern border and the eastern coast of the state. CT overall is ~8%.

		<p>Where do Connecticut's older adults live?</p> <p>Share of the population that is 75 years old or older, by town.</p>  <p>Map: Victoria Stavish • Source: U.S. Census Bureau</p>
11.	<p>What gaps will the Center fill?</p>	<p>A modern center will offer concurrent activities, diverse programming such as tech education, intergenerational activities, caregiver support, and legal aid clinics. It will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide ample, convenient, and safe parking with emergency service access • Ensure privacy for confidential conversations • Provide patio space for convening in good weather and outdoor programs such as yoga, tai chi and music, • Feature an expanded kitchen for events. <p>The Center will include a large meeting room to seat 60 people, adaptable meeting rooms for concurrent activities, efficient storage solutions, and sufficient bathrooms to support all occupants.</p>

12.	Where will the Center be located?	<p>Over a dozen locations were considered including Volunteer Field, the Town Green in front of Mallory Town Hall, and what used to be the Schneckenberg house in the historic district.</p> <p>The southwestern corner of Colonial Field was chosen as an ideal location. The location:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Overlooks the Colonial Field soccer fields and looks out over the community gardens• Offers ample parking, which is crucial for accommodating visitors and staff, as well as provides improved parking for the ball fields• Is on Town owned land, simplifying logistics and reducing costs• Has satisfactory topography for construction• Is tucked away from the highway noise• Is close enough to provide access to water for the town gardens. <p>The proposed building drawings (Elevation, Interior, Master, Location) can be viewed on the Senior Center Building Committee Webpage under Files and Documents.</p>										
13.	Can you describe the building?	<p>The conceptual design features a multi-functional 4250 square foot building with a 600 square foot portico and 2 large outdoor patios. The building is one story, slab on grade, super insulated, highly energy efficient and will have a backup generator. There are 5 handicap and 11 regular spaces in front of the building with an additional 18 spaces along the soccer field.</p> <p>And inside:</p> <table><tr><td>Vestibule</td><td>Large meeting room/event space</td></tr><tr><td>Waiting Area</td><td>3 Activity rooms</td></tr><tr><td>Reception Desk</td><td>2 Private offices</td></tr><tr><td>Expanded Kitchen</td><td>Storage in all offices and rooms</td></tr><tr><td>3 Bathrooms</td><td>Unfinished attic for storage, accessed via staircase</td></tr></table> <p>The proposed building drawings (Elevation, Interior, Master, Location) can be viewed on the Senior Center Building Committee Webpage under Files and Documents.</p>	Vestibule	Large meeting room/event space	Waiting Area	3 Activity rooms	Reception Desk	2 Private offices	Expanded Kitchen	Storage in all offices and rooms	3 Bathrooms	Unfinished attic for storage, accessed via staircase
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14.	Who is providing professional services?	<p>Architecture:</p> <p><u>Services:</u> Design, construction documents, incorporating professional services for mechanical, electrical and plumbing, and serving as the owner’s representative during construction to help ensure that the project meets the desired standards.</p> <p><u>Selection:</u> The Committee sent out a Request For Information and received responses from several architectural firms. After interviewing four firms, the Committee selected Seventy2 Architects for their experience, qualifications, creativity & innovation, project management, references, communications, fees, location and value.</p> <p><u>Seventy2 Architects</u>, locally based in Danbury and established in 2005, takes a hands-on approach. The firm's principals work directly on the project, and their location makes them conveniently accessible for meetings, town forums, and for on-site visits.</p> <p>Construction:</p> <p><u>Method:</u> The Committee decided to engage a Construction Manager instead of a general contractor to help reduce construction costs and improve the schedule and quality of work.</p> <p><u>Services:</u> Manage safe and efficient construction respectful of budget and timeline, oversee site work and subcontractors, and suggest opportunities for value engineering.</p> <p><u>Selection:</u> The Committee interviewed all 3 respondents to a Request for Proposal. The Committee selected Hawley Construction Company, for their experience, project management, references, fees, location, schedule, safety, insurances, bonding and value.</p> <p><u>Hawley Construction Company</u>, established in 1969, is also locally based and takes a hands-on approach. The firm's principals work directly on the project, and their location makes them conveniently accessible for meetings, town forums, and on-site visits. Additionally, Hawley successfully worked with the Town of Sherman on Mallory Town Hall, Sherman Playhouse and at the Public Works Facility.</p>
