

Section 5

Inventory of Lands of Conservation and Recreation Interest

This section of the Open Space and Recreation Plan contains an inventory of existing open space and recreation land in the Town of Stow – both publicly and privately owned – as well as land that has been identified as being of interest for future conservation and recreation purposes. These lands are divided into different categories of open space that are further explained in the narrative below and shown on Map 14.

Why Conserve Land?

Land conservation is an important municipal activity to advance a wide array of priorities and objectives. The acquisition of land or rights such as conservation restrictions can accomplish all of the following:

- Protect important surface and groundwater resources to promote public health and provide future economic expansion opportunities
- Maintain community character and preserve the rural and agricultural character of Stow
- Keep productive agricultural soils in production to ensure continued local food production (with a small carbon footprint)
- Provide passive or active recreation opportunities to encourage exercise and physical fitness
- Preserve open space in densely developed areas to provide a place where citizens can experience solitude and reduced congestion and stress
- Provide habitat for native animal and plant species, and for humans to experience the wonders of nature first hand
- Maintain the often overlooked green infrastructure that preserves natural system functions and ecosystem services such as clean air and water
- Minimize the impacts of climate change by making land and systems more resilient and protecting stream corridors and floodplains

These are some of the many community priorities that can be accomplished through ongoing municipal land conservation efforts. Unfortunately, many communities fail to appreciate what land conservation could do for their community until it is too late, and opportunities disappear forever. The challenge is to see the tremendous potential of this tool, and to use it wisely while we still can. The Open Space and Recreation Plan is a roadmap to do just that.

5A. Inventory of Protected Land in Stow

Town Land Managed by the Conservation and Recreation Commission

All land acquired by the Town and placed under the control of the Conservation Commission is protected by Article 97 of the Amendments to the State Constitution or simply “Article 97”. This provision protects lands acquired for natural resource purposes, meaning “conservation, development and utilization of the agricultural, mineral, forest, water, air or other natural resources.” Lands acquired for these uses cannot be converted to any other use without the following actions: 1) the local conservation commission must vote that the land is surplus to its needs, 2) the matter must be taken up at Town Meeting and pass by a 2/3 vote, 3) the town must file an Environmental Notification Form with the Commonwealth Executive Office of Energy and Environment, and 4) the matter must pass by a 2/3 vote of the Massachusetts Legislature. If the property was either acquired or developed

with grant assistance from EOE's Division of Conservation Services the converted land must be replaced with land of equal monetary value and conservation utility. Lands protected by Article 97 are often owned by the municipal conservation commission, recreation commission, water department, or state and/or federal agencies. Lands acquired for general municipal purposes and under the control of the Board of Selectmen are generally not protected by Article 97.

Table 5-1 contains information about land under the control of the Stow Conservation Commission and Recreation Commission. In some cases, additional research is needed to determine the level of protection of specific parcels. However, where that information is known it is included in the table.

TABLE 5-1: Inventory of Stow Conservation and Recreation Parcels

<u>Area/ Parcel Name</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Map/Parc.</u>	<u>Area</u>	<u>Owner /Mgr</u>	<u>Acq. Date</u>	<u>How Acquired?</u>	<u>Funding</u>	<u>Protection</u>	<u>Current Uses & Access</u>	<u>Zone</u>	<u>Condit ion</u> (excellent to poor)	<u>Add'l Rec. Opps</u> Potential for additional recreation uses
Northeastern Stow												
Flagg Hill Cons. Area/SVT	Boxboro/W. Acton	R20/6A(part)	98.0	SCC	Feb-99	P	1, 4	1,2	1,2,6	RC & R	G	n/a
Flagg Hill/Woodhead	Boxboro	R20/6A (part)	42.0	SCC	May-99	B	1, 4	1,2, 5	1,2,6	RC	G	Emerald Necklace trail
Flagg Hill/Boyer	W. Acton	R20/6A(part)	74.3	SCC	May-99	P	1, 4	1,2,5	1,2,6	RC	G	n/a
Flagg Hill/Sureau	Off W Acton	R20/6A(part)	28.0	SCC	Apr-99	P	1,4	1, 2	1,2,6	RC	G	n/a
Flagg Hill/Stuart (Bxbro)	W. Acton	R19#3	17.8	Boxboro CC	Jun-98			1	1,2,6	RC	G	n/a
Flagg Hill/Trefry Lane Open Space	Trefry La	R19/5A-A;5A-B	32.3	SCC	Aug-06	G	N/A	1, 4, 5	1,2,6	R	G	n/a
Flagg Hill/Waluck	Off Windemere	R-19/2A	4.7	SCC	Apr-03	P	2	1	1,2,6	RC	G	n/a
Captain Sargent Conservation Area	S.Acton	R21/43	36.0	SCC	Oct-81	B	1,4	1,2,	1,2,3,6	RC	G	Trail to Acton pending
Captain Sargent Conservation Area	Tuttle	R31/15	117.0	SCC	Oct-81	B	1...	1,2,	1,2,3,7	RC	G	Potential for ADA access

<u>Area/ Parcel Name</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Map/Parc.</u>	<u>Area</u>	<u>Owner /Mgr</u>	<u>Acq. Date</u>	<u>How Acquired?</u>	<u>Funding</u>	<u>Protection</u>	<u>Uses</u>	<u>Zone</u>	<u>Condit ion</u>	<u>Add'l Rec. Opps</u>
						P=Purchase; B=Bargain Sale; T=Transfer G=Gift; TT-Tax Taking	1=State/Fed eral Funds; 2=Stow Cons Fund; 3=CPA; 4=Other Municipal;	1=Article 97; 2=SH Agreement; 3=3rd Party CR; 4=Permit Conditions; 5=Deed Restrictions; 6=Reverter	1=Conservation & Passive Recreation; 2=Trails; 3=Agriculture & Community Gardens; 4=Playing Fields; 5=Fitness Course; 6=Parking	R – residential RC – recreation/ conservati on	Excele nt to poor	potential for additional recreation uses
Northwestern Stow												
Marble Hill Conservation Area	Great Rd.	R9/80	249. 2	SCC	Jan-75	B	1	1,2	1,2,5,6	RC	E	n/a
Maura Drive Open Space (Nyhan)	Off Taylor Rd	R7/30-8	26.7	SCC	Jan-84	G	N/A	1,4,5	1,2	R & I	G	n/a
Derby Woods Open Space	Off Harvard Rd.	R4/35A	42.5	SCC	Dec-13	G	N/A	1,3,4	1,2	R & RC	G	n/a
Pacy Land (Delaney)	Off October La	R4/32A	3.6	SCC	Aug-06	B	2	1	1	RC	E	n/a
Southeastern Stow												
Gardner Hill Conservation Area/Town Forest	Brookside Ave	R29/105	326. 5	SCC	Aug-68	P	1,4	1,2	1,2,6	RC	G	New SCT Trail links needed
Gardner Hill/Caswell Land	Off White Pond	R29/74-2	18.8	SCC	Dec-93	B	?	1	1,2	C & RC	G	n/a

