



STAFF FILE PHOTO/PAUL FRANZ

**Ben Goldsher, who manages the Hawks & Reed Performing Arts Center in Greenfield, will host a benefit on Sunday, Aug. 8, for the skate park.**

## GREENFIELD

# Skate park backers planning benefit

'Great town energy': Event to raise funding, awareness of proposed

By **MARY BYRNE**  
Staff Writer

GREENFIELD — In an effort to raise awareness and money for the construction of a new skate park, a collaboration of the Recreation Department and local interest groups is hosting a benefit at Hawks & Reed Performing Arts Center.

The event, scheduled for Sunday, Aug. 8, will feature a lineup of area artists, including Moxie, Lou Barlow, Power Trousers and The Feldons.

"Our plan is to try and raise as much money as possible to help this project happen," said Ben Goldsher, who manages the performance venue at 289 Main St. "There's great energy with the town and the Recreation Department wanting to see this project happen."

The new skate park — which will replace the former 17,000-square-foot skate park at the back of what is now the Olive Street Apartments — is proposed for the upper section of the Chapman and Davis Street parking lot.

The total estimated cost of the skate park project is \$775,000, Recreation Director Christy Moore said at a meeting about the park in June. The city expects to fund the project with a Parkland Acquisitions and Renovations for Communities (PARC) grant, a city match (from capital funding) of \$350,000, and donations and fundraising.

Moore said the two-year PARC grant, an application for which has been submitted and that could be awarded by the fall, would fund the design phase in fiscal year 2022, with construction beginning July 1, 2023.

"I'm thankful for Ben at Hawks & Reed, who is an avid skateboarder, for putting this event on," Moore said. "He hopes to have others in the future."

Susan Worgaftik, a member of the Friends of Greenfield Recreation, said so far the group has raised \$25,000 in community donations.

"We don't yet know what the actual cost of the skate park will be, but our fundraising goal is to do another \$50,000 over the \$25,000," Worgaftik said. "That would give us the extra money that we would need to make the park really something special."

The benefit in August will help bring the Friends of Greenfield Recreation closer to that goal.

"We just want to do something good for the community," said Goldsher, who is organizing the event with the help of local skaters Barry Scott and Jeremy Latch, along with the group Greenfield Skate and the Recreation Department. "This, to me,

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STAFF PHOTO/MARY BYRNE

**Ben Goldsher, from left, Barry Scott, Al Goodwin, Jeremy Latch and Brian Rodix meet Tuesday outside the Hawks & Reed Performing Arts Center to discuss fundraising efforts for the new skate park in Greenfield.**

## Skate park benefit Aug. 8

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is something I'd like to put my efforts behind, because I see a lot of benefit for our town."

Goldsher said the lineup for the event includes a diverse group of talent from Greenfield and Brattleboro, Vt., with band members who have an interest in supporting the cause. In particular, Lou Barlow is of the Amherst-based band Dinosaur Jr., a skater band whose music has been featured in skating films, Goldsher noted.

"This is hopefully the start for a few events we will be doing in support of this," he said. "It would be awesome in two years to see a skate park in Greenfield."

All sales from tickets will go toward the Friends of Greenfield Recreation's fund for the skate park, as will profits made through raffles at the event.

"If you look at towns

around us that have recently developed a skate park — Turners has a beautiful new skate park — it really brings a town together," Goldsher said. "It brings people to a central location and gives them something to do. It's a diverse population of people — kids who are 1 to 2 years old, to 60-, 70-year-olds, either cheering on somebody or riding themselves."

An avid skater himself, Goldsher — who recalled skating at the former skate park before it was torn down

— said skate parks are "an important part of every town."

"Ultimately," he said, "I think every town that has a ballfield and a basketball court should have a skate park."

Tickets can be purchased at the door for \$20, or in advance for \$15 via Hawks & Reed's website at [bit.ly/3ip-kksS](https://bit.ly/3ip-kksS). Doors open at 5 p.m.

*Mary Byrne can be reached at [mbyrne@recorder.com](mailto:mbyrne@recorder.com) or 413-930-4429. Twitter: @MaryEByrne.*