

• MASTER PLANNING • COMMUNITY CENTERS • SENIOR CENTERS • COMMUNITY PROCESS • FEASIBILITY STUDIES • RECREATION FACILITIES•

DESIGNER SERVICES ADAPTIVE REUSE OF THE DECAS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

TOWN OF WAREHAM, MA
MARCH 7, 2022

APPROACH AND FEE PROPOSAL

ABACUS [ARCHITECTS + PLANNERS]

March 7, 2022

Decas Steering Committee
Wareham MA

Dear Steering Committee Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit our proposal for the adaptive reuse of the John W. Decas Elementary School as a community center; this is exactly the kind of work we have been doing for nearly three decades. We are very familiar with issues associated with school reuse and with the design of community centers – mostly for municipalities. Some recent projects include:

- **Peter Bulkeley School, Concord, MA:** Adaptive reuse as senior center and senior housing
- **Franklin School, Medford, MA:** Adaptive reuse as mixed income housing and community space.
- **Edwards School, Beverly, MA:** Adaptive reuse as mixed income housing and community space
- **Converse School, Palmer, MA:** Adaptive reuse study as community facilities and senior housing
- **Center School, Hopkinton, MA:** Adaptive reuse and new construction options for community center
- **Millis, MA:** Adaptive reuse study of school as senior center and parallel study for new construction
- **Mansfield, MA:** Adaptive reuse study of police station as senior center with new construction option
- **Medfield, MA:** Adaptive reuse of school as a recreation center with new construction option
- **Ayer, MA:** Programming and site option planning study for Senior Center

- **Cambridge, MA:** New 8,000 SF community center in new affordable housing development
- **Brighton, MA:** New 10,000 SF senior center in affordable senior housing development
- **Lincoln, MA:** Community Center/Senior Center programming and study of 6 site options
- **Randolph, MA:** Multigenerational Community Center programming and site option study
- **Middleton, MA:** Programming and design for town facilities including a community center (with HKT Architects)

This work gives us a detailed understanding of the kinds of facilities communities are looking for in the 21st century, and the challenges and opportunities, costs and benefits, associated with adaptive reuse. Building conditions, site conditions, code compliance issues and the adaptation of older construction to new needs often entails substantial costs that municipalities need to understand as early as possible. Partner David Eisen serves on the Mass School Building Authority Designer Selection Panel and partner David Pollak served for 8 years on the Brookline Building Commission and 6 years on the School Committee so we have an “insiders” view of the realities of school construction and Town decision making.

Based on previous experience and our understanding of Wareham’s needs we would propose the following process – to be revised as needed once we begin:

- Review available information on Town needs and the existing building
- Meet with all entities who will have programming input at the school to tour the construction and then discuss programs to be accommodated. We can also visit existing facilities that might be relocated to the John W. Decas Elementary School.
- Abacus produces a programming document or programming options that are emailed and then reviewed over zoom. Interior and exterior uses will be noted.
- In parallel we will do a “high level” code review that defines critical code requirements associated with the reuse of the building.

- Abacus produces a final program or program options that will form the basis of the planning study.
- Abacus produces a series of conceptual plan layouts showing existing construction, proposed uses, and demolition and new construction. These will suggest the kinds of entries, public spaces and service/office spaces needed to meet contemporary needs within the context of the existing building and current/anticipated code requirements.
- We will review with the appropriate parties by zoom, or if advantageous, in person, and then revise as needed for subsequent review. Interior and exterior spaces will be shown.
- Once we have established a consensus adaptive reuse option or options we will write outline specification and work with PM & C professional cost estimators on "high level" pricing.
- We will prepare a report for the Annual Town Meeting on April 25, 2022 that includes programming for the existing spaces in the building, phasing floor plans, cost estimates.

We often find that adaptive reuse studies lead to a clear choice between: less demolition construction that is less responsive to community programming needs; and a more responsive layout that requires more work at a higher cost. This is subject to verification but suggests two options we would likely explore.

