

OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE

The purpose of the Open Space Committee is to advise the town on open space protection priorities and to assist the Conservation Commission in developing and implementing Stow's Open Space and Recreation Plan. As part of its efforts to implement the 2008 Open Space and Recreation Plan, the Committee began studying the significance of Stow's golf courses in terms of natural resource values and town character. This included looking at what ecological and community resources are supported on these properties and which portions of these properties are most significant in terms of open space values. Although the golf courses of Stow are healthy and thriving, the Open Space Committee feels the town should be planning today for any changes that may occur in the future.

Earlier in the year, the Open Space Committee commented on the Metropolitan Area Planning Commission's (MAPC) 495 Corridor Study. The committee suggested changes to the study based on priorities outlined in the Stow Open Space and Recreation Plan. Following its establishment in 2010, Stow's Chapter 61 Quick Response Team finalized the design and content of its Information Sheet. The sheet is a report designed to quickly orient town officials regarding properties on which the town may exercise Right-of-First-Refusal, as part of the Chapter 61 program.

Finally, the Open Space Committee reviewed the priority parcels identified in the town Open Space and Recreation Plan. This included a field trip by car to re-acquaint committee members with the location and character of each of the properties.

Respectfully submitted,

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RANDALL LIBRARY

2011 was an unusual year for the Randall Library. Increasing dissatisfaction with the library's awkward layout, limited study space, lack of parking, and chronic water leak problems led to consideration of a move to the soon-to-be vacated Pompositticut School.

Library trustees and the library director contacted the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners to discuss the possibility of receiving a state construction grant to help offset the cost of retrofitting the building. Rosemary Waltos, MBLC building consultant for small libraries, walked the site with library director Susan Wusk. Given that the MBLC does not recommend mixed-use buildings for public libraries, and funds for the next grant round will not be disbursed until FY2017, the funding seemed problematic. The Randall Library trustees held focus groups at the library to judge residents' response to a possible move. At the focus groups,