



781 Blakely Road • Colchester, Vermont • 05446 • 802.264.5500

[www.colchestervt.gov](http://www.colchestervt.gov)

November 2, 2022

Colchester Selectboard  
781 Blakely Road  
Colchester, VT 05446

RE: Letter of support and finding of compatibility for proposed Community Recreation Center

Dear Members of the Colchester Selectboard,

On behalf of the Colchester Planning Commission, I would like to assert support for the proposed Colchester Community Recreation Center, as presented by the town's Recreation and Parks Director and Recreation Advisory Committee. Our support for the project is aligned with the proposal's compatibility with the Town's vision, current land use, and future land use goals.

We find that the proposed recreation center is compatible with the 2019 Colchester Town Plan. In fact, the support within the plan appears early and often. The plan's introduction states that,

*Proud of the quality of life enjoyed here, the people of Colchester seek to build upon this foundation to ensure economic prosperity, **recreational opportunity**, and an entrepreneurial spirit for future generations."*

With respect to the Inner Bay neighborhood, where the existing Bayside Park facilities are and where the proposed recreation center would be located, the Town Plan states that:

*Services and recreational access for residents and tourists should be improved.*

The Town Governance chapter of the 2019 adopted town plan speaks to a town recreation center directly:

*The Bayside Hazlet and Bayside parcels must be developed to make room for the recreation center.*

Policy #3 of that chapter:

*3. Make improvements to Bayside-Hazlett property and Bayside Park, ultimately leading to the creation of an indoor recreation facility.*

And Action 7 of the same chapter:

*7. Advance the Bayside-Hazlett project as funding allows, and continue the recreation impact fee in support of the needs of a growing community.*

And the goal of the *Cultivating Colchester* chapter:

*Colchester will continue to be a recreation destination with equitable access for all, making it a healthy community to achieve physical, mental, and social wellbeing.*

Action item:

*3. During the term of this plan, the first phases of the Bayside Park Master Plan are anticipated to be implemented, resulting in increased recreational offerings benefiting the community.*

The 2019 Town Plan, drafted by the community, advanced by the Planning Commission, and voted affirmatively for adoption by the Selectboard, fully supports the development of a Community center at the Bayside Hazlett site. The proposal has the support of the Planning Commission for compatibility with this important community-driven plan.

Respectfully,

  
Rich Paquette, Planning Commission Chair

CC:           Adriane Martin, Recreation Advisory Board Chair  
              Glen Cuttitta, Parks and Recreation Director  
              Cath Yann LaRose, Planning and Zoning Director



**Burnham Memorial Library**

898 Main Street • Route 2A • Colchester, Vermont • 05446 • 802.264.5660

[www.colchestervt.gov](http://www.colchestervt.gov)

November 21, 2022

Dear Glen Cuttitta and members of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board,

Thank you for presenting the recreation center plan at our November meeting.

We are excited for and enthusiastically support Colchester's new community space for recreation, exercise, learning, and gathering. Your attention to the many aspects of planning, including thorough consideration of location, fiscal responsibility, and incorporating residents' input, culminated in a plan for a recreation center that will be enjoyed for years to come. We thank everyone involved for their hard work, employees of your department and advisory board members past and present. This facility will be a fantastic addition to our community.

With gratitude for your commitment and service to Colchester residents,  
The Burnham Memorial Library Board of Trustees

*Don Josey, Chair*

cc: Aaron Frank, Pam Loring, and the Colchester Selectboard



# Colchester School District

Colchester Board of Education, PO Box 27, Colchester, Vermont 05446

Phone: (802) 264-5999 • [www.csdvt.org](http://www.csdvt.org) • Fax: (802) 318-4669

January 10, 2023

Dear residents of Colchester,

We, the members of the Colchester School Board, wish to express our enthusiastic support for the construction of a new recreation center to serve Colchester residents and visitors as proposed on the 2023 Town Meeting Day ballot.

The 450 employees of the Colchester School District strive every day to prepare and empower our students to think critically, act responsibly, communicate effectively, and learn continuously to achieve their fullest potential. Succeeding in this endeavor requires the ongoing support and partnership of families, community members, private organizations, and public institutions.

