

1. Stevens Square Community Center — Portland, Maine



Summary:

- The building originally opened in 1969 as Catherine McAuley High School (an all-girls preparatory school) in Portland’s Deering Center neighborhood. [Maine Preservation+2SSCC Website+2](#)
- It was adaptively reused and reopened as the Stevens Square Community Center. The project preserved the gymnasium and 480-seat auditorium and converted classrooms into wellness, childcare, commercial office, café, and fitness spaces. [Maine Preservation+1](#)
- The project also leveraged historic tax-credits, rezoning, and became part of a larger master-planned campus (the “Stevens Square” campus) that includes senior housing and other uses. [Maine Preservation+1](#)
- Key take-aways for your context in Windham:
 - Large spaces inherent in school buildings (gym, auditorium) can become community gathering hubs.
 - Mixed uses (childcare, wellness/fitness, offices) help make the center viable.
 - Securing tax-credit eligibility and rezoning were instrumental.
 - Retaining historic character can help build community support.

Why it stands out:

It shows how a school built for educational use was transformed into a full-service community center with multiple programmatic components—not simply housing or single use. This gives a viable model for “community center” (rather than only housing or retail) reuse.

2. Trowbridge Youth & Community Center — New Haven, Connecticut



Summary:

- The former Trowbridge School (about 100-years old) in New Haven had been vacant since 2008 and was re-imagined as a \$3.8 million neighborhood youth & community center. [New Haven Register](#)
- The repurposed facility will include a half-court gymnasium, multipurpose rooms, dedicated arts and music spaces, a food pantry, offices, and bathrooms (approx. 7,900 sq ft.) for the surrounding Hill neighborhood. [New Haven Register](#)
- The project involved restoring the historic façade, upgrading adjacent park space, and is tied to broader neighborhood revitalization efforts. [New Haven Register](#)
- Lessons applicable:
 - A smaller-scale, neighborhood-based community center can be developed out of an old school.
 - Integration with adjacent outdoor/park space enhances usage and community value.
 - Community input and activating long-vacant buildings boosts neighborhood morale.

Why it stands out:

Though smaller than the Maine example above, this model is directly a “school → community center” conversion (rather than housing). This aligns very closely with Windham’s objective of converting a middle school into a community center.

3. Former Marian High School Community Center Project — Framingham, Massachusetts



Summary:

- The city of Framingham purchased the former Marian High School (Union Ave, roughly 100,000 sq ft) in 2023 for ~\$3.35 million, with the goal of converting it into a multi-generational community center. [Yahoo+1](#)
- The building already contains amenities such as a basketball court and theater, making it a good fit for reuse as a community hub. [Yahoo](#)
- The project is in an early stage: a community survey is open to gather vision/needs and to plan renovations (roof, windows, accessibility). [Patch](#)
- For your Windham project:
 - The importance of surveying and getting resident input early.
 - Recognizing that older schools may require major infrastructure upgrades (windows, roof, ADA, HVAC).
 - Multi-generational usage (“age 3 to 103”) is possible and desirable.

Why it stands out:

While not yet fully converted (as of the latest updates) it is a timely Massachusetts example of a school-to-community-center conversion initiative. It provides insight into early-phase planning, budgeting, and community engagement.

4. Old School Community Center — Wilmington, Vermont



- Located in the former school building at 1 School Street in Wilmington VT and now operating as the “Old School Community Center”. [Old School Community Center+1](#)
- Program includes event/class spaces, meeting rooms, full-size gymnasium; the building functions as a “third space” for youth sports, senior activities, group learning, food-distribution, etc. [Seven Days](#)
- **Key insights:**
 - Even smaller rural buildings can become versatile centers: community meeting rooms + gym + flexible space.
 - Tenants include commercial space (offices, food production, counseling) alongside purely recreational/community uses.
 - Operating model: nonprofit-led, many spaces available free or low-cost to local groups.
- **Takeaway for Windham:** Leverage the gymnasium or cafeteria — common school “big rooms” are huge assets. Tailor programming to multiple age-groups and partner space offers to generate revenue.

