



# Then and Now

## NOW What?

The Stillwater Community Center has been “saved” from the demolition crew and the Friends of Stillwater Community Center, Inc. is officially established to better negotiate and collaborate officially with other entities.

Where the heck to begin on what appears a daunting task to improve a heavily used community space and make it more appealing and marketable?

Since half the battle is creating a game plan, the group started with primary research, getting to know this wonderful old building from top to bottom, inside and out.

Last summer volunteers including representatives from groups that use the facility on a regular basis and city officials toured the entire building. Yes, even the vacant second floor and the stinky, old locker rooms on the far south end, behind the now lovely Lowry Activity Center – formerly the school’s gym.

A prioritized “wish list” of wants and needs was created from the tour. City staff already had a list and now the two merged into the Top 10 Maintenance Items and Projects.

Next, an amazing secondary research resource was available, thanks to a historical collection of information about Downtown Stillwater, the Stillwater Cultural District and the Stillwater Community Center created by the late Winfrey D. Houston.

The archive starts in 1987 with the City Commission investigating the possible use of the old middle school contracted with a firm to study building reuse. The timeline through 2016 includes some 20 studies, reports, task forces and surveys that directly or

indirectly impact the Stillwater Community Center or that the SCC could impact.

This information is being assimilated by the SCC Friends research committee to be cross checked with the Top 10 list, looking for places that are repeatedly identified as areas for enhanced use and marketability.

In 1991, Project Heart, was the first Stillwater Community Center occupant and serves Stillwater citizens nutritious meals five days a week. After 1 p.m. daily and weekends, however, the facility is seldom used, nor user friendly due to its layout with long, heavy tables.

So, for its first project, SCC Friends, Inc., the Stillwater Community Center Foundation and the City of Stillwater are partnering on the purchase of new lightweight, durable, round table seating for versatility, usability and marketability in the Project Heart space during its off-hours.

Then, of course, an extra fun event will be necessary to properly launch the “new” social venue at the SCC.

So, stay tuned!



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**Ann C. Houston** is a longtime supporter of the Stillwater Community Center and member of the Stillwater Community Center Foundation.

The Stillwater Community Center Foundation and the Friends of Stillwater Community Center strive to provide supplemental resources for the Stillwater Community Center to ensure its accessibility, affordability and sustainability for its use by residents and visitors of Stillwater and surrounding area. Visit [www.sccfriends.com](http://www.sccfriends.com) for more information.