

75 BACON STREET BIDDEFORD – THE FORMER ST. ANDRE'S CHURCH

a second location. a second home.

The ARPA Campaign to Fund My Place Teen Center in **York County**



www.mylaceteencenter.org

OUR MISSION

My Place Teen Center's mission is to provide a safe haven for youth, ages 10-18, sustaining them with comfort, meals, resources, and hope.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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C. Alan Beagle, Esq. **CLERK**

OUR VISION

All youth will have the academic, job readiness, and life skills necessary to lead independent adult lives filled with stewardship, courage, passion, and joy.

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Tina Burns **Director of Operations**
Joe Jimino **Facilities Director**
Timissa Dearborn **Office Manager**
Mac Waybright **Youth Culinary Program Instructor**
Alexis Dearborn **Program Coordinator**
Evan Jewell **Program Coordinator**

From Our Board Chair



Resilience is the Response

Steve Doughty from an on-line resource of mine, speaks about people he described as the "holy resilient." He said, "When subjected to the fiercest pressures of change, the holy resilient do not just endure or bounce back. They become more: more compassionate, deeper, simpler in their desires, and more focused in how to use their time. Resilience for them is not a matter of getting back to normal, nor is it about adjusting as well as they can. It is about transformation. It is about moving beyond where they were at the start of the change. It is about becoming new persons. This is so whether the change broke upon them through a diagnosis, pink slip, an unexpected phone call, a technological innovation, or cherished patterns of working with others."

We, too, are in this process of adjusting as well as we can.

We're adjusting to:

- the pandemic with all its inconveniences, economic impact, and mounting grief
- a new fervency for racial justice and its mounting grief

We can choose to meet these challenges with granite-like immovable resistance against the rushing waters unwilling to accept what is or will be, or we can meet the challenges with the resilience of a deeply-rooted reed that bends as the waters push against and surround it.

I truly believe that the leadership and staff at MPTC coped with COVID-19 as **that reed that bent but refused to break**. After schools were shut down in the middle of March 2020 and the staff realized that no kiddos would be entering their red doors, anxiety set in with the following questions: *How will we take care of our kids? How will we help our neighbors? How will our funders respond? Will the Center come out whole on the other side of this?* As the anxiety rose, the stress was palpable. MPTC was at a crossroads.

Within 48-hours, our fearless leader, Donna Dwyer, reached deep and I quote, "we have a kitchen, a cook, a van, and staff." Immediately a list was compiled of the Center's clientele and their families and daily meals were prepared for 50 at the curbside and 200 out for delivery – 250 people served each and every day for nine months. Old funding sources were tapped and new funding sources were discovered. The business model was transformed so as to meet the immediate need in the community.

Many other Westbrook residents besides regular attendees of the Center have been served.

A remarkable story of adjustment, transformation, and resilience.

Your Board of Directors will continue to monitor the present situation and look to the possibility of adjusting our very liquid business plan – based on the needs of the community. We thank you all for your ongoing support of MPTC and we invite you to continue that support in any way possible.

We also thank the York County Commissioners for their consideration of our ARPA request. You have the power to transform the 75 Bacon Street project.

Sincerely yours,

Tim Higgins, Chair of the BOD

WHO WE ARE

My Place Teen Center is a nonprofit southern Maine organization based in Westbrook with a second location to be opened in Biddeford, 2023.

Opened in 1998, we are a year round, free, out of school time, evidence-based, positive youth development program specializing in cultivating grit and alleviating hunger and trauma. We are open five days per week, year-round. Everything we do for the kids is free.

My Place Teen Center is at the forefront of some of the most crucial issues of our time.

- We fight to keep kids safe from the devastation of the opioid epidemic.
- We combat poverty and food insecurity.
- We create real, authentic communities with kids from diverse backgrounds, teaching them how to be good citizens and good neighbors.
- We show teens from broken homes that there is a better way to live life – with accountability, personal responsibility, and self-care.

In short: Adverse childhood experiences and the lifelong consequences of trauma can be counterbalanced with protective factors such as increasing cognitive capacity, healthy attachment of relationships, the ability to regulate emotions and behaviors, and creating safe environments. **This is our calling card.**

The Three Most Important Things We Do:

1. Provide food - daily meals and snacks
2. Offer a teen oasis
3. Instill GRIT via character development, academic support, mentoring, civic engagement, and life skills. The mettle of a kid's heart and will is IT. #tinySTRONG

Our Hallmark Programs:

1. Youth Leadership Academy – a specialized positive youth development program designed to increase developmental assets to reduce risky behaviors. Youth attend year-long units on Health and Wellness, Leadership and Social/Emotional competencies, STEAM, Workforce Readiness, and Character Education/Civic Engagement.
2. Restaurant Job Training Program (RJTP) – embedding life skills, work-force development modules, accountability protocols, STEM principles, and financial literacy practices, the RJTP gives teens the opportunity to train as proprietors, cooks, servers, bussers, hosts, hostesses, and dishwashers in a restaurant-like environment, preparing meals in the teaching kitchen, and serving 9,000 meals to their fellow teens in MPTC's dining room.
3. Get Urban Kids Outside! – getting city kids to explore and maintain the woods and local trails, breathe in fresh air, share, listen, and problem-solve teen angst, practice healthy lifestyle choices, glean and forage fresh produce, and engage in ecology studies. dining room.
4. Making Proud Choices! – an Evidence-Based, Safer-Sex Approach to Teen Pregnancy and HIV/STD Prevention curriculum that provides adolescents with the knowledge, confidence and skills necessary to reduce their risk of sexually transmitted diseases (STIs), HIV and pregnancy by abstaining from sex or using condoms if they choose to have sex.





