

The warrant article requesting the retention of the stone building was pulled off the warrant on April 13. However, numerous letters to the paper and misinformation circulated by its proponents continue to circulate, so the ESBC posted this statement (May 2010)

The Elementary School Building Committee (ESBC) is comprised of residents with professional backgrounds in civil engineering, construction, architecture, education and finance. We have worked closely with the Massachusetts School Building Authority and, with them, have hired reputable architects (SMMA) and a project manager (CMS) to design and build a school that meets the priorities and needs of our community.

Throughout the planning and design process of this project, community input, along with the financial impact to residents and the educational and safety needs of the students have been paramount. As a result, SMMA has provided - and the ESBC has analyzed - over 20 design concepts. There were many difficult decisions made along the way, but in the end, the ESBC chose the safest and most economical plan, which most efficiently utilized space on a very limited site.

In regard to the stone building in particular, the Stow Historical Commission was consulted and their official opinion for Town Meeting in October 2009, was that while they objected to the razing of the stone building, if Town Meeting passed the plan as proposed, they requested a suitable memorial to the building on school property. Separate funds for a memorial were always part of the project budget, so after the positive vote at Town Meeting and at the polls, the ESBC proceeded as planned to work with the Stow Historical Commission and design an acceptable memorial. The removal of the stone building was part of the design presented at Town Meeting, a point accentuated by the Stow Historical Commission's public announcement of their opinion (as referenced above) before the vote was taken. In addition, the Massachusetts Historical Commission has determined that the building has no historical integrity and its removal will not affect any significant historic or archaeological resources.

The decision to remove the stone building was based on a rational analysis of educational programming, safety, cost, and the most practical use of the existing school site. To suggest otherwise is to diminish years of hard work by dozens of volunteer committee members and expert analysis completed by qualified professionals in regular public meetings.