

Approve Y proposal

The Westport Weston Family Y is the next largest community service provider after the schools and the town.

The special use permit application before the P&Z now has as its focus the betterment of Westport as a community.

There is significant precedent for special use permit approval for community benefit in Westport. I cite only those with which I am personally familiar. I was Chairman of the Westport Board of Education during the planning and approval for Green Farms Elementary School, Coleytown Middle School, Bedford Middle School and Wakeman Fields expansion, Saugatuck Elementary School, and Staples High School. I was there at the Compo Beach Playground with my hammer. All these special use sites had neighbors and were in neighborhoods, all were traffic generators, all had to deal with ground water runoff and one even had a huge onsite septic system. All of these had opposition; fortunately, all were approved. Today, if you visit these special use sites, you find many new homes adjacent to or near these wonderful community facilities, indicating that property value and neighborhood character remain vital. Newcomers to town no doubt would be surprised, perhaps shocked, to learn that there had been opposition to any one of these. Without question, all of these special use permit approvals have left Westport a better place.

Westport should be proud that these decisions were made and that the community is a better place now. Fruition of the WWFY proposal to move its highly valued community services to the Mahackno location will add another community institution that will leave Westport a better place.

*Steven Halstead
Westport*