**We're not just raising kids here,
we're raising the next generation
of adults, and they're headed
your way...**

WHY DOES MY PLACE TEEN CENTER MATTER?

According to the 2019 recommendations from the National Commission on Social, Emotional & Academic Development, "...children require a broad array of skills, attitudes, and values to succeed in school, careers, and in life. They require skills such as paying attention, setting goals, collaboration, and planning for the future. They require attitudes such as internal motivation, perseverance, and a sense of purpose. They require values such as responsibility, honesty, and integrity. They require the abilities to think critically, consider different views, and problem solve. And these social, emotional, and academic capacities are increasingly demanded in the American workplace, which puts a premium on the ability to work in diverse teams, to grapple with difficult problems, and to adjust to rapid change." <http://nationathope.org/report-from-the-nation/>



The long-term impacts of poverty on children have been extensively researched and documented. Among the disturbing consequences:

- According to the American Psychological Association, child poverty is linked with a range of negative developmental conditions and outcomes, including poor academic achievement, school dropout, abuse and neglect, behavioral and socio-emotional problems, physical health problems, and developmental delays.
- Over time, child poverty contributes to chronic stress, lower levels of working memory, a weak foundation for later learning, behavior, and health, and poor adolescent and adult outcomes, according to the Urban Institute's research report, Child Poverty and Its Lasting Consequences.
- Perhaps most concerning is that poverty impacts a child's brain development, leading to long-term behavioral and cognitive difficulties.

In response, we provide academic assistance through Science, Technology, English, the Arts, and Math (STEAM) programs. We have our Restaurant Job Training Program where youth are learning front-of-the-house and back-of-the-house restaurant job training skills. We offer instruction in character development, leadership development, life skills, and financial literacy. We focus on aspects of healthy, responsible moral development that builds strong character, self-esteem, academic, and leadership skills. We run a youth-led store based on an earned point system. All this, and we provide daily, healthy, complete meals and snacks.

HISTORY OF MPTC AND TODAY

In 1996, Westbrook community leaders, shocked by a local teen's suicide and the increase of drug and alcohol abuse by teens, started a dialogue on how best to keep the city's 1,700 teens safe. They created an after-school teen drop-in center, the "Mission Possible Teen Center," which opened its doors in 1998 in the Dana Warp Mill. Westbrook soon became a vital community resource, the city's first no-barrier program for all kids, regardless of socio-economic status or background, to hang out in a fun, safe, and learning-filled space.



By 2004, demands for teen services increased and the Center realized it needed more space. The Board of Directors made the courageous decision to relocate the Teen Center and purchased the former United Methodist Church for its new home located in the heart of Westbrook. In 2013, and in celebration of our fifteen-year anniversary, the Board changed the name from "Mission Possible" to My Place Teen Center to recognize the kids who often referred to the Teen Center as "My Place..."

In 2014, Biddeford champions and stakeholders requested discussions about how to bring our business model to Biddeford. Originally we were functioning in a consultant mode, but early 2017 discussions turned to: Would we bring our business model to Biddeford and run a second site/MPTC for them? Given that expansion was already part of our strategic plan, this was an easy answer due to the positive relationship already developed with city leaders and a similar demographic and landscape between both cities.

Since then, we have been working closely with Biddeford Housing Authority/Southern Maine Affordable Housing and city leaders regarding establishing a second site at 75 Bacon Street, Biddeford; the former St. Andre's Church. Our target opening date is 2023.



Every child who winds up doing well has had at least one stable and committed relationship with a supportive adult.



CUMBERLAND COUNTY

755 Main Street, Westbook
Red Doors opened in 1998



YORK COUNTY

75 Bacon Street, Biddeford
Red Doors to be opened in 2023





Imagine Our Westbrook Success in Biddeford.

My Place Teen Center’s mission is to provide a safe haven for youth, ages 10-18, sustaining them with comfort, meals, resources, and hope. We did that in Westbrook. Now imagine that same philosophy expanding to Biddeford – reaching double the teens each year!

This will expand our mission so that all youth in York and Cumberland counties will have the academic, job readiness, and life skills necessary to lead independent adult lives filled with stewardship, courage, passion, and joy.

We are launching an American Rescue Plan Act campaign to renovate and furnish our second home in Biddeford. The Board and staff of My Place Teen Center have enthusiastically embraced this landmark project. Together, with the broad support of the community, we will be investing in the future of vulnerable teens and their families in southern Maine.

Invest in a Second Home. Invest in York County.

75 Bacon Street Renovation and Furnishings – \$1.5 MM

- *White box condition: roof repair/steeple, flooring, heating-ventilation system, windows/doors, interior improvements, plumbing, security/electrical upgrades, sprinkler updates, fire alarm, additional materials and labor - \$995k*
- *Furnishings, Fixtures, Equipment - \$450k*
- *Contingency - \$55k*

We will be in a shared ownership contract with Southern Maine Affordable Housing. My Place Teen Center will own the main floor and the balconies above the main floor at 75 Bacon. We are the sole owner of our Westbrook location.



Our culture is one in which we are loving first and firm when needed. A family-type, anti-bullying, safe environment is our hallmark.