<u>Area/ Parcel Name</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Map/Parc.</u>	<u>Area</u>	<u>Owner /Mgr</u>	<u>Acq. Date</u>	<u>How Acquired?</u>	<u>Funding</u>	<u>Protection</u>	<u>Uses</u>	<u>Zone</u>	<u>Cond ition</u>	<u>Add'l Rec. Opps</u>
						P=Purchase; B=Bargain Sale; T=Transfer G=Gift; TT-Tax Taking	1=State/Fed eral Funds; 2=Stow Cons Fund; 3=CPA; 4=Other Municipal;	1=Article 97; 2=SH Agreement; 3=3rd Party CR; 4=Permit Conditions; 5=Deed Restrictions; 6=Reverter	1=Conservation & Passive Recreation; 2=Trails; 3=Agriculture & Community Gardens; 4=Playing Fields; 5=Fitness Course; 6=Parking	R – residential RC – recreation/ conservati on	Excell ent to poor	potential for additional recreation uses
Gardner Hill/Taylor	Off White Pond	R29/74A	2.5	SCC	Jun-72	P	2?	1	1,2	RC	G	n/a
Gardner Hill/ Eliz Brk Farms	Off Heritage	R29/85B	17.7	SCC	May-98	G	N/A	1,4	1,2	R & RC	G	n/a
Memorial Field	Bradley	R29/104	5.0	SRC	?				4, 6	R	G	n/a
Apple Blossom Woods	Apple Blossom	R14/6A-G	6.8	SCC	Aug-92	G	N/A	1,4,5	1	R & RC	G	n/a
Dawes Lot	Sudbury	U6/9A	0.1	SCC	Jan-83	G	N/A	1	1	R & RC	G	n/a
Kingland Road A (SCT)	Kingland	U4/63	0.4	SCC	May-81	G	N/A	1	1	R	F	Boating ?
Kingland Road B	Kingland	U4/74	1.2	SCC	Jan-81	G	N/A	1	1	R	F	Boating ?
Pine Bluff Recreation Area	Sudbury	U3/12	31.0	SRC	Dec-75	P	?	1, 5	4, 6	RC	G	ADA project in progress
Southwestern Stow												
Susan Lawrence Park	Great Rd.	U1/(68	1.3	SCC	1963			1	1, 6	R	G	n/a
Annie Moore Conservation Area	Old Bolton	R3/35+R2/ 24	27.5	SCC	Jun-89	P	1,2,4	1,2	1,2	R	G	Could improve access
Hudson Road Woods	Walcott	R1/66	1.2	BOS	Feb-72	TT	N/A		1	R	E	n/a

State and Federal Protected Land

Stow is fortunate to have three areas that are owned and managed by State and Federal agencies within our borders.

- *Delaney Wildlife Management Area* -- The Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife manages the Delaney Wildlife Management Area (WMA) also known as the “Delaney Flood Control Project,” a combination of open water, wetlands and upland that is located in Stow, Bolton and Harvard. Approximately 170 acres of this 580 acre area are located in Stow. There are three dams within this area that were built to control flooding in the Assabet River and Great Brook. The area is actively used for hunting.
- *Marlborough-Sudbury State Forest* -- Also located in Stow is a small portion of the Marlborough-Sudbury State Forest, off of Sudbury Road. This area is owned and managed by the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation.
- *Assabet River National Wildlife Refuge* – This area is located on the Stow-Hudson-Sudbury-Maynard boundary and includes more than 1000 acres in Stow, which provides extensive walking, biking and hunting opportunities. Formerly part of Fort Devens, the area was known as the Sudbury Training Annex. The U.S. Army transferred 2,230 acres to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in 2000. A newly constructed visitor center is located just outside of Stow in Sudbury.

Table 5-2: State and Federal Protected Land				
	Location	Map/Parcel	Acres	Manager
Delaney Flood Control Land	Off Harvard	R5/2	170.5	MADFW
Sudbury State Forest	Off Sudbury	R26/5-1	77.3	MADCR
Sudbury State Forest	Sudbury Rd	R26/5-3	19.0	MADCR
Sudbury State Forest	Sudbury Rd	R26/5-2	46.82	MADCR
Assabet River NWR	White Pond	R26/1A	990.4	USFWS
Assabet River NWR	Off Sudbury	R24/12	9.0	USFWS
Assabet River NWR	Off Track Rd	R13/13A	53.5	USFWS
Total State and Federal			1366.52	

Nonprofit Conservation Land

The Town has three nonprofit conservation organizations that are active managers of land in Stow: the Stow Conservation Trust, Sudbury Valley Trustees and OARS. All work closely with the Town on land protection and land management projects. Collectively, these organizations protect more than 450 acres of land. A list of nonprofit holdings is found in Table 5-3 below.

Table 5-3: Land Owned by Nonprofit Conservation Organizations				
Area	Location	Map/Parcel	Acres	Manager
Fieldstone Preserve	Off Taylor	R6/118	53.0	SCT
Hale Property	Off Maple	R2/20	23.0	SCT
Corzine Property	Off Edgehill	R2/1B, R2/19A	30.3	SCT
Red Acre Woodlands	Red Acre/S.Acton	R30/20	167.0	SCT
Leggett Property	Gleasondale	R15/64A	34.5	SCT
Frost Property	Gleasondale	R15/62	0.6	SCT
Cogswell Parcel	Off Edgehill	R1/51A	0.2	SCT
Sureau	Boxboro	R18/27-1	17.5	SCT
Red Acre Parcel	Red Acre Road	R31/43	29.0	SCT
Red Acre Parcel 2	Off Red Acre	R31/44	3.0	SCT
Kalousdian	Hudson Rd	R1/2	20.2	SCT
Adj. to Kane Land	Off Forest	U8/24	2.4	OARS
Herene Preserve	Great Road	R9/1	13.0	SVT
Bolton Land	Off Appleblossom	R15/48C	7.8	SCT
Rising/Cohen Land	Treaty Elm	R15/47D	29.5	SCT
Hemenway Farm (pending)	Off Walcott	R1/64A-D-E	3.2	SCT
Spring Hill Estates (pending)	Off Walcott	R1/29 (part)	~22	SCT
Total Nonprofit			456.2	

Conservation Restrictions and Agricultural Preservation Restrictions

Permanent Conservation Restrictions (CRs) and Agricultural Preservation Restrictions (APRs) are other tools used to protect land – and often allow land to remain in private ownership and on the tax rolls, while preventing future development. These restrictions are held by the Town, the State or a nonprofit conservation organization – or a combination of these. They may be donated or purchased. There are 31 properties in Stow protected by CRs and APRs which total 770 acres. Of this, just 75 acres are protected by APRs, the remaining 695 acres are CRs. These are listed in Table 5-4.

Table 5-4: Conservation Restrictions & Agricultural Preservation Restrictions							
Grantor	Grantee	Date	Bk/Pg	Map/Lot	Area	Notes	EOEA CR #
Rising & Cohen	Town of Stow CC	12/31/1975	12916/297	R15/47D	29.50	Owned by SCT	#3
SCT	Town of Stow CC	12/30/1983	15386/426	R6/118	53.00	Lot 5 Taylor Rd	#6