Proposed Cost: We propose to execute this work for a total price of \$15,000.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have questions about us or our work. We look forward to working with you on the exciting project.

Sincerely,



David Eisen, FAIA, (cell 617-921-3903) David Pollak, AIA LEED (cell 617-921-4418)

HISTORY AND LEADERSHIP

Abacus was founded in 1989 and has been committed to the planning and design of community oriented buildings ever since. For three decades we have been working with municipalities designing community centers, senior centers, libraries, open spaces, public facility master plans and housing. We leverage limited funding to design timeless buildings that make a significant difference in the character and quality of civic life. Under the leadership of partners / principals David Eisen FAIA and David Pollak AIA LEED, we provide full programming, architectural, urban planning and public outreach services to meet budget and schedule challenges.

Many of our buildings are new; others are additions, renovations, and adaptive reuses. Some of them are in historic contexts where we need to recognize the traditional patterns of building that give each neighborhood its own identity. We work hard to preserve what is of value, while allowing buildings, spaces, materials and technologies to evolve to meet contemporary needs. Our knowledge of relevant codes, experience with city center environments, dedication to design and technical excellence, and superb professional qualifications will allow Abacus to deliver a Study that meets Wareham's needs now, and into the future.

[David Eisen FAIA](#) has an M.Arch from Harvard's Graduate School of Design and has been a partner at Abacus since 1995. His strong design leadership insures that the firm will produce a series of responsive and cost effect options for utilizing the site and existing building. He will work directly with Steering Committee on the creation of a supportive environment for facility users in a way that strengthens the character of Wareham. He has experience planning and designing a long series of community centers.

In addition to his Abacus work, David serves on the Back Bay Architectural Commission and the Mass. School Building Authority Design Selection panel, which inform his work in the public realm.

[David Pollak, AIA, LEED](#) is a GSD grad and an Abacus founding partner. His effective approach to project management keeps every project moving forward in a responsive and timely manner. David and David work closely together managing staff and consultants, and working with client and regulatory authorities. His expertise in community facility needs assessment, building reuse planning, permitting, bidding and construction management is perfectly suited to Wareham.

David served on the Brookline Building Commission for 10 years, served on the School Committee for six, three as chair, and continues to be on boards and committees. His understanding of municipal decision making and public engagement will be brought to bear on the study.