Temporary York County Location

QUALIFICATIONS



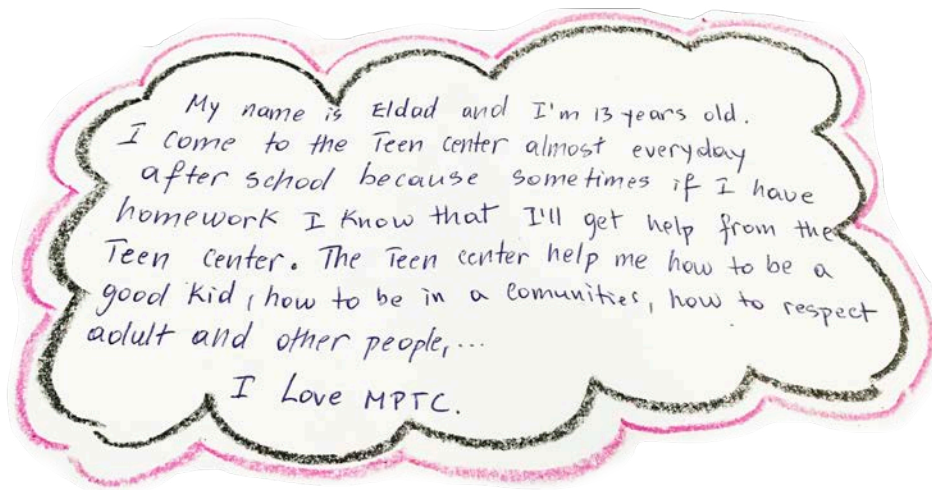
Our CEO, Donna Dwyer, has 24 years in social services, 14 years of nonprofit executive director/CEO positions, and holds three graduate degrees including an MBA with a focus on Entrepreneurship, a Certificate of Advanced Study in Educational Leadership, and a MS.Ed. in Special Education.

Donna also project managed a \$1.2MM renovation at the Westbrook site.

Our Director of Operations, Tina Burns, has extensive social services case management experience and seventeen years of non-profit accounting and office management.

In addition to our Board of Directors, in 2015, we formed an Advisory Council to help advance the mission of the organization through their individual and collective expertise and relationships in the community. This statewide group consists of a diverse pool of individuals that serve a variety of tasks such as raising the organization's profile, monitoring community needs and organizational trends, suggesting ideas, assisting with fundraising resources, linking to other groups of stakeholders, and offering informed guidance.





Home is where the heart is. Our home, in a renovated church on Main Street in Westbrook, and a new one in a former church in Biddeford, is where we nurture, inspire, and safeguard at-risk teens, many of whom have nowhere else to go. With steely resolve, and a passion for grit and accountability, we keep kids safe, fed, loved, and shown a different path. Join us as we change lives.



Check out the magic behind our red doors!

For more information, please contact:

Donna Dwyer, president/CEO
donna@myplaceteencenter.org

TEL 207-854-2800 • FAX (207) 856.2109

www.myplaceteencenter.org

75 Bacon Street Upper Level White Box for MPTC

BUDGET

Sources and Uses Summary

Sources	Budget	
Donated value of Building+soft costs	\$ 143,000	5.1%
SMAH pre-development costs	\$ 10,000	0.4%
ARP Funds	\$ 1,500,000	54.0%
Steeple, brownfield, other grants	\$ 75,000	2.7%
Donations	\$ 400,000	14.4%
In kind labor & donated materials	\$ 650,000	23.4%
	<u>\$ 2,778,000</u>	
Uses		
Building Acquisition	\$ 143,000	
Building Construction	\$ 2,090,000	
Furniture, Fixtures & Equipment (MPTC's direct allocation from ARPA funds)	\$ 425,000	
Closing / Soft Costs	\$ 20,000	
Permanent Loan Fees and Closing	\$ -	
Construction Period Carrying	\$ -	
Leasing Reserve (for future commissions and TI)	\$ -	
Vacancy Reserve (for unexpected vacancies)	\$ -	
Prefunded Replacement Reserve	\$ 100,000	
	<u>\$ 2,778,000</u>	

Notes:

- Construction estimates compiled by SMAH
- Budget is anticipated to cover cost to upgrade to meet all current codes and make exterior sound and weather proof. Also all mechanical systems operational. White box ready for occupancy



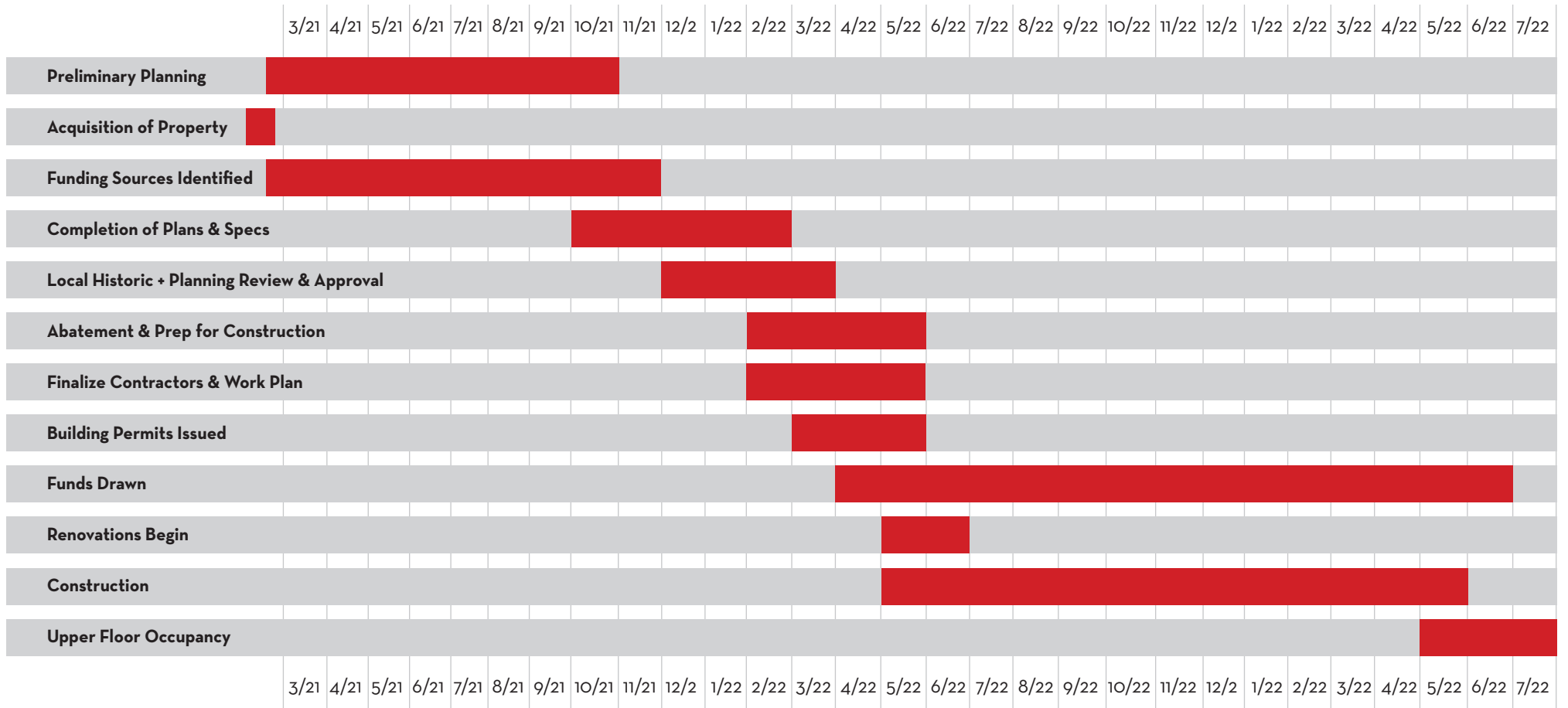
SOUTHERN MAINE
AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Development Budget