The Town of Colchester's Department of Parks and Recreation has demonstrated time and again its immense value in helping the District achieve its goals by providing irreplaceable before- and after-school care programs, as well as engaging year-round programming to help make our students more active, well-rounded young members of the community. The new Recreation Center would enhance the Department's ability to provide these services to our students and allow the Department to greatly expand the recreational opportunities it offers to the general public. In doing so, the Recreation Center would join the town's schools and parks as dynamic spaces of connection and growth for the entire community.

Furthermore, we would like to commend the Town of Colchester for the thorough and inclusive process it has used to determine the scope of the project, and for its commitment to a funding model that requires no new investments from the taxpayers of Colchester.

We believe that Colchester thrives when individuals, organizations, and institutions work together to make the community a healthier, more vibrant, and more connected place to live, learn, work, and play. We urge the voters of Colchester to vote "yes" and embrace this exciting new commitment to the health and wellbeing of our town's residents of all ages.

Respectfully submitted,

Lindsey Cox

Nic Longo

Ben Yousey-Hindes

Laurie Kigonya

Felix Anderson

**Lindsey Cox**  
Board Chair

**Nic Longo**  
Board Vice Chair

**Ben Yousey-Hindes**  
Board Clerk

**Laurie Kigonya**  
Board Member

**Felix Anderson**  
Board Member

To the Colchester Community,

The Colchester Recreation Advisory Board encourages you to vote **YES** for the Colchester Recreation Center.

On the March 7<sup>th</sup> ballot, we have the exciting opportunity to expand recreation opportunities in our community. The Colchester Recreation Center has something for everyone- a walking/running track, multi-purpose gym, fitness/cardio facility, fitness class spaces, community/meeting spaces, and more. Furthermore, the site for the Recreation Center is in a centralized location with access to three schools, Bayside Park, and the bike path.

This project is the culmination of 20 years of community engagement with surveys, focus groups, and information gathering. As a result of this process, it was identified that while our community has many outdoor recreation opportunities to offer its residents and visitors, more indoor opportunities are needed. The amenities most desired by our community were identified and incorporated into the facility.

The Colchester Recreation Center project provides the perfect opportunity to use the Local Option Tax (LOT) to fund its construction. The Local Option Tax is a 1% tax applied to all taxable goods sold in the Town of Colchester. By the time of construction, Colchester's LOT fund balance will be \$9 million (which must be used towards capital projects), like the Recreation Center. By using the existing \$9 million and future LOT funds to finance the \$6.9 million remaining over the next 10 years, we achieve a goal for our residents with the Recreation Center, as well as retain LOT funds for other capital projects.

**Therefore, the construction of the Recreation Center will not be funded by property taxes.** Operating costs for the Recreation Center will be paid by membership and facility rental fees.

There is no doubt that recreation is the heartbeat of our community- from the lake to our parks, trails, and open spaces. We look forward to the opportunity to continue to commit to the physical, social, and mental well-being of our community.

The Colchester Recreation Advisory Board fully endorses the Colchester Recreation Center project and hopes that you will also support it as well by voting **YES** on March 7<sup>th</sup>.

Sincerely,



Adriane Martin

Chair

Colchester Recreation Advisory Board



781 Blakely Road • Colchester, Vermont • 05446 • 802.264.5500

[www.colchestervt.gov](http://www.colchestervt.gov)

January 13, 2023

Dear Colchester Resident,

We, as your elected Colchester Selectboard, are writing to ask for your support of the Colchester Recreation Center, Article #7, on the upcoming Annual Town Meeting Election Ballot.

The Selectboard recognizes the immense value recreational opportunities and amenities bring to the community, which is why we are asking you to consider this proposal. This project came to fruition after 20 years of community engagement and outreach, and it will respond to the identified need for more multi-generational, multi-purpose, indoor recreational and group gathering spaces.

