

Wilder Club and Library

Charles Wilder's concept of a complete 19th Century community center that included a library (as well as a pool room, auditorium and even a bowling alley) resulted in the Wilder Club and Library. He left a small endowment that has helped support the building. Hall rentals contribute to support but are kept to as low a fee as possible to allow community members' use for family occasions. The historic building has been the recipient of multiple Vermont Historic Preservation and Cultural Facilities grants as well as local grants to become accessible while preserving historic integrity. This accessibility as well as a new air conditioning system encourages increased use by various organizations.

In 1997, the Wilder Club and Library trustees made the difficult but forward-looking decision to contract with Gates and Quechee Libraries to administer library services to reduce the redundancy and inefficiency of five distinct libraries in one town. At this point there had already been numerous attempts to improve cooperation. The Wilder Board acknowledged too that it was very difficult to keep a professional librarian for long in a part-time small library. After Gates Memorial Library closed, Quechee Library continued the contract with Wilder and, following automation, the two libraries became a fully integrated service.

SOLID WASTE

The Hartford Solid Waste, Recycling and Transfer Center is located on 19 acres of land on U.S. Route 5 South. In 1991, the Center underwent major changes resulting in a new recycling and solid waste facility that opened in June, 1992. The Center consists of an Administrative Office, Recycling Building, Scale House, and Household Hazardous Waste Building. The buildings have a total of 9,412 square feet. In July 1991, the Town began its curbside recycling program for residents of Hartford. Today, curbside collection and the main functions and services of the Center continue, where the uses for some of the spaces have changed including leasing a portion of the building for complementary uses such as a secondhand store and bottle/can redemption center.

The Center also includes a Construction and Demolition (C&D) transfer component. This service is open to all Town residents, businesses and property owners and the ten towns who are members of the Greater Upper Valley Solid Waste Management District (GUVSWMD). Several towns from New Hampshire also are allowed to use the construction and demolition area.

In addition to **recyclable drop-offs at the Center, the Town's curbside recycling p**rogram that started in 1991 has greatly increased the amount of recyclables taken from the waste stream. The table below shows the volumes for 2017 from curbside pick-up and drop-off at the Center from the Town and GUVSWMD.

**TABLE VI-3
COLLECTIONS OF RECYCLABLE MATERIALS – 2017**

Municipal Solid Waste (compacted & bulky) – 1200 Tons
Construction & Demolition Debris - 1100 Tons
Curbside Recycling - 726 Tons

Recycled Material at the Center – (403.35 Tons)

Scrap Metal	503,420 lbs. (251.71 Tons)
Specialty Metals	20,981 lbs. (10.49 Tons)
Aluminium Cans	8,800 lbs. (4.40 Tons)
Steel Cans	36,000 lbs. (18.00 Tons)
Tires	32,400 lbs. (16.20 Tons)
Batteries (Auto)	4,682 lbs. (2.35 Tons)
Batteries/Cell Phones	1,910 lbs. (.96 Ton)
Electronics	148,220 lbs. (74.11 Tons)
Paint	50,260 lbs. (25.13 Tons)

Note: Totals do not include volumes of household hazardous waste collected at regional HHW collections.

The Center also is a no-cost collection site for all Vermont residents for single-use and rechargeable batteries (Act 139), electronics (Act 79), paint (Act 58), and fluorescent and mercury containing bulbs (Act 39).

In 2016, a ground solar project was completed at the Center through a lease agreement with a solar company that installed and maintains a 500-kW array on top of the closed landfill. The solar field was projected to produce 892,000 kWh. In 2016, 2017, and 2018 it produced 832,405 kWh, 802,685 kWh, and 796,854 kWh. This renewable energy project allows the Town to reduce a portion of its annual electrical costs for various Town facilities.

Vermont Universal Recycling Law

In 2012, the Vermont Legislature unanimously passed the Universal Recycling Law (Act 148) in response to the state’s stagnant recycling rates that had hovered around 30-36% for nearly two decades. At that time, almost half of Vermonter’s trash was recyclable or compostable material. Putting these into landfills not only adversely impact valuable natural resources, but also release many more greenhouse gas emissions than reuse, recycling, food donation, and composting. The enactment of Act 148 was the response to this situation. In 2018, the Vermont Legislature made some changes to the law to address concerns about collection, disposal and timelines.

The law put in place the following goals with specific deadlines and benefits.

- Increase recycling and composting, which conserve natural resources and reduce greenhouse gas emissions and energy use.
- Promote food donation. Feed Vermonters not landfills.
- Provide consistent and convenient recycling and composting services statewide.

- Build green businesses and jobs that strengthen Vermont’s economy by encouraging businesses to invest in recycling, food donation, and organics management.
- Reduce the need for landfills, protecting our land, air, and water.

The Town is now gearing up for 2018 Food Scrap generators of 18 tons/year (1/3 ton/week) must divert material to any certified facility within twenty miles. Leaf, yard and clean wood debris are banned from the landfill. Haulers must offer leaf/yard debris collection. By 2020, all food scraps, including those from households, must be diverted with no exemption.

Financing the Solid Waste Program

The Center operates under enterprise-fund accounting rules. It is not a property tax-funded entity, but receives all operating expenses from tipping charges, membership fees, and commercial haulers and resident landfill user fees. The curbside recycling program that stops at all residences is supported by Town General Tax Funds. The market for recyclable materials is changing, most recently with fewer vendors that will take them and increasing costs. The Town also is experiencing a decline in the amount of construction and demolition debris coming to the facility. The Town is mindful of these trends and the need to review how the facility will be needed in the future.

Future for Hartford’s Solid Waste, Recycling and Transfer Center

While the Town has been successful over the years in providing needed solid waste services to residents, business and developers, changing markets, costs, available services within the region, and new state laws have altered the Center’s operations and costs. This has highlighted the need to review the future direction of the Center. It also has put a spotlight on the inadequate funding from the state to assist towns in meeting the Universal Recycling Law today, next year and beyond.

HUMAN SERVICES

The provision of human services is important, either directly or indirectly, to all residents of Hartford. Human-services programs serving Hartford and the region have been developed to help ensure the physical and mental health of the area residents and provide transportation, education, counseling, and other services. Hartford’s citizens have at their disposal a wide array of services. Citizens can access the complete list of agencies by dialing 211 or using the VT211 website.

CEMETERIES

Native Americans inhabited Vermont as early as 9,000 – 7,000 BC. Summer settlements typically occurred along rivers and streams. Settlement of Hartford by European descendants occurred about 250 years ago. Since the early days of Vermont, only associations, religious organizations, or private parties have principally owned and run cemeteries. Town and city governments avoided it. Only much later when those associations or religious groups had diminished and disappeared have governments, at their choice, stepped in to own and maintain a cemetery that had by then become inactive, aged, and historic.