Grantor	Grantee	Date	Bk/Pg	Map/Lot	Area	Notes	EOEA CR #
Robert and Irene Page	Town of Stow CC	6/13/1991	21217/117	R15/66	18.10	30 YR Term CR/Butternut; Renewal needed	n/a
Robert and Irene Page	Town of Stow CC	6/13/1991	21217/121	R15/66	6.10	PB Condition, Not signed by EOEA, Renewal needed, though written to be "permanent"	n/a
Mass Audubon	Town of Stow CC	8/7/1991	21339/152	R1/2	21.00	Kalousdian	#7
Richard and Dorothy Bolton	Town of Stow CC	10/28/1992	22551/027	R15/48-5; 48-3; 48-4; 48-6, (ALL A) ; R15/48B(B) ; R15/48C (C); R14/27 (D); R14/26 (E)	24.41	Springbrook Farm Subdivision, Parcels A-E; Partial release lot A2 approved by TM 2/2000 of 1.994 acres, orig total was 26.4; No EOEA sign off; renewal needed, Barn on Lot A	n/a
Peters Pond R.T., Peter Conant TR	Town of Stow CC	10/24/1996	26767/184	U11/39C	13.00	Parcel C Crescent Farms; Incl. Trail Esmnt; No EOEA sign off; renewal needed; Amended by Legislature	#9
Lynch	MA & Town CC	6/22/1998	28734/253	R21/004C	48.50	Shelburne Farm APR	n/a
Richard and Dorothy Bolton	Town CC	12/19/2000	32154/512	R15/48-5A	2.20	Parcel G Apple Blossom Way; Granted in exchange for partial release of earlier CR	#15
Stow Cons. Trust	Town CC	6/5/2002	35750/435	R30/20; R31/43, 44;	199.00	Red Acre Woodlands, SH	#19
Wedgewood Properties, Inc.	Town CC	3/12/2004	42225/191	R8/6, 7, 8	15.60	No EOEA sign off, needs renewal, required by SP	#20
Stow Cons. Trust	Town CC	12/14/2006	48665/111	R2/20	23.00	aka Hale Property, CPA Purchase	#22
Pulte Homes of New England	Town of Stow CC	8/2/2007	49887/490	R10/56/1A (part)	20.79	Arbor Glen wellsite	#23
Distinctive Acton Homes, Inc.	Town of Stow CC	6/14/2011	56987/301	R20/17-1 through 17-5, 17A, 17B	approx 10.5	Highgrove Est., No EOEA sign off, CC can re-record, required by SP	n/a
Stow Cons. Trust	Town of Stow CC	1/23/2013	61033/577	R2/1B; R2/19A	30.30	aka Corzine property, includes access easement, CPA purchase for \$75K	#25

Grantor	Grantee	Date	Bk/Pg	Map/Lot	Area	Notes	EOEA CR #
Habitech	Town of Stow CC	9/27/2013	69698/260	R6/107B-6	9.20	Taylor Road PCD, Boxborough Land excluded	#28
Tyler	MA DAR and Town of Stow CC	6/30/2008	51386/88	R2/12	8.00	APR	n/a
Kettell Farm Realty Trust	MA DAR and Town of Stow CC	5/18/2005	45203/243	R3/23B-3	18.00	APR	n/a
Frecha	SVT/SCT	12/23/1996	26928/534	R18/028A	37.80	Boxboro Rd. Heath Hen Meadow Brook & Pond	#10
Kennedy & Bowers	SVT/SCT	12/29/1997	28023/1	R20/47; R31/1	35.10		#11
Sudbury Valley Trustees	SCT	10/9/1998	29204/547	R10/1-4A	5.80	Spindle Hill Lot 5	#12
Sudbury Valley Trustees	SCT	6/1/1999	30240/376	R10/1-4B	8.90	Wheeler Pond, Lot 6A (adj to Lot 5 CR)	#13
Sureau	SVT/SCT	12/23/1999	30989/467	R19/010A	31.50	269 Boxboro Rd.	#14
Fletcher & McCord	SCT/SVT	12/27/2000	32180/325	R20/42B (part)	18.52	W. Acton Rd.; Incl. Trail Esmnt; aka Whitney Field	#16
Kennedy & Bowers	SCT/SVT	12/27/2000	32180/304	R20/042C	22.74	aka Whitney Field Incl. Trail Easement	#17
Smith	SCT	12/27/2001	34431/251	R21/025	1.74	109 W. Acton Rd.	#18
Lawson	SCT	5/27/2004	42902/179	U1/53	3.53	57 Barton Rd.; 475' on Assabet River with upland, bank and marsh	#21
Derby Woods LLC	SCT	9/27/2013	62698/260	R4/35A-1	42.50		#24
Frecha	SCT	12/27/2013	63118/289	R18/31-1	1.52		#26
MacFarlane	SCT	12/27/2013	63118/304	R18/33	2.92		#29
Sferra/Salvie	SCT	4/9/2014	63467/463	R21/1D-1	5.06		#31
Brewer Woods	SCT	9/17/2015	66091/320	R31/2-2B	1.5	CPA restriction	#32
Total CR					769.33		

Other Town Land

The following list of parcels in Table 5-5 are owned by the Town of Stow, but not held by the Conservation or Recreation Commission and not protected from future development. Many of them are dedicated to specific uses like schools, public safety buildings, cemeteries, etc. Others were donated or taken for back taxes and are not currently being used. Many of the parcels in the latter category are small or wet and have limited utility.

Table 5-5: Other Town Land (not held for conservation/recreation)				
Area		Location	Map/Lot	Area
Dam		Barton Rd	U1/51	1
Boone Monument		Barton Rd	U1/55	0.1
		Barton Rd.	R24/23A	0.43
Cemetery		Box Mill	R22/1-1	3
Cemetery		Box Mill	R22/2-4	2.06
Cemetery		Brookside Ave	R16/1	5
Cemetery		Brookside Ave	U10/62	1.2
		Conant Drive	R5/18	1.38
		Conant Drive	R5/19	1.18
		Conant Drive	R5/20	1.04
		Conant Drive	R5/21	1.01
		Conant Drive	R5/23	1.15
Cemetery		Crescent St	U10/15	1.3
Fire Station		Crescent St	U10/9	3
Library		Crescent St	U10/33	0.14
Old Highway Barn		Crescent St	U10/14	0.75
		Eliot St	R6/15	1.04
		Eliot St	R6/16	1.43
		Farm Rd	R31/47	4.13
Kane Well Parcel		Gleasondale	U7/34-2	28.75
		Great Rd	R30/15A	0.01
Cemetery		Great Rd	R29/2	3.5
Lower Common		Great Rd	R30/1	0.75
Center Common		Great Rd	U10/69A	0.38
Police Station		Great Rd	U10/39	1.64
Town Hall		Great Rd	U10/4	0.1
Town Building/Susan Lawrence		Great Rd	U10/68	4.15
		Great Rd (323)	U10/26	4.5
Center School		Great Rd	U9/44	14.98
		Great Rd	U9/21-1	1.46
Former Pompo School		Great Rd	R9/92	18
Hale School		Hartley Rd	R17/19	16.56
		Harvard Rd	R6/69	0.93
		Harvard Rd	R6/70	0.93
		Harvard Rd	R6/71	0.97
		Lane's End	R29/100B	0.1

Area		Location	Map/Lot	Area
Kettle Monument		Maple St	R3/26	0.01
Stormwater Pond		Off Militia	R30/79	2.37
		Off Militia	R31/48C	2.03
		Queens Lane	U3/5B	0.19
		22 Queens Lane	U3/5A	0.18
		Samuel Presocott	R30/16A	0.06
		Seven Star Lane	R11/51-8	0.92
Highway Barn		South Acton	R21/42A	10.60
Town of Maynard		White Pond	R26/4	7.50
		Sudbury Rd	U1/41	1.25
		Sudbury Rd	R24/23B	0.32
		Whitney Rd	R16/36B	1.11
Total Town Owned				153.21

Subdivision Open Space

The final category of parcels included in this inventory in Table 5-6 are “open space” lands that have been set aside as part of the subdivision review process. They are not protected by Conservation Restrictions except where noted, but cannot be used for other purposes under the terms of the Planning Board approvals for these projects.

