

## **SPECIAL COMMITTEES**

### **ASSABET RIVER RAIL TRAIL COMMITTEE**

With the purchase of the trail easement from the Maynard line to Sudbury Road completed in 2009, our committee continued to explore routes to continue the trail to Hudson. In the spring, Clark University graduate students undertook a project to use GIS and other data to map potentially suitable routes to make that connection from Sudbury Road to Hudson. Although the results were interesting, the committee felt that none of the routes were feasible.

In June the committee reported to the Selectmen that we were stymied in our efforts to find a suitable route to connect to the trail in Hudson, and had gone as far as we could. In July the Selectmen voted to dissolve the Rail Trail Committee, and voted to form a Multi-use Path Committee.

Rail Trail activities continued. Several representatives of the Town attended an August meeting of the Metropolitan Planning Organization in Boston, where we learned that monies were still available for the design and construction of the Stow portion of the trail, and that Stow might be able to join the existing Acton-Maynard design project, which was expected to restart soon. The November Special Town Meeting approved the expenditure of \$46,000 of CPA funds as Stow's share of the expected design cost of the "Track Road" portion. The Selectmen held a public meeting for discussion and input about trail uses and users, trail surfacing options and trailside amenities. They then developed a questionnaire for use at other public meetings and online for additional public input. The questionnaire closed on January 15, 2011.

Respectfully submitted,

Don Rising, Chairman

### **ELEMENTARY SCHOOL BUILDING COMMITTEE**

The Elementary School Building Committee was formed following the 2007 Annual Town Meeting, which voted to support an addition/renovation at Center Elementary School. As outlined by the selectmen, the ESBC duties are to:

*Direct and oversee the renovation and addition to the Center School, as recommended by the School Building Task Force and approved by the residents of Stow in May 2007. To include bringing a firm estimate of cost to Town Meeting for approval. To include hiring design services, contractor and other professionals as required. The Committee shall use the final report of the School Building Task Force as well as the Stow Schools Master Plan in their work. Committee members will need to be versed in the requirements of the Mass. School Building Authority (MSBA) and ensure that the building project meets all the requirements for potential reimbursement.*

2010 opened with the committee completing the design development phase, receiving approval from the MSBA and then moving quickly into a search for a contractor. We reviewed and approved a number of design features, from color of brick to acoustic options. We met with various town boards, particularly Planning and Conservation, to get site approval, working with all to develop acceptable order of conditions. Because of significant efforts by our design team, Symmes Maini McKee Architects, we were able to go to bid on the first of May. The public bid laws we function under required pre-qualification of all potential bidders and their subcontractors, but we still received eight qualified bids and the contract was awarded to P.J. Stella with a bid of \$23 million, \$5 million less than we'd expected.

After many years of hard work, it was a joy to invite the community to the groundbreaking on June 17, highlighted by all the elementary school children attending with yellow "hard hats", and a presentation of a "check" for approximately \$18 million from State Treasurer Tim Cahill and MSBA Executive Director Katherine Craven. The "real" work started shortly thereafter as the fences went up, the trucks arrived and the development of the site began. We were grateful to Shelburne Farm and the Painters for taking ownership of the Old Blacksmith Shop and relocating it up on the farm where we are sure it will be well tended.

The committee's responsibilities during construction are quality and cost control. We now meet monthly with the design team (Project Manager and Architects) to hear updates, and vote on change orders and payment requisitions. Our project manager has a clerk of the works on site acting as our "eyes" on a daily basis, and through him we keep tabs on the contractor and his subcontractors. It took some time to work out the working relationship; the experience of our design team kept us confident that we were in good hands in these early days of negotiation. There were inevitable challenges and surprises through the fall: under all the vegetation, wetlands were closer to the building site than expected; as the old wing was taken down, some unexpected asbestos pipe needed to be carefully removed; and ledge was more prevalent in parts of the site than anticipated. But things moved forward through the end of the year, when the heaviest snowfall in memory began to fall. Though the steel arrived a bit late, the team started raising the structure in spite of weekly snowfalls.

As 2011 arrives, we are expecting the schedule to be a bit behind, but still see the transfer into the new wing over the winter vacation 2011 (grades 4 and 5), and grand opening in September 2012. We're pleased to report that the MSBA is already paying us approximately half of our expenses (50.85% of allowable costs) on a monthly basis, saving the town thousands of dollars in interest expense. Our final revised budget should be accepted this month by the MSBA, confirming the savings from our low bid. Fundraising continues and [www.stowrecess.org](http://www.stowrecess.org) continues to seek the community's help in finding sources of funds to offset the taxpayer burden.

The ESBC wants to acknowledge the patience, enthusiasm and support of staff and teachers, not to mention the students of Pompo and Center Schools, as we move through the construction project. The impact is felt throughout the school community, and yet the optimism of a new school carries us all through the bumps and challenges. We encourage residents to keep track of our progress through the town website, where all meetings, minutes and documents are updated regularly.

Respectfully submitted,

Ellen S. Sturgis, Co-Chair  
Amy Finkel Hastings, Co-Chair; Architect  
Michael Wood, Superintendent  
Stephen Quinn, Contractor; Planning Board  
Craig Martin, Building Inspector  
Gary Bernklow, Finance Committee

Lynn Colletti, School Committee  
Charlie Kern, Selectman  
David Korn, Associate Member  
Lisa D'Alessio, Associate Member  
Gregory Irvine, Ex-officio; Principal,  
Pompo & Center Schools

### **MASTER PLAN COMMITTEE**

We are delighted to report that the Master Plan was finished late in the Fall of 2010, accepted by the Planning Board in January, 2011 and presented to the Stow Selectmen in February 2011. It can be read on the town website or at the Randall Library.