Building Acquisition		Notes
Purchase Price	\$ 130,000	
Closing / Legal Fees (Estimated)	\$ 8,000	Appraisal, Legal, Title, etc.
Furniture and Fixtures	\$ -	
Environmental Services	\$ 5,000	completed
Title Examination	\$ -	
Flood Insurance Cert	\$ -	
Phase 1	\$ -	completed
Demo Survey	\$ -	
Signage	\$ -	
Wire Fees	\$ -	
Total Acquisition	<u>\$ 143,000</u>	
Building Construction		
- White Box for upper level		
Design professionals	\$ 75,000	
Roof repair; steeple	\$ 85,000	
Flooring	\$ 110,000	
Heating-Ventilation System	\$ 140,000	
Windows & doors	\$ 110,000	interior storm windows + donated windows
interior Improvements	\$ 350,000	paint, repairs; carpentry
Plumbing	\$ 155,000	new bathrooms - upper level
Security; electrical upgrades	\$ 140,000	
Furniture and fixtures	\$ 425,000	
Environmental	\$ 200,000	
Sprinkler updates	\$ 190,000	new system
Fire Alarm	\$ 90,000	add smoke detection in lower level
Additional materials and labor	\$ 465,000	
Total Construction	<u>\$ 2,535,000</u>	
Prefunded Replacement Reserve	\$ 100,000	
Total Development Costs	<u>\$ 2,778,000</u>	

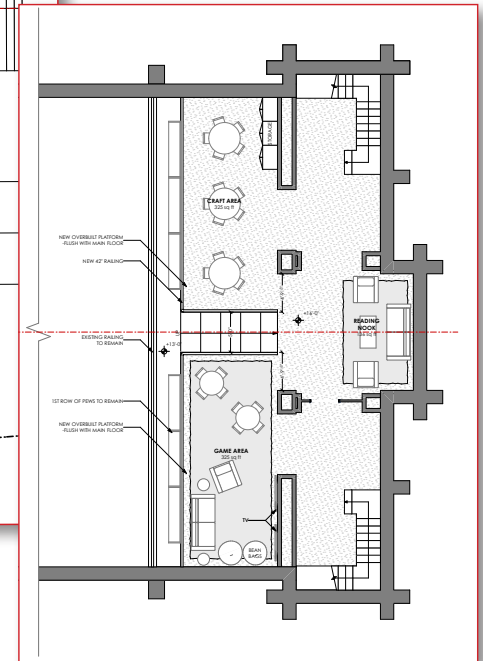
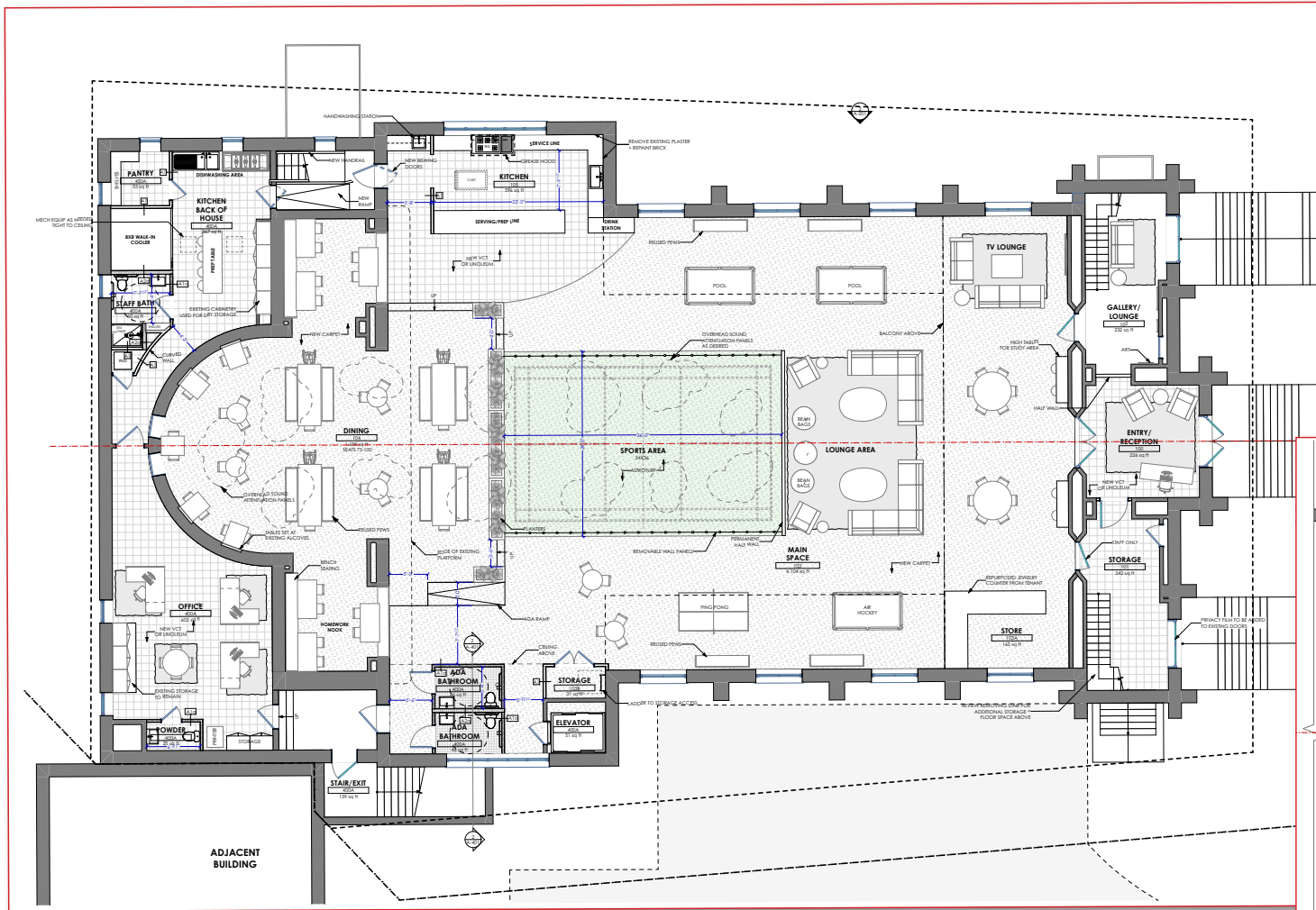
75 Bacon Street Upper Level Renovation for MPTC