The proposal for this 29,427 sq. ft. facility located on the Town-owned, 14-acre Bayside/Hazelett property includes multi-purpose exercise and gathering spaces, including a gym, track, weight room, studio space, classrooms, a kitchen, and locker rooms. With more recreational and community gathering spaces, active and vibrant lifestyles for all ages can be encouraged for years to come, and businesses too will benefit, as a year-round facility will bring people to our commercial center.

We still remain focused on fiscal restraint for the benefit of all taxpayers, which is why this project's funding is another benefit. We are seeking voter approval for \$15,907,000 to fund construction, but there is \$9 million in Local Option Tax (LOT) (1% sales tax) available in reserve for this project, and the remaining \$6,907,000 will be financed over 10 years and repaid with LOT funds. This results in NO increase in property taxes to support or construct the facility and NO increase to the LOT (repayment is funded with existing 1% sales tax). Additionally, Recreation Center operations will be funded by memberships and facility rentals.

With these positives in mind, the Selectboard urges you to vote YES on this project, as Colchester's health, economy, and social fabric can only benefit from the Colchester Recreation Center.

We also encourage you to contact Glen Cuttitta, our Town's Parks and Recreation Director, at [gcuttitta@colchestervt.gov](mailto:gcuttitta@colchestervt.gov) or 802-264-5640 with questions or for more information.

Once again, thank you for your consideration.

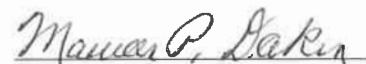
Sincerely,


**Your Colchester Selectboard**

  
Pam Loranger, Chair

  
Tom Mulcahy, Vice Chair

  
Jacki Murphy, Clerk

  
Maureen P. Dakin, Member

  
Charlie Papillo, Member





Colchester Historical Society  
828 Main Street  
Colchester, VT 05446

February 22, 2023

Dear Colchester Citizens,

The people of the Town of Colchester have enjoyed an amazing history of recreational facilities, programs, and activities and all that they have to offer. These include Airport Park (once an actual airport), Bayside Park (historically Clarey's Bayside Pavilion), Fort Ethan Allen Park (once the parade ground for an active U.S. military facility), the ever-popular Causeway (originally a railroad line), and several more.

Long-time active Historical Society member Inge Schaefer (author of two local history books) has helped establish the Friends of the Colchester Recreation Center. This group is committed to assisting the proposed recreational center to be a viable, low-cost facility serving the recreational needs of all Colchester residents. Another long-time Historical Society volunteer (chairman of the team that saved the historic Log Schoolhouse at Airport Park), has also advocated for this new recreational facility.

The leadership team of the Colchester Historical Society endorses the development of the proposed recreational center at the Bayside-Hazelett site. It is history in the making.

Bonnie L. Potter, President  
Colchester Historical Society

Senator Dick Mazza  
777 West Lakeshore Drive  
Colchester, VT 05446

To the Colchester Community:

I am writing to encourage your support for the Colchester Recreation Center.

The Colchester Recreation Center has been in the works for over 20 years. The Bayside/Hazelett property is in a central location with access to schools and Bayside Park. Colchester voters approved the purchase of this property in 2004 after surveys and community forums indicated a need for indoor recreation and gathering space.

The Colchester Recreation Center is funded responsibly. Colchester voters approved a 1% Local Option Sales Tax in 2015, to be used only for voter approved capital projects. The existing Local Option Tax—paid mostly by out of town residents--will fund the site development, building and equipment. The Colchester Recreation Center's operational costs will be funded with user and rental fees. **Your taxes will not increase because of the building or the operations of the recreation center.**

The recreation center will have public events, as well as free and fee-based programming, so that all members of the community can access the Colchester Recreation Center. The recreation center will include a walking/running track, multi-purpose gymnasium, a fitness/cardio facility, and fitness class spaces. The Colchester Recreation Center will also provide space for passive recreation such as games, activities and gatherings.

Colchester has a reputation of being a recreation-based community. Our outdoor facilities are heavily used and well-maintained. Over the last 20 years, many community members have been working hard to create a year-round community recreation facility that meets the need of all residents. I fully endorse the Colchester Recreation Center and hope that you will support it as well by voting YES on March 7.

Respectfully,

  
Senator Dick Mazza