Table 5-6: Other Subdivision Open Space (Homeowners Association)

Development	CR?	Location	Parcel	Acreage
Arbor Glen	yes	Hudson Road	R10/56/1A (part)	20.79
Whispering Woods		Kettell Plain	R2/16D	40.56
Taylor Road	yes	Taylor Road	R6/107B-6	9.2
Hickory Lane		Hickory Lane	R7/41C-4	28.2
			R7/41C-3	1.3
			R7/41C-1	
Brandymeade		Brandymeade Cir.	R21/5B-2B	18.13
Harvard Acres		Conant	R5/22	12.05
Wildlife Woods		Sudbury	R25/2A-1A; 2A, 3A,B,C,D,E F	70.6
Total Other Open Space				200.83

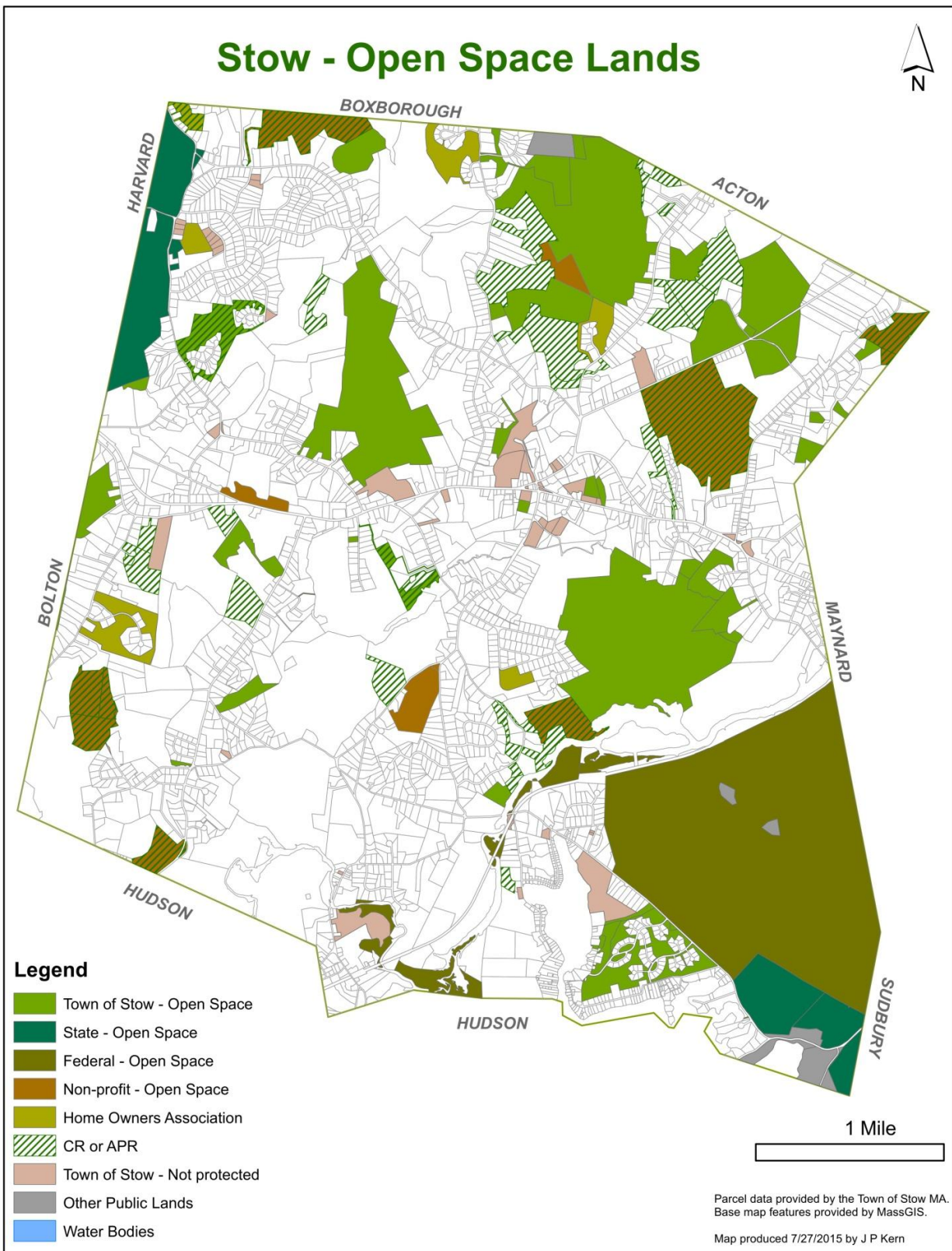
Land owned by Public or Private Water companies

Parcel Name/Owner	Map/Parcel	Area
Juniper Hill Water Co.	R15#119	10.6
Pilot Grove Apts. Well	R17#3-3	2.2
Town of Maynard	R26#4	7.5 (White Pond)

Pending Land and Conservation Restrictions

The following acquisitions or transfers of Open Space are pending as of the date of this Open Space and Recreation Plan:

1. Conservation Restriction on Ministers Pond Conservation Area (323 Great Road) - (required by Community Preservation Act)
2. Dunn Land – Purchase by SCT and CR to Town – 24.5 acres adjacent to Captain Sargent
3. Transfer of Hemenway Farm PCD Open Space to Conservation Commission/SCT
4. Transfer of Spring Hill Estates Open Space to SCT – approx 22 acres
5. Transfer of Ridgewood Estates “Public Use” Open Space to SCT



Map 14: Stow – Open Space Lands

Table 5-7: Summary of Open Space and Recreation Land in Stow

Type of Land	Acres
Town Owned Conservation and Recreation Land	1406.3
Nonprofit Owned Conservation Land	456.2
State and Federal Conservation Land	1366.52
Land Under CR	769.33
Other Town Land (non-conservation)	153.2
Other Subdivision Open Space (HOA)	200.83
Less Duplicate Acreage [protected by >1 entity]	(421.69)
TOTAL ACRES	3930.7

5B. Inventory of Town Recreational Facilities

The Town of Stow has active recreational facilities and assets managed by the Recreation Department and a staff Recreation Director. The facilities have grown over time and are actively used by residents and youth groups.

The Stow Recreation Commission is an appointed body of five members, chartered to oversee the Recreation Department and Director. The Recreation Department mission is to provide recreational opportunities for residents of Stow. Maintenance of recreation assets is the responsibility of the Department.

Under leadership of the Recreation Director, a mix of programs are run and overseen. Some programs, such as the active school age soccer program and baseball program are run by independent groups such as Stow Soccer Club and Assabet Little League. Other programs are run by the Department, including program planning and staffing (for example, swim lessons). The Stow Recreation Department runs a summer camp at Lake Boon. Other varied programs are independently run, with groups and businesses paying for use of fields, facilities and use of the Stow Town Hall. There is a diverse list of programs year round which are promoted via a brochure in the local newspaper and on the Town website.

Several entities own and maintain Stow's recreation facilities, including the Nashoba School District and the Recreation Department. The Recreation Commission has ownership and management responsibilities for three Town of Stow parcels as noted in Table 5-1 above. These are described in greater detail below:

The Pine Bluff Recreation Area was purchased by the Town to provide access to Lake Boon, including a swimming beach on the water. The site has multiple fields and facilities as shown in the table below. In the 1990s the site was developed to add soccer fields and irrigation. This is the premier site for soccer in Town. Also in the 1990s, a children's playground was added by donation from a non-profit group called the Stow Area Parents Network.