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15.	What are the key benefits of the Center?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides modern, accessible space and serves as a hub for community activities, meetings, and programs, benefiting residents of all ages • Expanded access to health, wellness and social connections can help reduce emergency services and long-term healthcare costs • Resolves the existing shortcomings with programming space, storage limitations, privacy, parking, and pedestrian and automobile access • Serves as a flexible venue for meetings, events, and activities, benefiting a wide spectrum of residents. • The spacious patio can be used most of the year for a wide variety of outdoor activities. Residents can enjoy a quiet spot to read or unwind, while the Center can host group fitness sessions. The Art Commission may organize painting workshops or hold seasonal art exhibits and sales here. Additionally, the Chamber Ensemble could present intimate concerts, receptions, or fundraising events. With its proximity to the warming kitchen, the patio is also ideal for catered occasions such as musical evenings, community meals, or other social gatherings. • Funding the Center is an investment in Sherman's future, ensuring the town remains welcoming and vibrant for generations to come, making it a true community asset
16.	Why is Social Services staying in its current location?	<p>Maintaining privacy in Social Services is crucial due to the sensitive nature of its work. By ensuring a private working environment, Social Services can protect the confidentiality of its clients and provide a safe space for individuals to seek help. Staying in the existing building can allow these services to expand their operations without the need for physical relocation or building expansion.</p>

17.	What is the timeline for the project?	<table><tr><td colspan="2">Planning Phase</td></tr><tr><td>May 2023</td><td>Committee Formed</td></tr><tr><td>Sep 2023</td><td>Interview architects</td></tr><tr><td>Feb 21st</td><td>Town Meeting to approve up to \$76,225 for pre-referendum Architectural Services</td></tr><tr><td>Feb 2024</td><td>Engaged Seventy2 Architects</td></tr><tr><td colspan="2">Design and Consultation Phase</td></tr><tr><td>Aug 2024</td><td>Conceptual design</td></tr><tr><td>Oct 2024</td><td>Cost Estimates (General Contractor Model)</td></tr><tr><td>Mar 2025</td><td>RFP for Construction Management</td></tr><tr><td>May 2025</td><td>Interview construction firms</td></tr><tr><td>June 14th</td><td>Town Meeting to approve up to \$15,000 for pre-referendum Construction Management Services</td></tr><tr><td>Jun 2025</td><td>Engaged Hawley Construction Company</td></tr><tr><td>Aug 2025</td><td>Landing Page on Town Website</td></tr><tr><td>Aug/Sep 2025</td><td>Project cost, construction timeline and architectural drawings available</td></tr><tr><td>Sep, Oct, Nov</td><td>Town Forums, see FAQ#19 for details</td></tr><tr><td>Nov 22</td><td>Town Meeting</td></tr><tr><td>Dec 6</td><td>Town Referendum</td></tr><tr><td colspan="2">Construction Phase</td></tr><tr><td>5 months</td><td>Construction drawings, engineering</td></tr><tr><td>12 months</td><td>Construction</td></tr></table>	Planning Phase		May 2023	Committee Formed	Sep 2023	Interview architects	Feb 21st	Town Meeting to approve up to \$76,225 for pre-referendum Architectural Services	Feb 2024	Engaged Seventy2 Architects	Design and Consultation Phase		Aug 2024	Conceptual design	Oct 2024	Cost Estimates (General Contractor Model)	Mar 2025	RFP for Construction Management	May 2025	Interview construction firms	June 14th	Town Meeting to approve up to \$15,000 for pre-referendum Construction Management Services	Jun 2025	Engaged Hawley Construction Company	Aug 2025	Landing Page on Town Website	Aug/Sep 2025	Project cost, construction timeline and architectural drawings available	Sep, Oct, Nov	Town Forums, see FAQ#19 for details	Nov 22	Town Meeting	Dec 6	Town Referendum	Construction Phase		5 months	Construction drawings, engineering	12 months	Construction
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18.	What is the cost of the project?	<p>The committee targeted a \$3.5 million budget for the building. Initial estimates were higher, so the Committee, Architect, and Construction Manager identified areas to reduce costs including reducing port cohere width and grading in place of a retaining wall.</p> <div><table><thead><tr><th>Category</th><th>Amount</th><th>Percentage</th><th>Details</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>Building</td><td>\$2.8M</td><td>65%</td><td>includes manadatory prevailing wage</td></tr><tr><td>Site</td><td>\$772K</td><td>18%</td><td>Septic, grading, paving, water</td></tr><tr><td>Soft Costs</td><td>\$500K</td><td>12%</td><td>Fees, furniture, appliances</td></tr><tr><td>Owner Contingency</td><td>\$228K</td><td>5%</td><td>Unexpected conditions and changes</td></tr></tbody></table></div> <p>The project will be funded by the Town and private donations as well. A generous donation of nearly \$450,000 has already been received.</p>	Category	Amount	Percentage	Details	Building	\$2.8M	65%	includes manadatory prevailing wage	Site	\$772K	18%	Septic, grading, paving, water	Soft Costs	\$500K	12%	Fees, furniture, appliances	Owner Contingency	\$228K	5%	Unexpected conditions and changes