TIMELINE

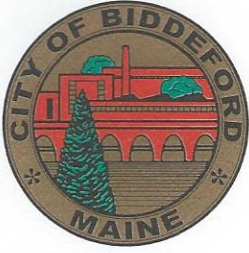


SOUTHERN MAINE
AFFORDABLE HOUSING

75 Bacon Street Upper Level Floor Plan



SOUTHERN MAINE
AFFORDABLE HOUSING



City of Biddeford, Maine

Alan M. Casavant
Mayor

September 22, 2021

York County Commissioners:

I have been Mayor of Biddeford for the past ten years, and during this time, I have been concerned about our local teen population. In the city, there are existing excellent programs, some of which are school related and involve such things as athletics and music, but far too many of our youth still fall between the cracks. Over the years, there have been numerous conversations (extending back to previous mayors), and all have wrestled with the problem of established strong programs that meet the needs of our teenagers. Dialogues were established with the YMCA, the Boys and Girls Club, and even private entities, but, for various reasons, none of those options proved practical.

Biddeford does possess a superb Recreation Director, Carl Walsh, and has an exceptional staff. Despite limited funding, they have consistently been able to create solid programs for all age demographics, but, unfortunately, city programming too often misses those who need mentoring and programming the most.

Several years ago, I was invited to visit My Place Teen Center, in Westbrook, by Donna Dwyer and her staff, and I was completely blown away by what I saw. A few years ago, I, along with other individuals who are engaged with youth, visited once again, and the impact on me was identical. Everything that I saw and heard convinced me that such a program was needed in Biddeford. Those who attended with me, including city councilors, were similarly impressed. The role modeling, mentoring, programming, food offerings, creative energy, and the colorful, safe space were immediate attractions to us all. Donna provided a thorough overview of what she and her staff achieve on a daily basis, and I firmly believe that what I saw can be replicated in Biddeford. Westbrook and Biddeford are very similar in history, economics, and culture, and I believe, as do those councilors who have visited the facility, that the philosophy and programming of My Place would have an immediate, positive effect on our teens.

I believe that the following bits of data paint an urgent picture of the needs of Biddeford's youth:

-45% is the average FRL number for JFK + BPS; BPS is 48%. However, in the past, these numbers were in the range of 60%, but free universal nutrition since COVID skewed the numbers that reflected actual poverty.

-51.4% of children under six live in single family homes

-because of market conditions, reduced housing stock, the purchase and repurposing of rental units in Biddeford, and the Supreme Court decision on the Biden executive COVID order regarding evictions, youth homelessness has exploded. Numbers change wildly daily, but as of this date, there are over 50 families that are homeless in the Biddeford school system. It is the expectation that these numbers will increase as the winter rental marketplace heats up.

-it is estimated that as many as half of Biddeford students are un-engaged after school, though the school department offers 27 after-school sports and clubs for students. Because of the pandemic, we are seeing less student participation that we did in the Fall of 2019.

-students who do not engage in after-school activities

Are 14% more likely to be absent from school

Are 20% more likely to cut class

Are 3X less likely to have a GPA of 3.0 or higher

Are half as likely to earn a bachelor's degree in six years after graduation.

My fear, and the fear of councilors, is that there are too many teens in my city who have no supervision after school, as parents are working, or, sadly, "not engaged." I have had many conversations with Superintendent Jeremy Ray about the need to establish more school programming for our students, so that we do not "lose" them during those after school hours.

