

Stow: Forever Green

Preserving the Stow we Know



Stow Open Space and Recreation Plan
June 2008



IMPORTANT NOTES FOR READERS

Purpose of Plan: This plan is an update of the 1997 Open Space and Recreation Plan prepared by the town of Stow. The plan summarizes the progress that the town has made in providing for its open space and recreation needs and sets forth goals and specific action items for the next five years. The plan is designed to provide a framework for the efforts of various town boards and committees involved in the protection Stow's open lands and to guide municipal partnership efforts with both state and federal agencies and nonprofit organizations. It will also help guide work by the town's Community Preservation Committee and will serve as the Natural Resources and Open Space component of the town's Master Plan, currently under revision. The Open Space and Recreation Plan must be updated every five years to maintain eligibility for the Commonwealth's Self Help and Urban Self Help Grant programs.

A Word About Maps: For the first time, Stow has been able to take advantage of GIS mapping technology in preparing the Open Space and Recreation Plan. While this has allowed the production of much higher quality maps than had been in previous versions of the plan, along with information on landownership, it also means that it is easy to find errors. Every day in Stow this information changes -- parcels are divided and ownership changes, properties are enrolled or removed from Chapter 61 preferential taxation programs, and lands are protected. The Open Space and Recreation Plan was prepared over several years, and we have used the best available information at the time the plan was prepared. In some cases there are minor acreage discrepancies that do not materially affect the recommendations in this plan. In addition, the maps are illustrative and are certainly not intended to be used for regulatory purposes. As an example, this includes wetlands, rare species, floodplain and zoning maps, where the original source should always be consulted.

Content & Executive Summary: The contents and order of the items in this Open Space and Recreation Plan are set forth in state guidelines for community open space and recreation plans. It is anticipated that a more "user-friendly" executive summary of this plan will be prepared for public distribution and made available on Stow's web site.

Updates: We anticipate continuing to update this plan on a regular basis and encourage residents to bring to our attention any revisions or corrections that should be made in the next update. If you are interested in assisting with implementation of the action items in this Open Space and Recreation Plan, please contact the Stow Conservation Commission.

Thank you.

Stow Open Space and Recreation Plan Committee

Stow Open Space Committee

Stow Conservation Commission

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- C – Comment Letters from Public Agencies on Draft Plan
- D- Accessibility Inventory
- E- Commonwealth Agricultural Lands Executive Order and Mitigation Policy
- F – EOEА Article 97 Policy
- G – Opinion of the Attorney General Article 97, Massachusetts Constitution