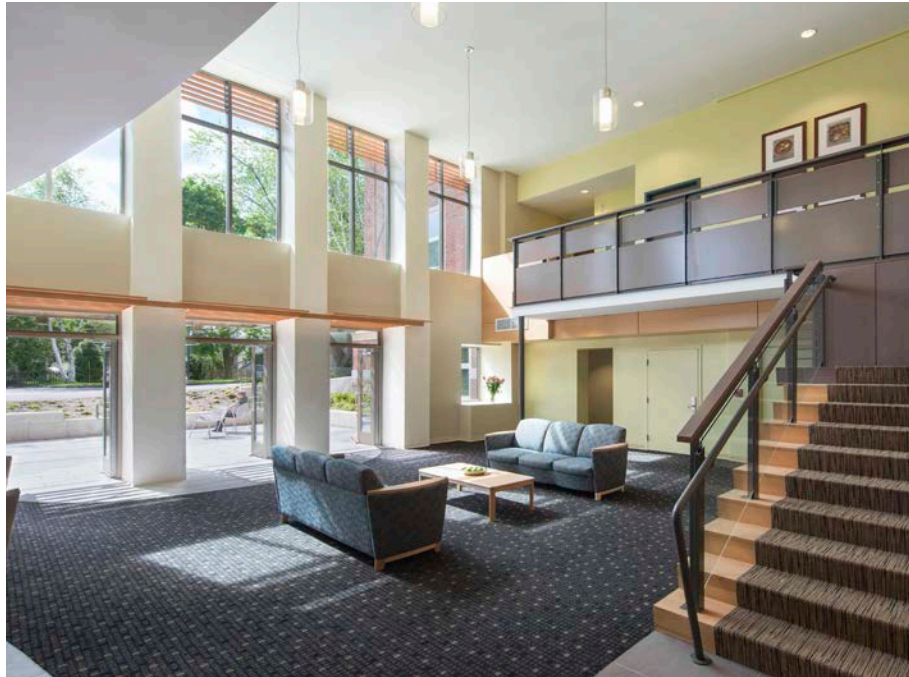
ABACUS PERSONNEL

Our 9 person office has 4 licensed architects and provides computer modeling, physical modeling, analytic and design skills to formulate, present and evaluate site and building options, resolve programmatic and construction issues, and see them through to closeout. We are big enough to provide the broad range of expertise that work like this requires, and small enough that David Eisen and David Pollak will attend every meeting and manage every aspect of the project.

We have built our reputation by using every space, inside and outside, and every architectural element to achieve the maximum benefit. All personnel work hard to understand issues from the perspectives of our clients, of building users, and of funders and taxpayers, and leverage every dollar to the fullest. We then work closely with our clients supporting fund raising and community outreach, as required for each unique municipality and project.

[Annie Steele](#) has an M.Arch from Wentworth Institute of Technology and has been with Abacus for 8 years. She has been project manager for senior and community center projects in Millis, Lawrence and Mansfield - working with clients, consultants and contractors to realize design visions responsive to site conditions and clients needs. Her technical skills - with building systems and computer modeling software - keep projects drawings progressing with the accuracy needed for public bid work and to minimize change orders.

[Julia Patten](#) is completing work on the first phase of the Ayer Senior Center programming and design, and was integral to the completion of the Carlisle Senior Center work. She has an M.Arch from Wentworth Institute of Technology and she has been with Abacus for 8 years. She brings expertise in public engagement and programming, project planning, construction documents and construction phase services that will be important in Wareham.

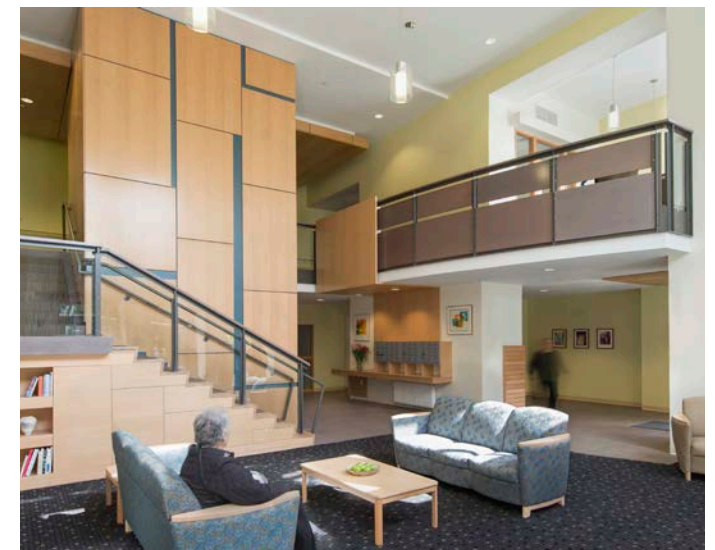
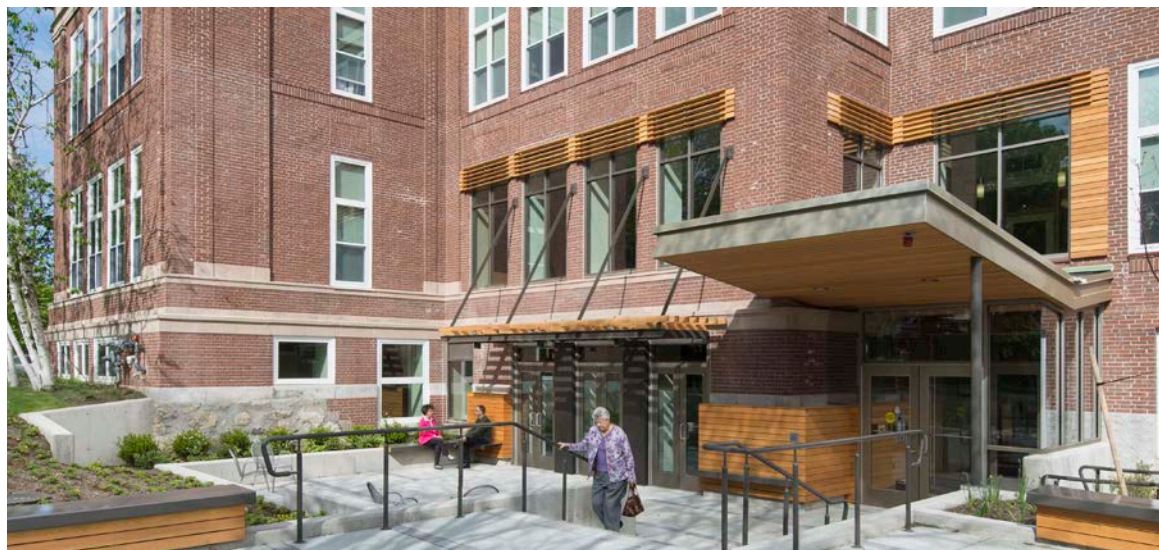