The Memorial Field was gifted to the Town in 1945 to honor the World War II death of a resident Wiljo Allan Pekkala. The field initially was a baseball field, but has transitioned to use as a softball and soccer field. The parking area for this site is shared with the Conservation Commission for access to Gardner Hill/Town Forest.

Stow Community Park was built in 2010 after the Town purchased an 11 acre parcel in part with Community Preservation Funds and in part with general municipal funds. The municipal portion of the land is currently leased to an adjacent farmer for active agriculture. The Recreation portion contains two premier Little League (60 foot diamond) baseball fields, 2 basketball courts, 2 tennis courts, and a playground. The outfield of the baseball fields is also usable for soccer and outer field sports. The site contains a covered pavilion with picnic tables that can be used for events. A portion of the field area is used in winter as an ice skating rink, and an exercise course and walking trail rings the site.



The Recreation Commission maintains some other assets located on town land. This includes the field behind the former Pompositticut School, now under construction as a Fire Station and Community Center.

Table 5-8: Detailed Inventory of Town Recreational Facilities

<u>Sport</u>	<u>Item</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Owner</u>	<u>Maintenance</u>
Basketball	Basketball Court	Hartley Road / Hale	Hale School	Nashoba School District
Basketball	Basketball courts (2)	Stow Comm Park	Stow Rec	Stow Rec
Baseball: 60-foot infield diamond	Baseball Field (2)	Stow Comm Park	Stow Rec	Stow Rec
Baseball/Softball: 90-foot infield diamond	Hale School Field	Hale School	Hale School	Nashoba School District
Boating	Lake Boon Water Access	Sudbury Rd Boat Ramp	Town of Stow	Town of Stow
Boating	Lake Boon Water Access	Pine Bluff Beach-informal	Stow Rec	Stow Rec

<u>Sport</u>	<u>Item</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Owner</u>	<u>Maintenance</u>
Boating, canoe/kayak	Assabet River Access	Sudbury Road Bridge	Town	Town of Stow
Exercise Course	Head Lifecourse	Marble Hill Conservation Area	Town	Conservation Commission
Exercise Course/Walking Path	Exercise Stations and $\frac{3}{4}$ mile path	Stow Comm Park	Stow Rec	Recreation Commission
Tennis	Tennis Courts (2)	Stow Comm Park	Stow Rec	Stow Rec
Playground	Children's Playgrounds	Center School	Center	Nashoba School District
Playground	SAPN Children's Playground	Pine Bluff Area	Stow Rec	Stow Rec
Softball 90-Foot infield diamond	Softball Field(Note 1)	Memorial Field	Stow Rec	Stow Rec
Soccer 11v11 or 8v8	Full Soccer Field (Note 2)	Pine Bluff /Stow Comm Park	Stow Rec	Stow Rec
Soccer 11v11 or 8 v 8	Full Soccer Field	Pompo	Pompo School	Stow Rec
Soccer 6x6	Small Soccer Field (Note 2)	Pine Bluff	Stow Rec	Stow Rec
Soccer 6x6	Small Soccer Field (Note 1)	Memorial Field	Stow Rec	Stow Rec
Soccer 6x6	Small Soccer Field (Note 3)	Hale School	Hale School	Nashoba School District
Soccer 6x6	Small Soccer Fields (2) (Note 4)	Stow Comm Park	Stow Rec	Stow Rec
Swimming	Beach/swimming	Pine Bluff Area	Stow Rec	Stow Rec
Volleyball sand court	Court w/net	Pine Bluff Area	Stow Rec	Stow Rec
Biking/Walking	Rail Trail	Track Rd.	Private	Private

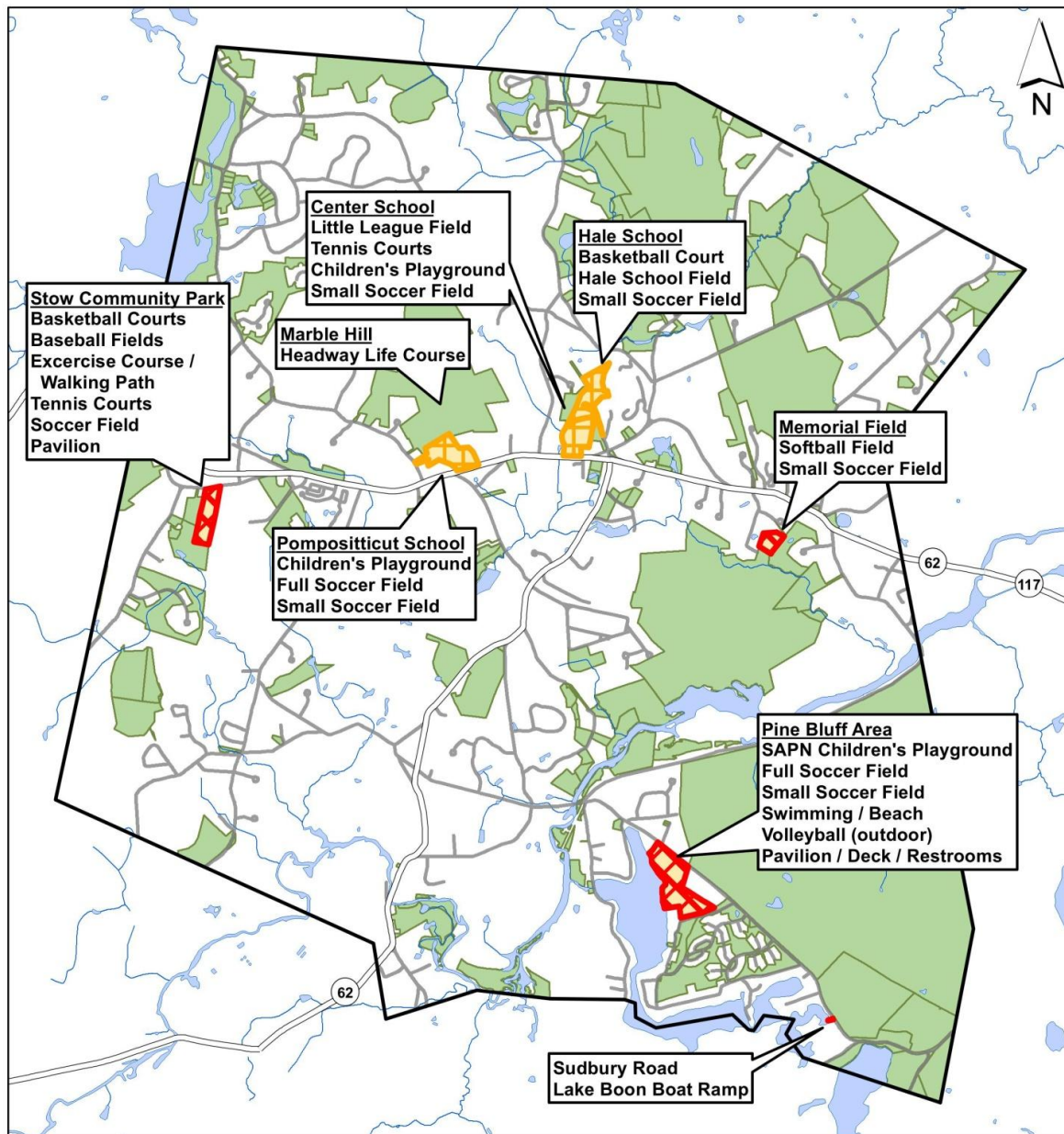
Note 1: Softball field at Memorial Field is a shared field - Softball / Soccer

Note 2: Soccer fields are shared at Pine Bluff - large field also lined for two smaller fields

Note 3: Soccer field at Hale School only available in the fall - School has priority for use/scheduling

Note 4: Community Park fields are shared – one of the Baseball Field outfields also serves for use by soccer field use.