We need additional programming during summers, when lack of supervision poses ever greater risks and problems, too often leading to bad choices. Jeremy and his staff are in full agreement that more engagement and opportunities for kids lead to their achieving of their full potential.

We are hoping that the old St. Andre's Church building, on 75 Bacon Street, in the urban core, can be a solution for our problems and the future home for My Place Teen Center. It is central to many attractions and opportunities and is in the backyard of some of our most needy students, including those who are immigrants. The opening of MPTC in the upcoming year would provide the stability and mentoring of our teens, as they need someone who can believe in their dreams and hopes.

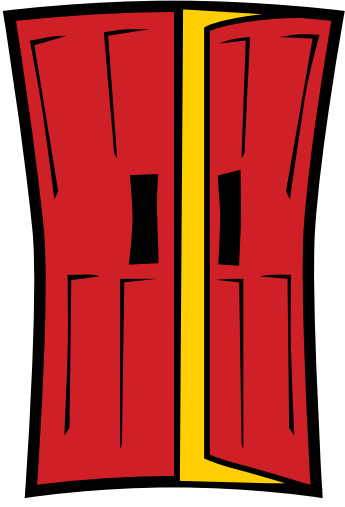
I am thrilled at the prospect of Donna and her staff coming to Biddeford. It is another piece in the puzzle of the city's Renaissance. I hope that you will be able to assist in making this dream come true.

Sincerely,



Alan Casavant

Mayor



Check out the magic behind our red doors!

There are over
500 reasons to
support My Place
Teen Center.

And here are some
of their stories.

755 Main Street
Westbrook, Maine 04092
207.854.2800
www.MyPlaceTeenCenter.org

WCSH 6 Who Care Agency of Distinction
United Way Partner Agency
Tom's of Maine 50 States for Good Award
Mainebiz's Nonprofit Business Leader of the Year
Maine Children's Alliance Giraffe Award
TD Beach to Beacon Charitable Recipient



Meet Aisha Age 12

Aisha is everything a 12-year-old should be — smart, funny, full of energy. Everyone who meets Aisha sees these qualities right away. Often everyone, except Aisha. It used to be if you paid her a compliment she would shrug and disagree. Her home life is rocky and she has experienced things that kids just shouldn't have to experience. MPTC offers Aisha stability. Aisha knows that she can come here and just be herself. She can hang out with her friends, she can talk with staff, she can mess up and know that we are going to love her anyway. So she comes, every day, and every day we have seen her self-confidence grow a little bit more. Now when you compliment Aisha, she will smile back, give you thanks, and throw in, "I know."

Meet Alli Age 12

Last year Alli moved from Westbrook to Standish, but she has been able to continue to attend Westbrook Middle School. Alli is an involved student. She does well in classes, is part of the honors chorus, and participates in talent shows and similar activities, but she has a very hard time with change. Staying in Westbrook Schools allows Alli to continue to be successful. Without MPTC, this would not be possible. MPTC provides a safe, fun, and free place for Alli to hang out with her friends and have dinner after school while her mom is at work. Without MPTC she would have no place to go after-school and would have to switch to another district.

Meet Mark Age 14

Mark lives in Westbrook with his parents. He is a freshman and plays freshman football for Westbrook High School. He loves rap music and action movies. Mark is full of energy and always has a smile on his face. Mark is the kind of kid who can easily get himself in trouble. He spends a lot of time away from his house. He likes to come to the teen center because it is fun place to hang out. MPTC is more than a fun place. If Mark were not here, he would be hanging out on the streets, in the park, unsupervised. MPTC gives Mark a safe place to be, where caring and loving adults are there to model and guide for him, and still have a lot of fun.

Meet Soladad Age 12

Soladad is in 7th grade at Westbrook Middle School. Soladad comes to MPTC almost every day after school. Soladad comes to the teen center because it gives her something to do after school. At MPTC she can hang out with her friends, listen to music, and play games, do the things that kids her age should be doing. If she were not coming to MPTC, Soladad would be home and she and her sister would be fighting. MPTC gives Soladad a safe place to hang out without all the conflict and drama.

Meet Zoe Age 12

Zoe's parents live apart. She lives here in Westbrook with dad during the school year and visits with her mom in Florida over her summer break. Zoe was away all summer but came by MPTC her first day back. Zoe says she likes coming to the teen center because this is a place she can truly be herself. She can sing and dance with her friends and it's ok.

Meet Liam Age 15

Liam is one of those kids you know is here as soon as he enters the building. He is loud. His voice bellows at its lowest octave. Every step he takes sounds like the step of an elephant. His words often border on inappropriate and his body is often bounding into someone else's space. But to define Liam by these characteristics would be a mistake. Liam has a heart of gold. It just took a little digging to unearth it. He is fiercely loyal and has made good friends here at the center. Additionally, he has really connected with staff. He has learned to trust us and over the past year he has shown tremendous growth with both his social skills and his behavior. We are so proud of his growth and can't wait to see what the next year brings.

Meet Elizabeth Age 14

Elizabeth has been coming to MPTC for a long time. Elizabeth loves music, especially One Direction. She might be one of their biggest fans! Elizabeth has struggled over the past year with a variety of personal issues and has retreated in a big way from social life. She has retreated into the internet and spends a great deal of her time interacting with virtual "friends" often to the expense of the people who love her sitting right next to her. MPTC helps keep Elizabeth grounded. While it is a struggle to unplug her from her iPod, here Elizabeth interacts with friends, with staff, and with peers making real connections with people in her community. She is able to be herself in a place free from judgment.