PETER BULKELEY TERRACE, SENIOR CENTER & HOUSING
Concord Housing Authority

This historic 1909 elementary school in the heart of Concord Center has been renovated as a fully accessible senior center and 28 apartments. The \$5,800,000 facility provides a range of spaces that accommodate social and educational activities for the community.

Careful site design and grading has converted what were once basement locker rooms into a new two-story light-filled living room and outdoor gathering space, bringing the building to life. Lower level ramped access is woven into the landscaping and terraces. Original brick, stone and cast stone was restored or replaced, historic features preserved, and the envelope thermal performance upgraded.

- 2021 AIA National Design for Aging Award*
- 2016 BSA Accessible Design Award*
- 2015 Prism Award, National Association of Home Builders*
- 2013 AIA New England Honor Award*





FRANKLIN SCHOOL CONDOMINIUMS
Medford, MA

Abacus brought a 100 year old masonry school back to life with a sensitive renovation and exuberant additions that meet contemporary needs. The project combines affordable and market rate units.

Twenty new condominiums and community spaces help revitalize the surrounding neighborhood. Dramatic double height lofts look out over the skyline; interior spaces are flooded with natural light. Masonry and historic features were carefully restored, including the entry portico and monumental steps facing a busy street. New high performance systems meet rigorous sustainability requirements.

*Boston Society of Architects 2010 Housing Award
Builder Association of Greater Boston 2007 Prism Award
for Best Condominium Planning*



EDWARDS HARBORVIEW CONDOMINIUMS

Beverly, MA

With a floor added on top and a new courtyard carved out of the building volume, a sprawling school has been transformed into 28 light-filled condominiums. First and second floors are flats with townhouses on the third and fourth floors. Living spaces are on top with terraces overlooking the harbor. 25 units are market rate; 3 are affordable.

The masonry shell was restored while new interior construction creates a sense of openness within units and the glass-enclosed lobby. The new construction complements the historic architecture; new systems meet high sustainability standards.