Stow - Recreation Department Interests



Legend

-  Recreation Department Lands
-  School Lands with Recreation Facilities
-  Protected Open Space Lands
-  Stream
-  Water Body

0 1 Mile

Floodplain data developed by the Town of Stow MA.
Base map features provided by MassGIS.

Map produced 7/20/2015 by J P Kern

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Map 15: Stow – Recreation Department Interests

5C. Lands in Current Use Tax Programs

A large number of properties in Stow are enrolled in current use tax programs under Chapter 61 (forestry), 61A (agriculture) and 61B (open space/recreation). These allow the owner of the property the opportunity to pay reduced property taxes in exchange for a promise to keep the land in the specified use (agriculture, forestry, recreation/open space) for a specified term of years. It is important to remember that landowners can withdraw their properties from these programs at any time. If the owner converts the property to another use (for example by selling it for development), while it is enrolled, rollback taxes are due and the town has a right of first refusal to match the terms of a sales contract. This right can also be assigned to a nonprofit conservation organization. Several parcels in Stow have been proposed for conversion in recent years. Several years ago, the Selectmen passed on the right to purchase land formerly owned by Margaret O'Grady on Hudson Road that was developed as a 66 unit Active Adult Neighborhood condominium complex. The Town voted to purchase land off Walcott Street owned by Alice Cushing for open space, recreation and affordable housing using Community Preservation Funds, however ultimately lost a court challenge brought by the landowner and the developer. The Town evaluated land owned by Minute Man Airfield, Inc. for mixed use and construction of a new elementary school, however the purchase of the land was not approved by Town Meeting and this land is now permitted for the Ridgewood Active Adult Neighborhood development.

A recommendation in the 2008 Open Space and Recreation Plan was the development of a formal municipal process to consider properties being removed from Chapter status. Since then, the Board of Selectmen has formally adopted a process that gives municipal boards and departments notice of planned Chapter withdrawals and allows public input into the consideration of whether or not to exercise the right of first refusal. This process is working well.

Table 5-9 highlights changes in Chapter enrollment in Stow since the last Open Space and Recreation Plan was completed in 2008, and a full list of properties is contained in Table 5-10. Overall the number of landowners and acres enrolled in the program have not changed significantly, however there has been a shift in enrollment, with fewer acres in Chapter 61 and 61A and more in Chapter 61B. A closer analysis reveals that the reduction in land in Chapter 61 comes primarily from the protection of two parcels of land (Sureau and Leggett) and the development of the Highgrove Estates subdivision. The reduction of land in Chapter 61A comes from the permanent protection of two farms by the Commonwealth's Agricultural Preservation Restriction (APR) program (Tyler and Mosley) and three landowners that switched from 61A to 61B. In addition, one new property owner enrolled in 61A.

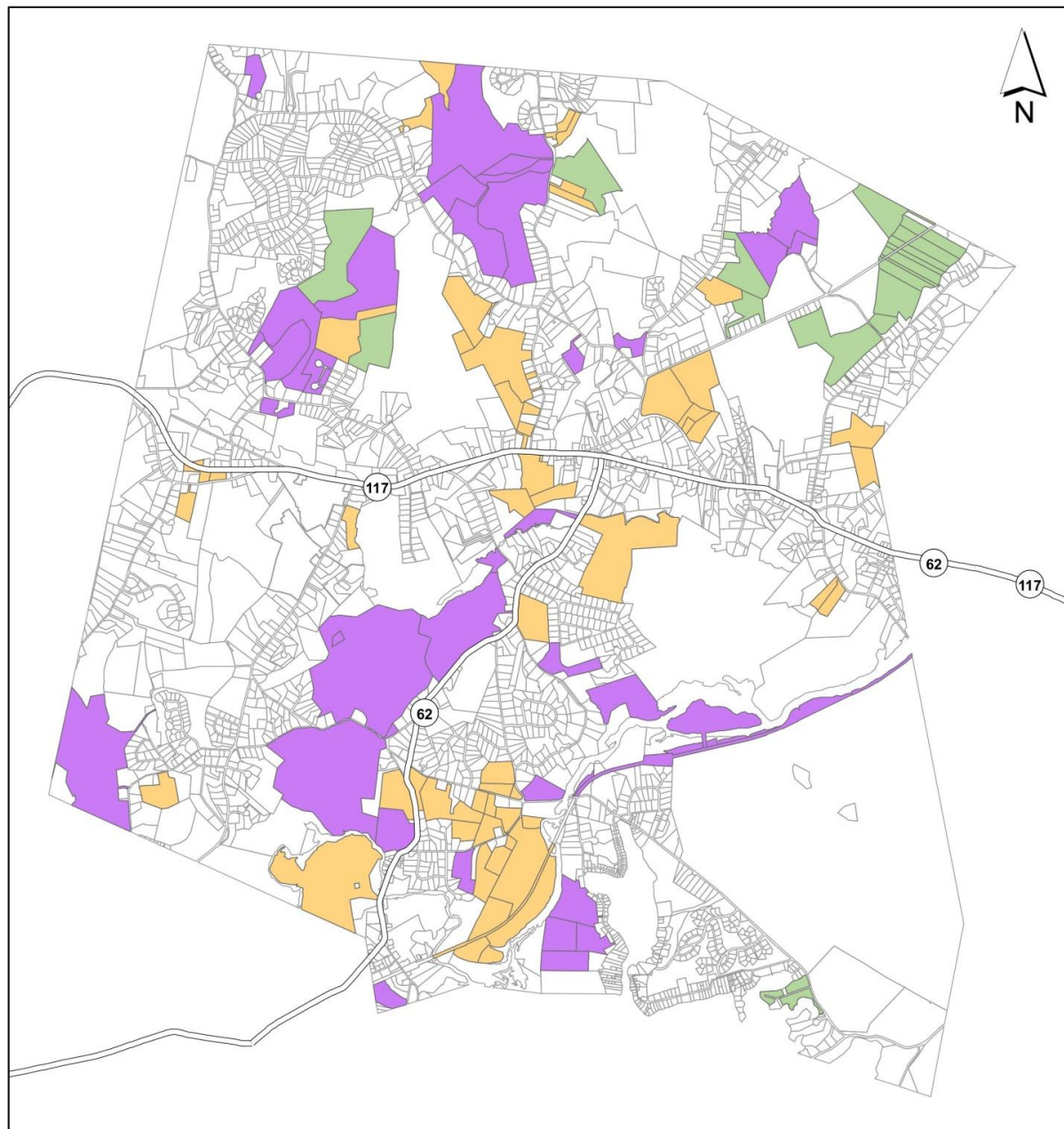
Table 5-9: Change in Current Use Program Enrollment 2008-2015

Program	2008		2015		Change	
	# of Parcels	Acres	# of Parcels	Acres	# of Parcels	Acres
Chapter 61	25	363.75	20	281.94	- 5	- 81.81
Chapter 61A	59	987.89	54	745.86	- 5	- 242.03
Chapter 61B	31	1039.69	38	1219.40	+7	+ 179.71
Total	115	2391.33	112	2247.20	- 3	- 144.13

The largest landowners enrolled in the program are:

SCC Associates Inc	325.37
Honey Pot Hill Orchards Inc	158.21
Minute Man Airfield Inc	153.47
Minute Man Realty Corp	122.75
Alice Cushing	100.00
George Morey	84.00
Page Family Limited Partnership	83.15
Edward H. Perkins/TR Ash Trust	81.15
Wedgewood Properties Inc	74.78
Charles & Jean Lord	74.30
Albright/TR Access Realty Trust	72.38
Linda Mikoski	66.02

Stow - Land Enrolled in Current Use Tax Programs



Chapter 61 Program Lands

- Chapter 61
- Chapter 61A
- Chapter 61B

■ Water Bodies

0 1 Mile

Base map features provided by MassGIS.

