

Stamford Community Building Group Meeting

May 22, 2018

Attendees: Pat, Caroline, Sara, Gina, Susan, Victoria, Bill, Carolyn B. Carolyn Brooks, Helen, Steven

Reaffirmation of Primary Goals

In talks with community members regarding the location and function of a potential community gathering space, the original goals of the project have been reaffirmed. They are:

1. Create a “town center” environment, visible from Route 8, that identifies Stamford as an attractive, active community that values its residents, history, and natural beauty.
2. Create an outdoor, covered gathering space that encourages and accommodates a wide variety of school and community uses and is functionally and aesthetically integrated with the natural and structural elements of the entire property.

Review of Input Gathered from Community Members

The first approach to meeting the goals that was explored during SCBG meetings and at Green-Up Day was to meet both project goals using the open space in front of the school. Discussions with community members led to consideration of a second option that would meet both goals using space in front of the school and space on the side and/or back of the school (in the area of the pre-school playground and the basketball court). The general idea is to create an attractive, welcoming hardscape with seating in front of the school for use by students and community members both during and outside of school hours. The landscape would include a large sign identifying the town, and allow for temporary signs to announce events. The space on the side/back of the school building would be visually integrated with the landscape in front of the school and would accommodate the covered structure. The pros and cons of this second option include the following:

PROS

- A larger space around the structure would accommodate larger crowds at events
- A larger space would allow for concurrent events (e.g., concert, bbq, play areas for kids)
- The visual integration of the structure with the community garden, playground, and basketball court may encourage greater use of those spaces
- The hardscape, seating area, and signage in front of the school could be stage one of the overall project and accomplished in a relatively short period of time
- With more space available, the structure could be scaled as needed to accommodate planned use
- River access could eventually become part of the integrated whole
- The spaces to the side and back of the school offer grand views of the mountain range

- The structure could be accessed from the school without crossing the driveway and is further from the traffic on Rt 8
- A structure further from Rt 8 would be less subject to vandalism by passers-by

CONS

- A structure in the playground area could only be used by the school community during school hours
- A setback variance from the fence along the property border may be needed

General comments regarding the project included the following:

- A remnant of the old school building could be incorporated into a modern landscape in front of the school
- A structure that provides children with shade could attract grant funding
- Mt Anthony Middle School has a large outdoor classroom that could inform the structure design
- Presenting the selectboard with more than one option is a good idea

Next Steps

Attempts to encourage input from as many community members as possible will continue. A sign that briefly describes the project and encourages people to read about it on the unofficial town website and to attend the next SCBG meeting will be posted at the Community Tag Sale (Pat and Sara). A questionnaire about the project will be drafted (Pat) and distributed, perhaps during recycling center hours, in an effort to gather community input that would be valuable for use in the presentation to the selectboard and in proposals to funding agencies. The presentation for the selectboard is targeted for early July. Preparation for the presentation will be an agenda item at the next meeting.

**The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, June 12, 6 pm, at the school.
All are welcome.**