5. Bridgewater Area Community Foundation project — Bridgewater, Vermont (former school → community center)



- The former school building is being transformed into the “Bridgewater Community Center” by the newly-formed Bridgewater Area Community Foundation. [PT Vermont](#)
- Planned uses: licensed childcare center, business & community spaces, programming to strengthen social ties and reduce isolation. [PT Vermont](#)
- **Key insights:**
 - The reuse project is inclusive of childcare and business/commercial tenants — allowing a broader fiscal base.
 - Even when full conversion is not yet complete, early engagement and foundation creation matters.
- **Takeaway for Windham:** Consider a mixed-tenant strategy: combine recreation/program space + rental offices + childcare or other social-service functions. That broadens stakeholder engagement and potential revenue streams.

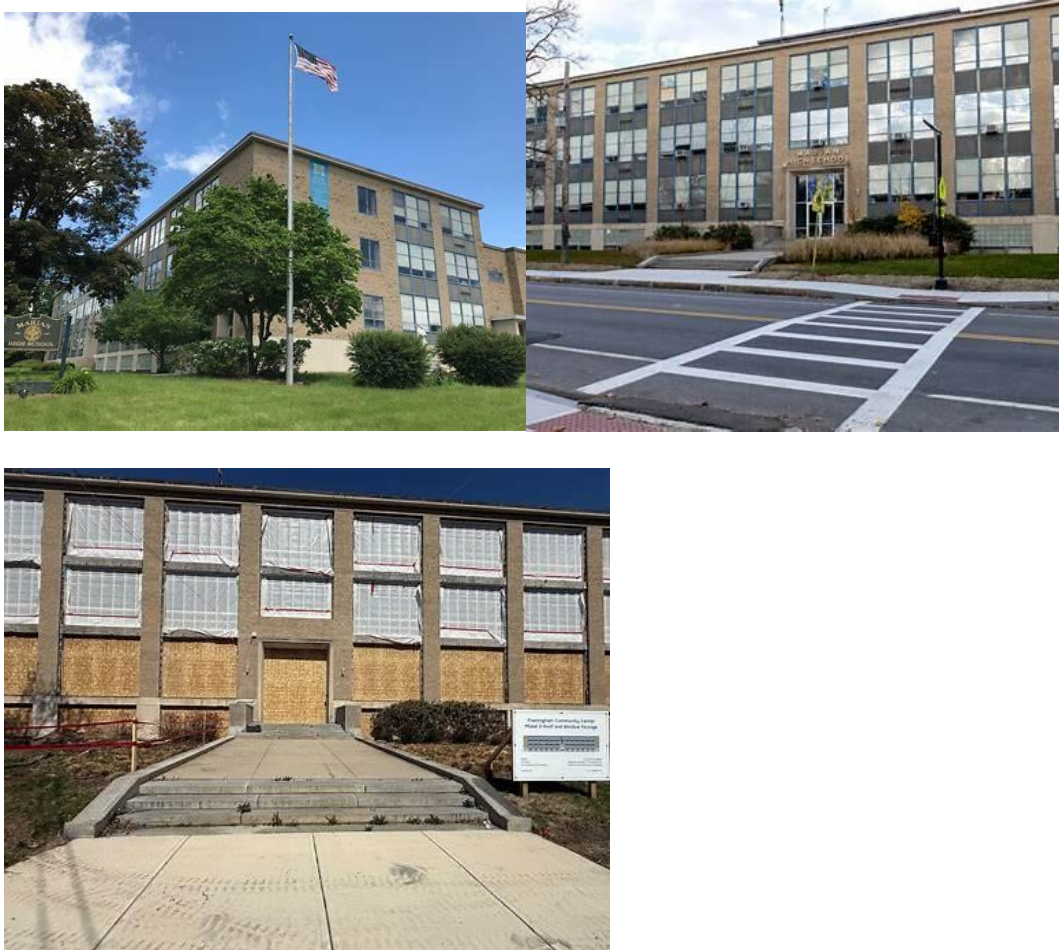
6. Champlain Housing Trust & Old North End Community Center — Burlington, Vermont (former school → community center)



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- The 1929 former “École Nazareth” school building in Burlington, VT has been converted into the Old North End Community Center, serving about 4,000 people yearly. [PT Vermont](#)
- Features: a large commercial kitchen, updated playgrounds, fiber-optic internet, restored historic windows, accessible elevator. [PT Vermont](#)
- **Key insights:**
 - Historic tax credits and preservation incentives were used to support conversion—helpful for budget planning.
 - Facilities incorporate modern needs (internet, accessibility) while preserving historic character.
 - Strong community impact: multiple tenants, multi-program usage.
- **Takeaway for Windham:** If the middle school building has historic qualities, explore state/federal tax credits and historic preservation grants. Also, build in modern infrastructure (internet, accessibility) from the start.