Map produced 7/20/2015 by J P Kern

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Map 16: Land Enrolled in Current Use Programs

Table 5-10: Lands Enrolled in Current Use Tax Program

Ch.	Parcel ID	Owner	Owner2	Location	Total acres	Chap. Acres	Non- Chap Acres
61	000R-8 00005A	MERRILL CHRISTOPHER B TR	HERO MEADOWS NOMINEE TRUST	WEDGEWOOD RD	30.94	25.19	5.75
61	000R-8 00006B	50 DUNSTER DRIVE NOMINEE TR	AVERY WILLIAM L JOSEPHINE V TRS	50 DUNSTER DR	54.82	50.32	4.5
61	000U-6 00009B	DAWES ROBERT T TRUST	C/O SARAH BAILIN TR	SUDBURY RD	9.02	9.02	
61	000U-6 00013A	DAWES ROBERT T TRUST	C/O SARAH BAILIN TR	50 HALLOCK POINT RD	3.54	3.54	
61	00R-19 00010A	SUREAU CAROLE S TRUST	SUREAU CAROLE S TRUSTEE	269 BOXBORO RD	36	22.5	13.5
61	00R-20 00042B	FLETCHER BRUCE	MCCORD JEAN	132 SOUTH ACTON RD	24.33	11.52	12.81
61	00R-21 042- 9A	FLETCHER BRUCE		SOUTH ACTON RD	11.35	11.35	0
61	00R-31 000003	FLETCHER REALTY TRUST	SANDRA J BRUCE ETRUSTEES	SOUTH ACTON RD	5	2.5	2.5
61	00R-31 000005	FLETCHER REALTY TRUST	SANDRA J BRUCE E FLETCHER TRUSTEES	SOUTH ACTON RD	0.9	0.9	
61	00R-31 000006	FLETCHER REALTY TRUST	SANDRA J BRUCE E FLETCHER TRUSTEES	SOUTH ACTON RD	20	19	1
61	00R-31 000008	MOREY GEORGE		SOUTH ACTON RD	8	5.25	2.75
61	00R-31 000009	MOREY GEORGE		SOUTH ACTON RD	14	14	
61	00R-31 000010	MOREY GEORGE		SOUTH ACTON RD	8	8	
61	00R-31 000011	MOREY GEORGE		SOUTH ACTON RD	5	5	
61	00R-31 000012	MOREY GEORGE		SOUTH ACTON RD	9	9	

Ch.	Parcel ID	Owner	Owner2	Location	Total acres	Chap. Acres	Non-Chap Acres
61	00R-31 000013	MOREY GEORGE		SOUTH ACTON RD	2.5	2.5	
61	00R-31 000014	MOREY GEORGE		SOUTH ACTON RD	8	8	
61	00R-31 000016	MOREY GEORGE		TUTTLE LN	5.5	5.5	
61	00R-31 000017	MOREY GEORGE		OFF SOUTH ACTON RD	26.75	26.75	
61	00R-31 000057	KUNELIUS MARILYN E		144 RED ACRE RD	49.74	42.1	7.64
61 A	000R-1 0024-2	STOW GREENHOUSES LLC		84 COM WALCOTT ST	12.81	12.81	
61 A	000R-3 000048	SCANSAROLI ALBERT R		49 OLD BOLTON RD	2.45	0.95	1.5
61 A	000R-3 000052	SCANSAROLI ALBERT R		GREAT RD	0.94	0.94	
61 A	000R-3 00048A	SCANSAROLI ALBERT R		OLD BOLTON RD	3.45	3.45	
61 A	000R-3 0023-1	MONG STEVEN R	KIRSTEN MONG	70 OLD BOLTON RD	7.01	5.51	1.5
61 A	000R-7 000038	MINUTE MAN AIR FIELD INC		BOXBORO RD	10	10	
61 A	000R-7 0030-7	MINUTE MAN AIR FIELD INC		TAYLOR RD	7.84	7.84	
61 A	000R-8 000005	BARNES HILL TRUST	KAREN MACWILLIAMS	58 WEDGEWOOD RD	30.81	28	2.81
61 A	000R-8 000010	WARD DANIEL E/VICKI A DROMEY	TR TAYLOR ROAD RE TRUST	TAYLOR RD	25	25	
61 A	000R-8 00008C	WARD DANIEL E	DROMEY VICKI A TR TAYLOR RD RE TRUST	ASA WHITCOMB WY	0.49	0.49	
61 A	000R-9 000099	WARD DANIEL E/VICKI A DROMEY	TR TAYLOR ROAD RE TRUST	OFF TAYLOR RD	4.75	4.75	
61 A	000U-9 000018	MIKOSKI LINDA		438 GREAT RD	16.6	14.6	2
61 A	000U-9 000031	FIELD FAITH B		GREAT RD	11.92	11.92	

Ch.	Parcel ID	Owner	Owner2	Location	Total acres	Chap. Acres	Non-Chap. Acres
61 A	000U-9 000033	FIELD PEDER O	FAITH B FIELD	PACKARD RD	2.73	2.73	
61 A	000U-9 00017A	MIKOSKI LINDA		GREAT RD	0.4	0.4	
61 A	00R-10 0042- 3	TARANTO BETTY A LIFE ESTATE	TARANTO DONALD & DANIEL 1/2 INTEREST	32 HUDSON RD	7.75	5.75	2
61 A	00R-12 000001	PERKINS EDWARD H	TR ASH TRUST	25 ROCKBOTTOM RD	90	87	3
61 A	00R-12 000005	MCDONALD ROBERT C	GAY GIBSON MCDONALD	387 GLEASONDALE RD	20.5	18.5	2
61 A	00R-13 000001	HONEY POT HILL ORCHARDS INC		SUDBURY RD	7.35	7.35	
61 A	00R-13 000002	HONEY POT HILL ORCHARDS INC		SUDBURY RD	22	22	
61 A	00R-13 000004	HONEY POT HILL ORCHARDS INC		SUDBURY RD	7.3	7.3	
61 A	00R-13 000006	HONEY POT HILL ORCHARDS INC		SUDBURY RD	13.9	13.9	
61 A	00R-13 00004A	HONEY POT HILL ORCHARDS INC		SUDBURY RD	1.9	1.9	
61 A	00R-14 000004	MARTIN ANDREW S	MARTIN KRISTINE M	BOON RD	5.21	5.21	
61 A	00R-14 000005	GAGNON BETH A	HARNETT MARK D	149 141 WHITMAN ST	10.8	7.8	3
61 A	00R-14 000014	HONEY POT HILL ORCHARDS INC		SUDBURY RD	8.12	8.12	
61 A	00R-14 000018	HONEY POT HILL ORCHARDS INC		BOON RD	3.28	3.28	
61 A	00R-14 000021	HANGEN DONALD	TONA HANGEN	102 BOON RD	7	5.5	1.5
61 A	00R-14 00016A	HONEY POT HILL ORCHARDS INC		138 SUDBURY RD	80.55	79.05	1.5