Meet Dominic Age 15

Dominic is a work in progress. He is a kid who has had a tremendous amount of upheaval in his young life. Substance abuse, domestic violence, significant loss. This upheaval has had its impact. Dominic regularly runs away from home. Couch surfing is preferable to sleeping in his own bed. Sleeping on a friend's couch feels safer than sleeping at home. Dominic struggles with responsibility. He is in and out of school, in and out of trouble. At MPTC Dominic finds something he does not find at home. Consistency, stability, meals, comfort, love. Dominic is a work in progress but at MPTC, we keep working because he matters.

Meet Franklin

Age 17

Franklin has had a tumultuous adolescence. As a younger teen, Franklin struggled with gender identity. This struggle left him with little support at home and he has spent much of his teenage years homeless, couch-surfing, and trying to avoid trouble. Franklin attends school in Portland, but comes to Westbrook after school to come to MPTC. He says he comes here because MPTC offers a lot for him to do and it makes it easier to make the right choices. When he is here, his anxiety is less. He is happier. He is safe.

Meet Baqir

Age 15

Baqir immigrated to the United States from Pakistan when he was in elementary school, first to Portland and eventually settling in Westbrook. Baqir is now a sophomore in high school and has been a part of the MPTC community for a few years. An avid athlete, he plays football and basketball for Westbrook High School. He is a proud student, who dreams of college. He speaks two languages. Baqir is a role model for many of our younger kids and carries himself with dignity. We are proud to have Baqir as part of our community.

Meet Livvie

Age 14

When Livvie first started coming to the teen center she was withdrawn, crass, and hard to talk to. She was hard to get to know. Over the past year, however, we have seen an amazing young woman emerge. A talented artist, she creates beautiful comic book style drawings. She has connected with other young women and has developed some very close friendships. These friendships have eased her transition from middle school to high school. Sometimes she still sits alone, but now it is because she seeks space, not because there is no one to fill it.

Meet Victor

Age 12

Victor is your pretty average seventh grader. He loves video games, kick-ball, and computers. What he doesn't love is homework. When Victor fell behind in his school work his mother contacted us. We were able to work with Victor to encourage him to get his school work done. Staff were there to assist him when he had questions and praise him when he completed an assignment. This school year, Victor is committed to getting his work done on-time. We are able to help him out here by offering homework assistance every day!

Meet Hope

Age 14

Hope is an outstanding member of the MPTC community. She is always willing to lend a hand, is respectful, and a good friend. When Hope first started coming to MPTC she was shy and quiet. Over the past year we have seen tremendous growth in Hope as she has opened up to our community. We have undergone some major renovations here at MPTC. Throughout the renovation period, Hope was always ready to volunteer for whatever needed to be done. Her help was greatly appreciated by both staff and her peers. Hope loves music and dreams of becoming a singer.

Meet Carter

Age 15

Carter has been coming to MPTC for a few years now. He is an awesome kid. He has been studying Jukado for several years and is quite good. He is funny, motivated, and smart. He is also the victim of relentless bullying. Kids pick on Carter because he is short. Bullies make fun of him and have been physically violent toward him. Carter struggles to take back power and sometimes to feel more powerful he becomes the bully. Here at MPTC, we have worked with Carter to learn productive ways to handle bullies and being bullied. He has learned when he must talk to an adult to keep his self and others safe. We have worked with him to problem-solve ways to cope with his anger and frustration when he is bullied. He has learned that power does not come from taking his feelings out on others. Carter has made huge strides and we have seen growth in his self-esteem, pride, and self-control. There is still work to be done, but Carter is committed to success.

Meet Damien

Age 11

Damien is a vibrant member of the MPTC Community. He is full of energy, spunky, and super fun to be around. Damien is also a good friend and peer. He often seeks out kids who are by themselves and will ask them to join him in a video game. Also, he helps his friends remember the rules and make good choices, which is definitely appreciated and recognized by staff. He plays rec football and loves hanging out with his younger siblings in the park.

Meet Marcus

Age 15

Marcus is a pretty good kid with a pretty big heart. He is a great big brother, always looking out for his younger sister. He is a good friend and a decent student. He plays sports, is full of energy, and can be really fun to be around. But Marcus can be really hard to get to know and until he trusts you can be a real challenge. When he meets someone new he will test their limits; he wants to know if you are going to stick around or run away. His parents are separated and both struggle with substance use and staying out of trouble. Marcus has learned he can trust us here at MPTC. He has pushed and discovered that we are not going to give up on him. He knows that we are going to be here for him no matter what he needs.

Meet Heidi

Age 15

Heidi loves fashion, art, and has a flare for the dramatic. She dreams of being a fashion designer. Daily life can be challenging for Heidi. She has mental illness and often struggles with self-esteem. Here at MPTC, Heidi has a place to express her dreams, to try out her ideas, and to be herself. She was an active member of the fashion club, making new clothing from old. She loved the improv acting class. She always participates in arts and crafts. She loves Karaoke. At MPTC Heidi is able to live some of her dreams and find encouragement to keep following them.

Meet Mandy

Age 12

Mandy is adorable. When you see her, you just want to hug her. She is small and looks very young for her age. She also acts young for her age. Mandy has some learning disabilities and severe ADHD. Her mom, a single mother, struggles to keep up with all the demands. Mandy's mom has found an ally in MPTC. She has been forthcoming about Mandy's needs and we have stepped up to help Mom meet some of them. Mom knows that Mandy can get help with her homework, work out some of her energy, and improve her social skills. She also gets dinner and a ride home! It is a huge service for this family and a huge relief to a busy and tired mom struggling to get it all done.

Meet Daniel

Age 12

A 7th grader, Daniel is an absolute joy to have around. This kid is always smiling and his laugh is infectious. He likes jogging, camping, computers, and video games. He is always friendly to the other kids and to staff. When asked why he likes coming to MPTC he said, "There are a lot of good people here!"

