

Chelsea Planning Commission

5/9/19  
Minutes

Town Library  
7:00 p.m.

**Members Present:** Dickson Corbett, Susan Hardin, Neil Kennedy, Ed Kuban

**Public Present:** Jessica Richter (TRORC), Samantha Allen

**Called to order at 7:05 p.m.**

1. **Consultation with TRORC.** Jessica Richter from the regional planning commission consulted with us about upcoming planning needs. The town plan does not need to be revised until 2023. At present, all of the required plan elements are met, but when it comes time for another revision the regional planning commission will be looking for the following updates: (1) more discussion about the plan for utilities and facilities in terms of prioritizing future uses and budgeting for the costs of repairs and buildings; (2) more discussion about transportation issues including access to rail and air travel; (3) updated discussion on education and adult basic education opportunities in town; (4) expanded promotion of affordable housing including accessory dwelling units; (5) expanded discussion about agriculture including value-added products; and (6) expanded discussion of the Hazard Mitigation Plan.

Additional discussion surrounded the possibility of scheduling an appointment with a TRORC consultant around the issue of planning for a creative economy. Such discussions have occurred in other towns and have been productive. Given the successes of North Common Arts, the First Branch Collaborative, the summer Arts Festival, the barn quilts, SafeArt, and other local community endeavors, this may be a discussion worth pursuing.

Additional discussion involved upcoming training opportunities. It was recommended that TRORC make these opportunities known to the selectboard as well as some of the opportunities fit well within their responsibilities.

2. **Samantha Allen Presentation.** Samantha Allen and Donny Wilcox are seeking to salvage exercise equipment that is currently stored within the school. At present, there is a need for storage space for the equipment and there is long-term interest in finding a new home for a community gym. Several alternatives were discussed. If anyone has storage room in their barn in the meantime they are encouraged to contact Samantha Allen. A letter discussing the issue was received for inclusion with the minutes.

3. **Grocery Store Project Update.** A generous grant from the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board's Rural Economic Development Initiative (REDI) program has allowed a consultant to assist some Chelsea residents with supporting expanded local grocery options. A marketing survey is being conducted to assist in that effort. Paper surveys are available at the Chelsea Public Library. Substantial assistance as well has been provided by the Vermont Council on Rural Development, the Green Mountain Economic Development Corporation, and the Preservation Trust of Vermont.

4. **Other Business.** Susan Hardin raised concerns about water quality at the Riverside apartments.

**Adjourned at 8:45 p.m.**

Dear School Board Members,

On behalf of the Chelsea Recreational Committee, I am writing to you all with the interest of developing a community Fitness Center. I would like to propose a few suggestions on how this idea could successfully develop into a reality.

Currently the Chelsea Recreational Committee offers two exercise classes, both of which are advertised as all inclusive opportunities for local and surrounding townspeople to exercise together. Members of Chelsea as well as residents from Tunbridge, Washington and other surrounding towns have participated in these classes. We are also currently in the process of trying to develop an additional class to continue expanding this wonderful opportunity for community members to gather and better their physical health. While there has been a great turnout of new and return members participating in these events, there still remains a large portion of the community looking for more opportunities to be physically active.

My proposal to you all is to build on the enthusiasm of the members in our town and in surrounding towns by developing a Fitness Center. The equipment for this exercise space will be donated by Donny Wilcox; his variety of exercise equipment is currently located in the gymnasium at the school. The Recreational Committee has been hard at work researching possible locations for this idea. After many good discussions, many members are excited at the possibility of utilizing a space at the Chelsea School. One proposal is to convert the current music room or another room in the school building into a Fitness Center. The music room is an ideal space as it is separate from the academic portion of the school. This room is also conveniently located next to two locker rooms and water fountains, all of which are necessities for a well-run fitness space. Another room that was discussed was the Home Economics room. This room has access to a main door that is not connected to the main building. It is separate from the main area of the building. It also can stay as a classroom for the Health Teacher to use to teach health to the students in the school.

Within this space, the current thought is to offer fitness courses as well as free time for members to utilize all of the equipment. Fitness courses would be lead by educated, trained staff, and would address a variety of fitness levels, offering everything from introductory courses to advanced classes. Our hope is to attract as many members as possible, this all-inclusive space promoting health and wellbeing in a fun, positive environment.

We understand such a transition would not likely be feasible during this school year, but possibly throughout the summer months the conversion could be possible. We would love to discuss this possibility with you all further and would appreciate any input and ideas you may have to contribute.

We are very excited at the possibility of bringing local and nearby community members together to exercise. This opportunity would not only provide more options for people to better their physical health, but it would also bring many individuals together in a fun, positive, healthy way.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

### **Executive Summary:**

This proposal to the Chelsea Tunbridge School Board members focuses on developing a community wide fitness center located in the Chelsea Public School. This fitness center would be equipped with weights, treadmill, elliptical, rowing machine, bench press, stationary bike, and other equipment. The core purpose for this fitness area is to provide the students, staff members, and community members of Chelsea, Tunbridge, and other surrounding towns an opportunity to have a local facility to exercise and have training opportunities.

### **Background Information**

In 2006, Steve Kamen, a previous teacher at Chelsea Public School, provided a weightlifting class to high school students. This class was the beginning stage of the weight room being on the stage in the gym at the Chelsea Public School. Through the years, Donny Wilcox, staff members in the school, the community members in the town of Chelsea and students have donated their time and money to build upon the weight room to make it accessible to all among the communities. Over the past century, many staff members, students, sports teams, and community members have used the weight room to better their personal health.