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19.	How can I donate to the project?	<p>Donations are welcome and greatly appreciated. Contact the First Selectman’s office. Don can be reached at (860) 355-1139 or dlowe@shermanct.gov</p>																				
20.	What will I be voting on, in the December referendum?	<p>The language for the referendum vote is not finalized; however, it expected that the vote will be to appropriate Town money for the building; not approve the design. The design is a vision and may change as community feedback is addressed and construction drawings completed.</p>																				
21.	What will become of the Old Town Hall	<p>It will continue to be utilized by social services and will also be utilized by Park and rec. The Old Town hall will continue to serve the public for groups, gatherings, and town entities in many of the same ways that it does today.</p>																				

22.	How is energy conservation being considered?	<p>The Center will incorporate the latest building science as we consider not only the construction cost, but the lifetime cost of this building. Thermal insulation along with high efficiency mechanical units will have the largest impact on a building's carbon footprint and long-term utility costs. The building will meet or exceed requirements of the International Energy Efficiency Code and Connecticut State Building Code. For example:</p> <p>Wood Trusses will be used to frame walls and roof. Wood is a renewable resource and uses less energy in the manufacturing, transportation and extraction processes compared to other building materials.</p> <p>TruExterior siding uses over 70% recycled materials like polymers and fly ash.</p> <p>Windows on the building will be thermally broken, double pane, insulated windows with Low E2 coating. By incorporating a thermal break into the window frame, the windows minimize heat transfer, keeping interiors cooler in summer and warmer in winter. Windows will be flashed and installed using the latest air barrier technology for energy efficiency and occupant comfort.</p> <p>Thermal Insulation will allow for more efficient long-term function of the building.</p> <p>Electric heat pumps reduce carbon emissions and energy consumption by transferring heat rather than generating it.</p> <p>LED lighting will be used throughout, at the interior and exterior of the building, in convenience, aesthetic, and emergency fixtures.</p> <p>Plumbing: High Efficiency Fixtures to be installed at each location.</p> <p>Paint: Interior and Exterior paint can be low VOC.</p> <p>Incentive rebates vary for solar panel technology and are subject to changes with government administrations and priorities. The payback timeline can be determined based on the cost of installation and the utility costs for a given building. We will investigate the financial viability of solar panels on the roof of this building and can design the roof trusses to accommodate future panels if they are not a good fit for the budget at this time.</p>
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23.	Will you come back asking for more money after the referendum?	We are committed to stay within our budget We allocated ~\$200,000 for unexpected conditions and changes, and if that amount is not sufficient after receiving construction bids we will look to further reduce features.																								
24.	Where can I get information on the project?	<p>Securing approval at a town referendum depends heavily on transparent communication and broad-based support. The following are available for more info:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Town Website: The Senior Center home page FAQs Document: Address common questions about the project’s purpose, process, management, and anticipated benefits. Updated as new information or questions arise.Public Information Sessions: Open forums for the community to view designs, plans, ask questions, and provide feedback. We chose different days and times to fit various schedules.<table><tr><th>DATE</th><th>DAY</th><th>TIME</th><th>LOCATION</th></tr><tr><td>September 21</td><td>Sunday</td><td>2 - 3 PM</td><td>Charter Hall</td></tr><tr><td>October 25</td><td>Saturday</td><td>10- 11 AM</td><td>Town Hall</td></tr><tr><td>October 29</td><td>Wednesday</td><td>7 PM</td><td>Zoom only</td></tr><tr><td>October 30</td><td>Thursday</td><td>Noon</td><td>Senior Center</td></tr><tr><td>November 16</td><td>Sunday</td><td>2 - 3 PM</td><td>Charter Hall</td></tr></table>Town Meeting: November 22 Saturday 10 AM Mallory Town HallNewspaper: Selectman’s monthly columnSocial Media: FacebookEmail the Committee: SSCCBC39@gmail.com	DATE	DAY	TIME	LOCATION	September 21	Sunday	2 - 3 PM	Charter Hall	October 25	Saturday	10- 11 AM	Town Hall	October 29	Wednesday	7 PM	Zoom only	October 30	Thursday	Noon	Senior Center	November 16	Sunday	2 - 3 PM	Charter Hall
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