Meet Vivaan

Age 12

Vivaan is a charismatic and charming young man. He is the kind of kid who can smile and get what he wants. Vivaan plays baseball, loves video games, and hanging out with his friends. He is also the kid who can get himself into trouble. Vivaan has a tendency to make bad choices, especially when trying to impress a group of friends. At MPTC, Vivaan learns how to make good choices. He is rewarded not for showing off, but for showing up, participating, and being a team player. Although, sometimes he has been known to get a free candy bar or two from our store, because we have to admit, it is hard to resist that smile.

Meet Ella

Age 12

Ella is a shy, small kid who often finds herself the subject of other kid's jokes. Her clothes are worn, her hair is knotted, her social skills are limited. When Ella comes to MPTC she comes with a caseworker. At other places this might set Ella apart, but at MPTC, many of the kids who come here have one-on-ones who work with them. Here Ella finds other kids she can relate to.

Meet Eric

Age 16

Eric is a truly gifted kid. An athlete — he is a gymnast, a cyclist, and a track star. He was one of six high school students chosen to participate in the Bike Maine event — a six day bike ride around the state. He can steal the attention of every kid in the center, clearing the furniture out of the way, doing no-handed flips up and down the floor. Not only an athlete, he is also a role model. Eric is helpful, always willing to lend a hand. He treats every person with respect. He is also poor. He and his brother are being raised by a single dad who struggles to make ends meet. Poverty places Eric "at risk." Statistically, Eric's likelihood of improving his circumstances are small. But, Eric is not defined by his socioeconomic status. Here at MPTC we teach Eric and kids like him that they are not statistics, that their dreams can be realized. Eric wants to go to college and we know that he will. We will do what we can to help him make that dream a reality.

Meet Michael

Age 14

Michael was a sledge hammer. Every interaction he was on the offensive — strike first before he could be struck. Rough home life doesn't even start to describe his upbringing. One parent in jail and the other in and out of sobriety, it's not surprising that he was hard to get to know. Despite the challenge, staff have persevered and over the past year, this kid has completely transformed. Michael just needed to know that we could be trusted. His shell has started to crack and inside is a bright, caring, and committed young man. Michael still has challenges, but he is better equipped to meet them. He is far more likely to bend than to break.

Meet Tomas

Age 14

Tomas has grown up with MPTC. He has been coming in here since he was old enough to. He has encountered a number of challenges in his young life. Exposure to domestic violence, unstable home life, these are pretty regular occurrences. Not surprisingly, his behavior has been really up and down. MPTC offers Tomas consistency. Here he knows the expectations, he understands the rules, and he knows he will be kept safe. Over the last year, Tomas has matured. The kid who used to take bites out of snacks and stick them back in the container has turned into a responsible young man. This year, Tomas started high school. It is hard to believe that he is now a 9th grader. He has an excitement to learn and he loves coming in to tell us about his day. He still has challenges, but it is has been really gratifying to experience his growth.

Meet Jennifer

Age 12

Jennifer is new to MPTC, but she has quickly become a great member of the MPTC family. She is kind, helpful, and a good role model for her peer group. She is always willing to chip in and participates in group activities. Jennifer's favorite movie is Mary Poppins and she loves rap music. Jennifer comes to the center with her younger brother, Tyler. She is a great sister and the two often hang out together. When she gets involved in an activity that Tyler is not really interested in she always makes sure that he is involved in something and feels comfortable.

Meet Todd

Age 13

Todd was desperate for some independence but his mom was a little nervous. Todd's dad died a few years ago and understandably his mom was a little overprotective. Todd had friends who came to the center and had begged his mom to let him come after school. She called the center a few times, came in and spoke with staff, got a tour. She quickly realized that this was a safe and caring place for Todd to be. His mom had made it very clear to both him and us that he was supposed to stay here at MPTC unless he had her permission to leave. Well, Todd was overwhelmed with his new found freedom, and, one day, when Todd wasn't thinking so clearly, he left the center without permission. Staff immediately contacted his mom and he was quickly located. She was mad! But, she was relieved to know that MPTC respected her rules and contacted her immediately. Todd, his mom, and our staff were able to work through this momentary lapse in Todd's judgment and he has been joining us after school ever since. Knowing that your kid is somewhere that is dedicated to keeping him safe is invaluable.

Meet Anne

Age 14

Anne is homeschooled. MPTC offers her a place where she can interact on a social level with her peer group and participate in activities. Anne is a force. She is funny, spunky, and outgoing. As a homeschooled student Anne spends a lot of time with her parents, adults, and by herself. MPTC offers her a place to connect with other kids her own age and develop some of the very important social skills that kids often develop through school.

Meet Lea

Age 11

Lea has been coming to us since she was 10. When we first met Lea she was a quiet, shy girl. Lea decided to join our hip-hop dance team. As the year progressed we saw Lea's confidence grow. Lea had never done anything like dance before. The night of the recital she was nervous, but when the curtain lifted, this quiet girl danced her heart out and she loved it! Lea is looking forward to dance beginning again this year.

Meet Fissehn

Age 14

Fissehn is an awkward kid. Heavy set, socially aloof, he is a bit of a loner at times. When he does hook up with friends he can't steer towards kids who are likely to get him in trouble. When Fissehn first came into MPTC we were not sure what to expect. He seemed a little shy, but he came in with a group we know can be challenging. At MPTC, however, we do not judge a book by its cover. In Fissehn's case, it was a good thing, because we would have been very wrong. Fissehn is a great kid. Funny, loyal, a good friend. He seeks out those who are all by themselves and invites them to participate in activities. He is a role model for other kids. As it would turn out, Fissehn just needed someone to open the book and read a few passages to learn what he was all about.



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