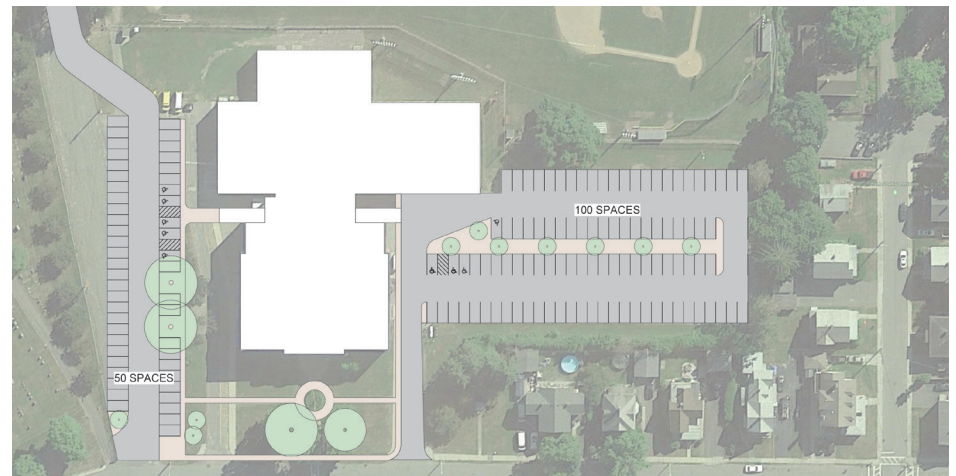
QUALIFICATIONS / SELECTION CRITERIA

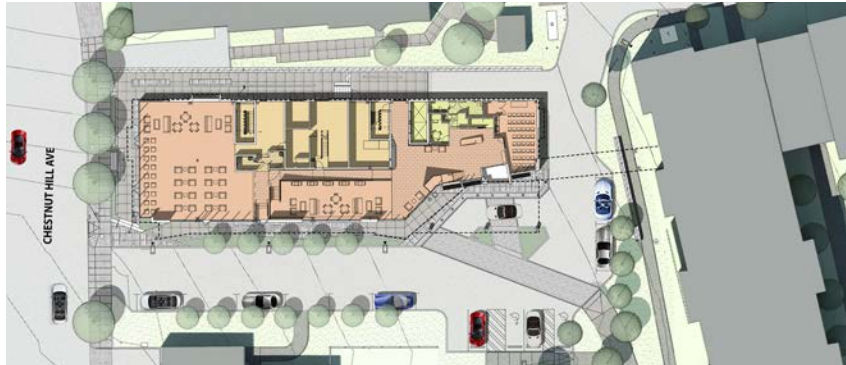
ABACUS [ARCHITECTS + PLANNERS]

CONVERSE SCHOOL Palmer, MA

Working with the Town of Palmer and development consultants, Abacus studied a series of options for the reuse of the Converse School. The preferred solution renovated the gymnasium and theater for public use, built out a new senior center, and developed 60 affordable senior apartments.

The historic building envelope is to be restored with selective demolition to facilitate reuse. The Town is reviewing implementation options, costs and funding in relation to other town goals.





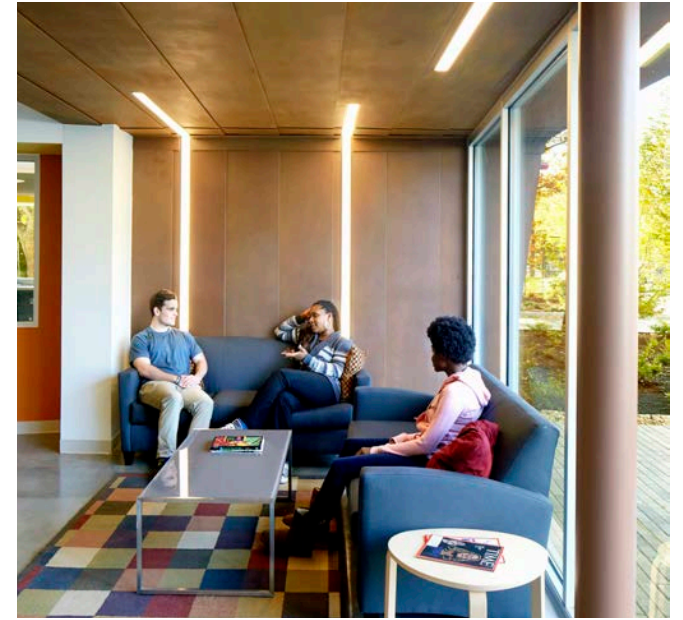
WEINBERG HOUSE SENIOR FACILITIES & HOUSING
Brighton, MA

This 55,000 square foot mixed use complex for seniors provides 61 affordable apartments for residents from diverse backgrounds. A series of interior and exterior function spaces connect to the main 2Life (formerly JCHE) campus next door, and to nearby shopping and civic areas. A cafe faces the street and welcomes everyone in.

