



# Senior Center Building Project



VOLUME 1

To the Residents of Wilmington,

The Buzzell School was built in 1935. At the time, it opened as a state-of-the-art building. It was a very proud moment for the Town of Wilmington, and as such, the building was named after Daniel T. Buzzell. Later, the school was shuttered as the community's needs grew larger than the building. The Town continued to keep the building in operational shape for future uses. That future use came in 1986 when community members donated their time and supplies to refurbish and reopen the building as the Buzzell Senior Center. The 8,300 square foot building has been honorably serving the Town's Seniors for over 30 years. The Senior Center has provided a necessary location for the community's seniors to enjoy a myriad of activities from movement classes, such as Zumba and Tai Chi, to art groups encompassing everything from knitting to painting; while also offering community wide social events such as lunch and dinner events, theater productions and musical events. The Senior Center has continually held steadfast to their motto: "Better Together," by creating an environment that promotes social, physical, and emotional well-being to a population so often under served. The Department of Elderly Services provides programs and services that continue to evolve. Unfortunately, the size and age of the Buzzell Senior Center is no longer adequate to accommodate the programmatic and spatial needs of the growing Senior community in the Town of Wilmington.



In 2018, the Town of Wilmington contracted the Harriman Group to conduct a review of the Town's Municipal and Education facilities and develop a Facilities Master Plan. The Facilities Master Plan identified physical deficiencies of the current Buzzell Senior Center building that prevent the Department of Elderly Services from serving the community to the best of their desire and ability. These deficiencies include no dedicated administrative offices, no sprinkler system, asbestos in the walls, inadequate bathroom facilities, an unusable basement, lack of compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, inadequate parking, and an HVAC that is outdated. The size of the building was also found to be just over half the size of what is needed for the current and projected Senior population of Wilmington.

The 2020 Covid-19 pandemic further highlighted many of the building's deficiencies, but also highlighted how necessary a Senior Center is to support the lives of seniors. The Department of Elderly Services quickly adjusted how it serves the community so that the most vulnerable residents continued to receive as many services as possible. This incredible effort continued to highlight the many ways that the Senior Center supports the community.

At the June 2020 Annual Town Meeting, residents voted overwhelmingly to appropriate \$650,000 to move the project forward with a Feasibility Study and Schematic Design. The Feasibility Study is the phase we are currently in. It will explore site locations, programming needs, space needs and parking

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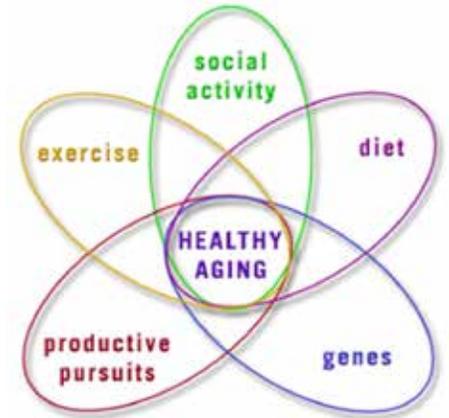
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## Town of Wilmington Population Growth and the relationship to the need for a new Senior Center

Referencing research and projections from the UMass Donahue Institute and the Metropolitan Area Planning Council, the Senior population in the Town of Wilmington is expected to grow by over 200% by 2030 from 2010 levels. More recent Town Census data (2018), supports this projection.

Wilmington has an aging population. Approximately 30% of the adult population of Wilmington is over the age of 60. When the Buzzell Senior Center opened in 1986, that number was less than 1%. Based on the 2018 Town Census, there are currently 5,411 Seniors in the Town of Wilmington, with over 2,000 registered at the Senior Center. In 2019, 28,500 visits to the Senior Center were logged in.



Pre-pandemic, there were many programmatic needs left unmet by the Buzzell Senior Center due to lack of space or necessary improvements that were cost prohibitive.

Some programs have had to be canceled due to lack of space, such as:

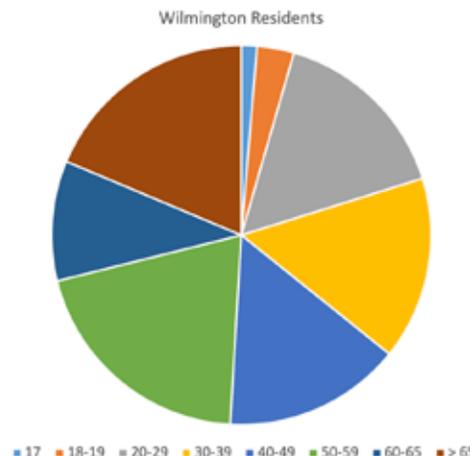
- Winchester Hospital Educational Seminars
- Veteran Luncheons
- Intergenerational programs

Other beneficial programs are unable to be scheduled in the Buzzell Senior Center at all and must be scheduled in the nearby 4th of July Building, which is ineffective for a facility which should be all encompassing for our Seniors.

Additionally, there are no dedicated spaces for: Educational seminars, caregiver support group, a computer room with updated equipment, a library and quiet space, exercise equipment, exercise classes, sewing, creative arts, games, ceramics billiards, and bocce, among others.

### Wilmington Age Demographics

• Wilmington data from 2018 Town Census



(as of 11/06/19)		
Age Range Wilmington Residents		
<17	0	0.0% < no data available
17-19	249	1.3%
18-19	589	3.1%
20-29	2940	15.7%
30-39	2924	15.6%
40-49	2840	15.2%
50-59	3781	20.2%
60-65	1916	10.2%
>65	3495	18.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>18734</b>	

