

## **Give Castleton Recreation a Home – Keep CVS!**

This spring, on Town Meeting Day Castleton voted 83% in favor (544 to 111) of having the town buy back the Castleton Village School building and grounds from the Slate Valley Unified Union School District for one dollar. On the same ballot, Castleton voters also approved (415 to 245) the funding for a new full time Recreation Director position. A first ever for our town! It is safe to assume that those who voted yes to the new director position wanted to see Castleton Recreation grow and expand. We also think it is also safe to assume that of the 544 people voting to buy back CVS for the town, 415 or 76% of them wanted to see the building stay in town ownership as a recreation facility so the Castleton Recreation can grow and expand!

In addition, 135 Castleton and Hubbardton residents signed our petition.

Why do we take the time to crunch these numbers? Because right now the select boards of Castleton and Hubbardton are deciding whether to sell or keep the soon to be closed Village School. And while they have held several public meetings, they have not stated publicly their process for how they will make the decision. No criteria or timeframe have been given for how they will judge the proposals.

Castleton Recreation has a proposal for the building that has been formally submitted to the Ad Hoc Committee of the select board. Our proposal is to repurpose CVS into the '*Community Village Square*', a Castleton-Hubbardton Recreation Center. The plan more than covers operating costs of running the building. Our vision is to keep the building in town ownership and for two well established organizations to manage and run the building. These two organizations: Castleton Recreation and The Boys and Girls Club of Rutland Co. both have paid professional staff whose offices would be in CVS. There is even room for a third private business that has expressed interest in the building.

Think of all the possibilities that a well maintained, accessible building with parking and surrounding greenspace would provide for our residents! Exciting new possibilities, many of which have never before been available locally. Indoor walking space for seniors, adult classes and sport leagues, community theater, community film screenings, space for a summer and winter farmers market, community gardens, maker space, and large town-wide gatherings such as harvest dinners, seasonal events and fundraisers. With classrooms, a gym with a stage, a small library, a kitchen, and an outdoor basketball court and ballfield, it is an incredible opportunity to have a physical space where we can provide many new activities for our citizens of all ages.

We are asking the residents of Castleton and Hubbardton to speak up and support turning CVS into the '*Community Village Square*', a Castleton-Hubbardton Recreation Center. Write to your select board members, come to the meetings Thursday June 16<sup>th</sup> and Wednesday June 29 at 6:00 pm and express your support for the Castleton Recreation proposal.

The availability of the Castleton Village School is a once in a lifetime opportunity for this town to have such a space and in the process, we can build a stronger, more vibrant and resilient community.

Castleton Recreation Commission

Martha Clifford, Ann Niklasson, Mike Hall, Nancy Parker, Mary Droege, Marley Parsons, Matt Ryan