



The Skating Club of Boston®

The following article was published by the [Boston Business Journal](#) on Thursday, May 30, 2019.

Boston Skating Club is building a \$37M facility in Norwood

By Jim Morrison – Special to the Journal

May 30, 2019

After 107 years, the historic Skating Club of Boston — one of the seven charter members of U.S. Figure Skating — is building a new home in the suburbs. It just broke ground on its new \$37 million facility at 750 University Ave. in Norwood, the former site of Lost Brook Golf Club.

Construction is expected to be completed in July 2020.

The 180,000-square-foot training facility will feature three rinks, a sports injury prevention and strength training center, dance studio, club and team locker rooms, coaches lounge, ticket office, lobby café, Club trophy room, library, multiple guest areas and meeting rooms, and an apparel and equipment store.

To finance the purchase, the club sold the land it owned next to its current Brighton location for \$14 million and then sold its current location for \$26 million. The club will continue to operate out of the 1240 Soldier's Field Road facility until the new building is ready.

The new facility was designed by Studio Troika Inc. and will be built by J. Calnan & Associates. Northstar Project and Real Estate Services are the project managers. The project is financed in part by Dedham Institution for Savings and MassDevelopment.

The Skating Club of Boston is one of just a few clubs in the country that owns its own skating facilities, according to the club's executive director, Doug Zeghibe. He said the current facilities have been outdated for many years, but the search for the right location to build new facilities has taken several years due to increasingly high costs of developing land in Greater Boston.

"Most towns had trouble thinking of us as anything more than a hockey club," Zeghibe said. "Norwood has been exceptional. Our project manager says they're supportive and working with us, not against us. I credit the town manager and the board of selectmen for that. It makes a huge difference."

Zeghibe said Norwood is central to most of the club's 800 members, who come from as far away as Maine, Worcester, Connecticut and Rhode Island, as well as all over Greater Boston. As a nonprofit, the

Skating Club will not be assessed property taxes at the state-of-the-art facility, but it is expected to generate economic and other benefits for the town.

In addition to the economic impact of the construction, once it's completed, the club will bring 30 full-time jobs to Norwood. Also, the thousands of skaters and spectators who come to the facility each year are expected to provide a boost to local businesses.

In fact, both the Planning Board and Board of Selectmen both voted unanimously to approve the project, which will benefit the town by including discounted ice time for the Norwood High School hockey team and the youth program as well as reduced-price memberships for Norwood residents.

Norwood Planning and Economic Development Director Paul Halkiotis said the total value of Skating Club's economic impact on the town will be more than the Golf Club which operated previously on that site.

"There's also the cachet that come from having a facility like that in our town," Halkiotis said. "We were told once the building is complete, the club is going to try to get the facility designated as an Olympic training facility. There's only two of those in the U.S. This would be the only one on the east coast. We'd be proud to have a building with the five Olympic rings on it in town."

Zeghibe said the current facilities are analogous to Fenway Park: very old, outdated and much loved.

"It was built for a sport that was very different at that time," Zeghibe said. "There are no dedicated offices or even dance studio. We use another room, but the athletes can't jump because it shakes the floor too much. There are no medical support facilities. And it only has seating for 300. But still, when Olympic athletes are in town, they all want to skate there because of the history."

Well-known Boston surgeon and 1956 Olympic gold medalist Dr. Tenley Albright said she loves the old facility and will miss it. She began skating after seeing the Boston Skating Club's "Ice Chips" show there, and she's excited to see it performed in the new facilities.

"We're all very much like a family," Albright said. "It's a time when so many more people want to skate. The new building will be a place for competitions and it's natural for it to grow. I was quite excited to be there. This is bringing together health music choreography and skating. It has been exciting."