7. City of Framingham project — Framingham, Massachusetts (former Marian High School → community center)



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- In 2023 the city purchased the former Marian High School site (built in the 1950s) for ~\$3.35 million, with the intent to convert it into a multi-generational community center. [Patch](#)
- Current phase: securing windows, roof, and infrastructure. Community survey underway. [Patch](#)
- **Key insights:**
 - The project is at a planning/initial-rehab phase rather than completed. Important to note that even just acquiring and securing the building is a major step.
 - The organization is explicitly aiming for “age 3 to 103” usage — multi-generational programming.
 - Funding includes federal ARPA funds, federal earmark applications, local funds.
- **Takeaway for Windham:** Even if full conversion isn’t immediate, acquiring/stabilizing the building can lay the foundation. Community visioning process and staged infrastructure investment may make the project more feasible.

8. Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association of Boston & Quincy Grammar School — Boston/Chinatown, Massachusetts (former school → community center)



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- The Quincy Grammar School building (built 1859) at 88-90 Tyler St., Boston, is now owned by the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association of Boston and operates as a community center. [Wikipedia](#)
- Serves the immigrant community historically, retains its civic role albeit shifted from K-12 education to community service.
- **Key insights:**
 - The location in an urban neighborhood shows that community center conversions are not only for suburban/rural towns.
 - The building is smaller in scale compared with full middle/high schools but still offers model for neighborhood-centric use.
- **Takeaway for Windham:** Consider neighborhood-level programming (e.g., meeting rooms, language classes, cultural programs) in addition to full recreation services; location matters for foot traffic and community impact.

9. Dame School / City Wide Community Center — Concord, New Hampshire



- The former school building at 14 Canterbury Road in Concord, New Hampshire (once the “Dame School”) was converted into the “City Wide Community Center” by the city, opening in June 2018. [Resilient Buildings Group, Inc.+1](#)
- It retains parts of the old school (13,817 sq ft reused) plus ~16,926 sq ft new construction. [Visit Concord New Hampshire](#)
- Features include: offices for Parks & Rec, a branch of the public library, high school gymnasium, multi-purpose rooms, exercise rooms, senior lounge, teaching kitchen, and recreation programs open to all. [Visit Concord New Hampshire](#)
- **Lessons for Windham:**
 - Good example of *school* → *municipal / recreation facility* conversion rather than solely housing.
 - Integrates library, recreation, meeting rooms — good multi-generational model.
 - The “old plus new” construction/expansion approach shows flexibility for phased reuse.

10. Mahoney Middle School / Mahoney City Center Site — South Portland, Maine



- The city of South Portland, Maine is actively discussing the transformation of the 100-year-old former Mahoney School into a “Mahoney City Center” (library, public safety, city hall, meeting space). [WGME](#)
- The project is in the planning / community-design phase (“design deep dive” for resident input) rather than completed conversion.
- **Lessons for Windham:**
 - Useful case of **early engagement and design visioning**, before full renovation.
 - Shows how municipalities repurpose old school buildings for broader civic/community center functions.
 - Important to view planning as multi-stage: visioning → stabilization → renovation → operation.

11. Former School Building – Rochester Vermont Feasibility Study — Rochester, Vermont



- The town of Rochester, Vermont undertook a feasibility study for reuse of its former high school building as a “center for culture and community life.” rochestervermont.org
- The study covers activities such as childcare, adult daycare, local job creation, arts, community programming — i.e., broad community uses rather than just recreation.
- **Lessons for Windham:**
 - Good example of **preliminary assessment / feasibility work** — a step you may want to mirror in Windham.
 - Emphasizes thinking about financial sustainability, mix of uses, partnerships.
 - Reinforces that reuse does *not* have to be purely recreation — may include cultural, childcare, workforce elements.