Generous lounges and meeting spaces offer the flexibility for a changing array of programs responsive to resident needs. Complex site circulation and infrastructure challenges have been resolved in close cooperation with the City of Boston and the neighborhood.



2021 AIA National Design for Aging Award
2021 Boston Society of Architects Accessibility Honor Award



JEFFERSON PARK HOUSING AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES
 Cambridge Housing Authority

A outdated public housing development has been replaced with new housing and community spaces. The \$50,000,000 project focused on a new street and four courtyards that reconnect to the surrounding neighborhood. Townhouses over flats all have their own entries and terraces or balconies. Four story buildings line busy Rindge Ave, with community spaces on the ground floor.

Dynamic forms and sheltered spaces create a vibrant sense of community with landscaped public spaces offering privacy to individual apartments.

2022 Harleston Parker Medal People's Choice Award

2020 New England AIA Honor Award

2020 Builder Award

2019 American Institute of Architects Housing Award

2019 Boston Society of Architects Small Firm Design Award

2019 Boston Society of Architects / AIA NY Housing Award





ALLENCREST MULTI-GENERATIONAL COMMUNITY CENTER
Leominster Housing Authority

This new community center provides flexible spaces that support a series of different public uses. A loft, meeting room with a sliding partition and individual work areas surround an open gathering space.

The design combines passive solar heating and natural ventilation with a high efficiency HVAC system, expertly worked into the building's spatial structure to reduce energy usage while maintaining a high level of user comfort.

- 2014 Boston Society of Architects Small Firms Design Award*
- 2013 AIA/HUD Secretary's Community Informed Design Award*
- 2013 Boston Society of Architects Educational Facility Award*
- 2012 AIA New England Honor Award*
- 2012 Boston Society of Architects Honor Award*



QUALIFICATIONS / SELECTION CRITERIA

ABACUS [ARCHITECTS + PLANNERS]

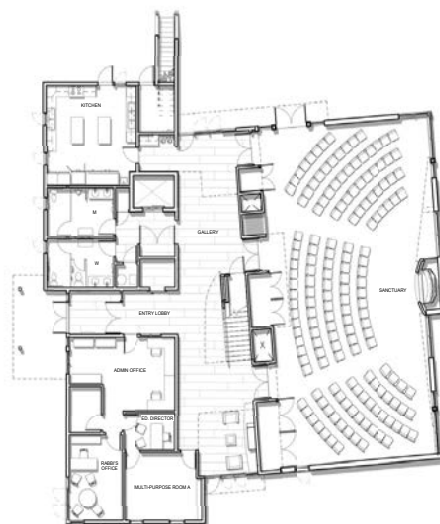
LINCOLN WAY MULTI-GENERATIONAL COMMUNITY CENTER Cambridge Housing Authority

This community center is an addition that bridges between two existing buildings. It weaves masonry, brick, wood and metal together to form an inviting public place for meetings, classes, and celebrations. The building is tied into its tight urban context through the use of brick while providing a contemporary sense of openness. The additions utilizes the back walls of two adjacent building to reduce construction costs and energy loss.

The flexible interior is used by seniors as well as by teens and families for a variety of community uses that change over the course of a day and through the week. The building was part of a larger project that renovated 7 other community centers.

2010 Boston Society of Architects Accessibility Honor Award





BETH SHALOM TEMPLE & COMMUNITY CENTER
Milton, MA

A new 12,000 SF Synagogue includes a sanctuary space seating 160, offices, a library, and a series of flexible meeting and class rooms lining a central street-like spine. Skylights, clerestory windows and curtain walls look out onto the landscape and open up to the sky. Although the community is multi-generational, seniors make up a large proportion of the membership.