Respectfully submitted,

Marcia Rising, Chairman  
Steve Dungan  
Charles Kern  
Karen Kelleher

Rebecca Mattison  
Roy Miller  
Kathleen Willis

### **POMPO USE STUDY COMMITTEE**

The Pompo Use Study Committee, which reports to the Board of Selectmen, is composed of five members, each serving an indefinite term. The Committee is responsible for finding the best use possible for the Pompositticut School Building after the Nashoba Regional School District has vacated the Building.

In the past year we have been gathering information by utilizing on-line surveys, newspapers, public forums and interviewing those departments, groups and businesses that are interested in space at the Pompositticut building. It is our mission to be sure that everyone is heard and we deliver an accurate and well-planned idea for the building.

The Committee wants to thank the Board of Selectmen, the Town Administrator, and all the Town Departments that supported us through the year, and especially the citizens that took the time to share their ideas and thoughts with us.

We would also like to make a special thank you to Associate Patricia Bolton, who not only attended meetings but also telephoned in from Iraq while on tour with the United States Army Corps of Engineers.

Respectfully submitted,

James Sauta, Chairman

Mike Busch

Patricia Bolton, Associate

Paul Chaisson

Rob Aldape, Associate

Gus Stathis

Ann Deluty

Elizabeth Tobey, Secretary

### **STOW MUNICIPAL AFFORDABLE HOUSING TRUST**

The Stow Municipal Affordable Housing Trust (SMAHT) was established by Town Meeting vote on May 16, 2005 when the Town voted to accept the provisions of MGL C44 s 55C, paragraphs (a) through (j) inclusive, establishing a municipal affordable housing trust fund. In May 2008, Town Meeting voted to adopt a Municipal Affordable Housing Trust, which provides for a Board of Trustees consisting of seven trustees to be appointed by the Board of Selectmen, one of whom must be a selectman. Trustees serve for a term of two years, with no limit on the number of terms.

The purpose of the Trust is to foster the development of affordable housing. Specifically, the powers and duties of the Trust allow it to buy and sell real estate, borrow money, develop and hold property, and all with the benefits of being under the Town's municipal structure – insurance coverage, investment management and accounting, and other such administrative functions. The Trust requires Board of Selectmen approval for any real estate transaction over \$200,000, and Town Meeting approval to borrow, mortgage or pledge for amounts greater than the current Trust assets. At Annual Town Meeting in 2010, the Town augmented the Trust's powers and abilities by granting it the ability to lend funds.

The Trust continues to be active and in 2010 focused on finalizing development of a Housing Production Plan (HPP). Building on work begun in 2009, the SMAHT Board edited the draft compiled by a consultant, paid for with Community Preservation funds, then circulated the revised draft plan for review and comment by Town boards and committees. SMAHT met with the Planning Board and Selectmen to review the draft plan, and incorporated their suggested changes, particularly related to zoning changes. The final draft was submitted to the state Department of Community Housing Development in December 2010.

SMAHT continued to partner with the Master Plan Committee in drafting the Housing element of the Stow Master Plan, to ensure that the housing goals and objectives of the Master Plan complement the Housing Production Plan. The Master Plan was completed in late 2010.

In addition to the Housing Production Plan, SMAHT worked to develop a loan program to help facilitate the production of affordable housing units eligible for inclusion on the Town's

Subsidized Housing Inventory. Loan documents were drafted and approved by town counsel. In late 2010 SMAHT began negotiations with the developers of the proposed Plantation II and Pilot Grove II affordable housing expansions to lend certain pre-development costs. Both developments are integral parts of the HPP. Those negotiations will continue into 2011.

As of December 31, 2010, there was \$206,121.51 in the Trust Fund.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Jacobs, Chair  
Michael Kopczynski, Vice Chair  
Quince Papanastassiou

Trish Settles  
Cynthia Perkins  
James Salvie, Selectman

## **OUR HERITAGE**

### **ANCIENT DOCUMENTS COMMITTEE**

A complete inventory of all artifacts in the historical museum in Randall Library and in the Town Vault was compiled by Liz Moseley, curator. She researched early Town Reports and 50 years of minutes of the Stow Historical Society to bring this information up to date. Based on this research, work continues on the reorganization of the museum and creating identification tags for the artifacts.

In conjunction with this project, Ralph Fuller created the cover pages entitled “Treasures of Stow’s Attic” for the 2009 Town Report. The artifacts are all part of Stow’s history, reflecting the people who lived here, the way of life in times past and the town’s growth through more than 300 years. Townspeople are urged to donate items of Stow history to the town’s collection by calling Liz Moseley at 978-897-4930.

For the second year all third grades from Center School visited the Town Hall in June for a History Day. A pictorial history of Stow was followed by a hands-on show of historical items from the Randall Library Museum and personal collections of committee members.

The Ancient Documents Committee and the Historical Society sponsored a guided walk of Upper Village for Springfest in May. Ralph Fuller was the guide for the tour, which ended with a Victorian tea at the former manse of the Union Church, home of one of the committee members.

Requests were received for genealogical information for Ephraim Robbins, Samuel Gates I, II and III; William Henry Parker and the Randall family.

Bob MacDonald volunteered to computerize a large collection of deeds from the vault, and the committee welcomed Dorothy Spaulding as a new member. She is interested in continuing organization of old cemetery records.