Currently the weight room is not allowed to be used due to legal purposes. The community members who have had access to the weight room have been informed how all the equipment will need to be removed by the end of the school year 2018-2019. This is due to the weight room being made back into a stage. The community members still use the gym at the Chelsea School twice a week to do exercise classes. These classes target whole body workouts, strength and conditioning classes as well. Since the members who use the gym are unable to utilize the weight room during these workouts, they have had to provide their own personal equipment. This is a disadvantage to many other community members because of the limited equipment that is being offered. It also does not appeal to the public who is looking to begin exercising. In order to make this change, we need to have a space where the public can utilize both the weight room area and the gym.

### **Specialty Programs and Project Description:**

- Health Classroom for middle school students who attend Chelsea Public School and Tunbridge Elementary
- Mindset and Nutrition Courses for students and community members of all ages
- Strength and Conditioning classes
- Boot Camp classes
- Personal Trainer Opportunity
- Speciality classes: aerobics, weight lifting, yoga
- Crossfit Classes
- Social Environment for all

**Financial Summary:**

When the public wants to use the gym and the weight room, they fill out the Facility Use form explaining their need for the space. Since the organization that is using the space is under the Chelsea Recreation Department, the school does not require a payment to utilize the space. The members of the Chelsea community who utilize the weight room have an understanding of the weight room closure. With that being said, if it is able to be transferred to another location in the school, the members of the town are willing to negotiate a plan to start a payment plan for the fitness center if necessary.

The Chelsea Recreation Department is also applying for grants to fund this opportunity. If grant money is received, the hope is to replace and add new equipment for the fitness center. In addition, the money can be used towards health classes for the town, instructor fees for special classes, and other specific courses.

**Closing Section:**

The Chelsea Recreation Department and community members of Chelsea and surrounding towns are hopeful in continuing this weight room on the school grounds of the Chelsea Public School. There are many benefits for keeping this room alive and going not only for the school members but for the community members as well.

Karen Payne

P.E. Teacher at Chelsea Public School K-8th

Re: An Additional Workout Room

**Benefits:**

I see a benefit to having a workout room as a way of bringing other adults into the school during the day which can increase partnerships with community members. It shows students that parents value education. Overall having more volunteers in the school shows a sense of pride and support for the school and a stronger sense of togetherness.

A benefit to having a workout room for students and community members is that youth see that adults value fitness and health.

Another benefit is that the workout room could be used as a classroom to teach students about proper fitness and correct techniques. The workout room could help students maintain a healthy weight, help them to prevent injury, increase strength and endurance, it can be a time to listen to music and relax or a time to socialize in a healthy manner. Exercise helps deal with stress as well as improve physical condition.

If community members are in the school immediately after school, they could potentially help with supervision. There could be an after school workout program.

**Disadvantages/considerations:**

If the workout room is in the current music room, there will be more isolation of me. The music teacher and myself sometimes discuss solutions to integration of programs or student learning. As the Health teacher located in the main building, I am able to have quick conversations with other middle school teachers. Being located in the main building allows me to socialize or follow-up with students in between periods.

There would have to be a separation of equipment rooms so the physical education equipment purchased for students doesn't get used. Having equipment get worn out, missing, or broken would take away from the students.

I suggest walking through the logistics of the idea prior to any decision.

# Chelsea Rec Committee Survey

17 responses

## What would you like to see from the Chelsea Rec Committee?

17 responses

More events in town

Local place to workout

More family activities that bring the community together.

A community fitness center

more community involvement from all ages. It would be great to collaborate with other local businesses.

More family events

A safe welcoming environment

Children's classes! Learn to skate, learn to ski, gymnastics, stuff that we have to travel so far for! Littles can't always play the main three Chelsea sports...it would be nice to have other stuff.

Summer day camps

Open gym for kids to shoot hoops and more kid events in general. Families are always looking for inexpensive fun events.

A pool would be awesome

WHO is the committee??

Things geared for parents and younger children (toddlers)

Group kids skating events organized around sports schedule, group kids events in general, sports equipment borrow, swap, trade and donate exchange place (skates, cleats, ball shoes, helmets)

A gym would be awesome with early morning and late evening times

I am not sure. Maybe more events for families.

a kids movie night,parents welcome.with popcorn of course

Yoga, spin classes

Years ago, there was a winter event at the ice rink...with horse drawn sleigh rides. That was fun.

None

The Family painting was awesome, so more opportunities to paint with local artists. It would be great to get some of the local herbalist to be available for workshops, and some farmers that would be able to go over some ideas for winter and early spring gardening.

Fall fest, winter fest

Zumba jazzercise

Community winter carnival, sliding party, a 5k or color run.

Community picnics and community dances

Family friendly such as painting, run/walk etc or kid events such as sports clinics or camps

A dance, festival

Some type of field day

Sports camps for 3-5 year olds . And a community picnic with different events to compete in as a family maybe end of June times to kick off summer

Organized game nights (volleyball, soccer, softball??)

town walk history tour,for kids and adults

## What times would work best for your family for summer events?

16 responses

4pm,5pm, 6pm,7pm

5 Pm and on

Weekends, during the days.

N/a

Anytime, especially in the winter when the weather is colder and we all need more gatherings as a community.

5:30 or later

3-6

Early evenings or weekends