Movable walls allow the sanctuary and other spaces to be divided into smaller rooms, or opened up for larger gatherings. Oversized doors lead out onto terraces and into gardens that function like outdoor rooms.

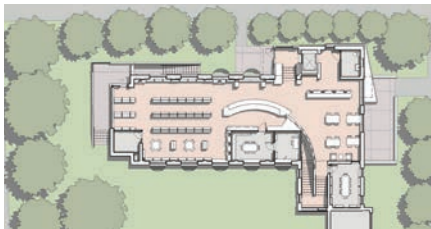
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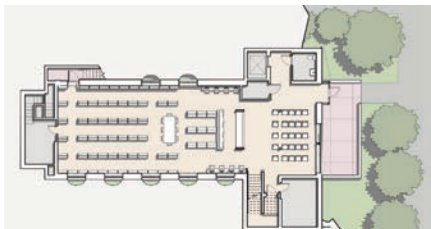
TAFT MEMORIAL LIBRARY & COMMUNITY CENTER Town of Mendon, MA

A 1950's concrete block church has become a light filled library right near the center of Mendon. New windows and entries at the front, side and rear connect the interior to the surrounding town and open up to the green space that cascades down the hillside behind. An open interior features a semi-circular circulation desk that then sweeps down the stairs to the lower level. Flexible spaces accommodate a variety of public activities and library programs for seniors, children, teens and adults. A new elevator and stairs provide complete accessibility to everyone.

A very limited budget inspired many members of the community to contribute their time and donate materials - making the library a central focus for the Mendon community.



Main Level



Lower Level



STUDY FOR A NEW COMMUNITY / SENIOR CENTER

Town of Lincoln, MA

Working with the Town Administrator and the Heads of both the Council on Aging and Parks & Recreation, Abacus studied various sites throughout Lincoln as part of a feasibility study for a new inter-generational community center. Five sites were presented to the community, with residents playing a critical role in determining a final site. Existing conditions were surveyed and costs and benefits of each site were evaluated by Abacus.

Abacus prepared programming documents, site design studies and schematic building designs including plans and perspective renderings.



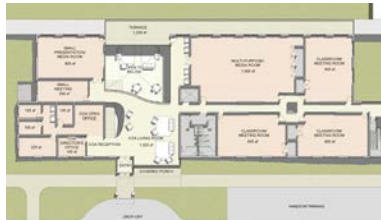
SITE OPTION 1



SITE OPTION 2



SITE OPTION 3



MULTI-GENERATIONAL / COMMUNITY CENTER FEASIBILITY STUDY

Carlisle, MA

The Town of Carlisle acquired the 6 acre 338 Bedford Road property and engaged Abacus to conduct a public process and develop a master plan for how to best utilize the site for town purposes.

Abacus orchestrated an open community design process with the Council on Aging and Parks and Rec. to get input, explore site development options, and build consensus around the best use and layout for the site and building program. A final direction was set and coordinated with Town Boards and Departments.

Abacus recently completed Phase 2 with the Town's Advisory Group- developing a more detailed Multi-Generational Community/Recreation program that serves the needs of many of the towns constituencies in a cost effective manner, and laying out the building and site to engage the town and its needs.

Challenging storm water management, parking and site circulation are being analyzed and options developed.



MANSFIELD COA FEASIBILITY STUDY

Town of Mansfield, MA

Abacus prepared a community center feasibility study comparing the cost of the adaptive re-use of an existing police station with demolition and new construction. We worked closely with the Town, Council on Aging and Recreation Department preparing a building program.

The associated costs for adaptive re-use include complete replacement of the MEPFP systems, structural elements, and various exterior masonry repairs as well as selective demolition of interior partition walls and ceilings. New construction schemes explored how the site could be better utilized with existing construction gone.

Due to the complexity and deterioration of the existing building, demolition and construction of a new building proved more cost effective. Abacus provided plans and renderings of the proposed facility for future public outreach of the project.