Ch.	Parcel ID	Owner	Owner2	Location	Total acres	Chap. Acres	Non-Chap. Acres
61 A	00R-14 00016B	HONEY POT HILL ORCHARDS INC		SUDBURY RD	3.46	3.46	
61 A	00R-14 00020B	BOON ROAD SOUTH TRUST	RAFFOL KENNETH & JONATHAN S HELMAN TRS	BOON RD	19.65	19.65	
61 A	00R-14 0012- 2	HONEY POT HILL ORCHARDS INC		SUDBURY RD	7.66	7.66	
61 A	00R-14 019A- 2	HONEY POT HILL ORCHARDS INC		BOON RD	4.19	4.19	
61 A	00R-15 000075	SIPLER DWIGHT P.	BARBARA P. SIPLER	184 GLEASONDALE RD	24	24	
61 A	00R-16 000046	MIKOSKI LINDA		WHEELER RD	12	12	
61 A	00R-16 00030A	MIKOSKI LINDA		OFF GLEASONDALE RD	10	10	
61 A	00R-17 000001	WARREN FRANCIS JR		76 CRESCENT ST	29.2	26.2	3
61 A	00R-17 000020	FIELD PEDER O	FAITH B FIELD	PACKARD RD	2.77	2.77	
61 A	00R-17 000026	CACCIATORE RAYMOND J	TR CACCIATOR E RLTY TRUST	PACKARD RD	0.97	0.97	
61 A	00R-17 000029	CACCIATORE RAYMOND J	TR CACCIATOR E REALTY TRUST	PACKARD RD	47	47	
61 A	00R-17 001A- 2	PILOT GROVE FARM INC		CRESCENT ST	1.99	1.99	
61 A	00R-17 001A- A	PILOT GROVE FARM INC		CRESCENT ST	5.02	5.02	
61 A	00R-17 001A- B	PILOT GROVE FARM INC		CRESCENT ST	7.97	7.97	
61 A	00R-18 000025	MESSINGER FREDRERIC P	WINKLER SUSAN G	241 BOXBORO RD	5.67	4.17	1.50

Ch.	Parcel ID	Owner	Owner2	Location	Total acres	Chap. Acres	Non-Chap. Acres
61 A	00R-19 00008A	WOODHEAD WM&DANIEL/ M KATRANIDE	WOODHEAD FAMILY REALTY TRUST	297 BOXBORO RD	4.13	4.13	
61 A	00R-19 00008B	WOODHEAD WM&DANIEL/ M KATRANIDE	WOODHEAD FAMILY REALTY TRUST	BOXBORO RD	4.13	4.13	
61 A	00R-19 0010-3	MESSINGER FREDERIC P	WINKLER SUSAN G	BOXBORO RD	4.13	4.13	
61 A	00R-21 000020	BOTTINO ROBERT J		171 WEST ACTON RD	13.25	11.75	1.5
61 A	00R-21 000044	PILOT GROVE FARM INC		SOUTH ACTON RD	30	30	
61 A	00R-22 00002B	LORD CHARLES H	JEAN F LORD	66 -69 BROOKSIDE AV	78.8	74.3	4.5
61 A	00R-29 000072	HANSON HAROLD J ESTATE	HAROLD K HANSON EXECUTOR	63 WHITE POND RD	6	4.5	1.5
61 A	00R-29 000073	HANSON HAROLD ESTATE	HAROLD K HANSON EXECUTOR	65 WHITE POND RD	4.8	4.8	
61 A	00R-30 000049	MIKOSKI LINDA		OFF RED ACRE RD	16.49	16.49	
61 A	00R-30 000077	MIKOSKI LINDA		OFF POMPOSITTICUT ST	12.54	12.54	
61 B	000R-1 000027	CUSHING ALICE A		117 WALCOTT ST	106.44	100	6.44
61 B	000R-4 00002A	SHEPHERD NANCY H		HARVARD RD	6.45	6.45	
61 B	000R-4 000043	PITT CONSTRUCTION CORPORATION	C/O WEDGEWOOD PINES COUNTRY CLUB	OFF HARVARD RD	42.12	42.12	
61 B	000R-4 00039A	F & S REALTY TRUST	C/O WEDGEWOOD PINES COUNTRY CLUB	215 HARVARD RD	28.76	23.76	5
61 B	000R-6 113-1A	LARSON ARTHUR G	LAURIE M LARSON	435 TAYLOR RD	9.7	8.2	1.5

Ch.	Parcel ID	Owner	Owner2	Location	Total acres	Chap. Acres	Non-Chap. Acres
61 B	000R-7 000034	MINUTE MAN AIR FIELD INC.		TAYLOR RD	24.5	24.5	
61 B	000R-7 000035	MINUTE MAN AIR FIELD INC		302 BOXBORO RD	116.13	111.13	5
61 B	000R-7 035B-4	MINUTE MAN REALTY CORP		BOXBORO RD	11.043	11.043	
61 B	000R-8 00007A	WEDGEWOOD PROPERTIES INC	C/O WEDGEWOOD PINES COUNTRY CLUB	OFF DUNSTER DR	62.23	62.23	
61 B	000R-9 000100	WEDGEWOOD PROPERTIES INC	C/O WEDGEWOOD PINES COUNTRY CLUB	WEDGEWOOD RD	12.55	12.55	
61 B	000U-2 000054	COLLINGS ROBERT F	CAROLINE J COLLINGS	BARTON RD	11.55	11.55	
61 B	000U-7 0006-4	GUTKNECHT D RUTH		45 C MARLBORO RD	8.92	7.42	1.5
61 B	00R-11 00011A	SCC ASSOCIATES INC		OFF HUDSON RD	1.77	1.77	
61 B	00R-11 00037A	SCC ASSOCIATES INC		58 RANDALL RD	151	146	5
61 B	00R-11 025B-3	SCC ASSOCIATES INC		RANDALL RD	177.06	176.06	1
61 B	00R-11 025B-8	SCC ASSOCIATES INC		CROSS ST	1.54	1.54	
61 B	00R-12 000002	ROCKBOTTOM LIMITED PTNSHP.	C/O SUSAN BONNER	449 GLEASONDALE RD	22.64	20.94	1.7
61 B	00R-13 000009	JONES GREGORY D	BARBARA H JONES	61 SUDBURY RD	10.6	9.1	1.5
61 B	00R-14 000008	TALPEY THOMAS M	MARYANNE P TALPEY	170 WHITMAN ST	10.98	9.48	1.5
61 B	00R-15 000034	RISING DONALD B		TREATY ELM LN	14	14	
61 B	00R-15 000066	PAGE FAMILY LIMITED PARTNERSHP		WHEELER RD	81.15	81.15	

Ch.	Parcel ID	Owner	Owner2	Location	Total acres	Chap. Acres	Non-Chap. Acres
61 B	00R-15 00047D	RISING DONALD B	ANNA COHEN REALTY TRUST	TREATY ELM LN	29.5	29.5	
61 B	00R-16 000047	PAGE FAMILY LIMITED PTNSHP.		115 WHEELER RD	5.61	2	3.61
61 B	00R-16 0030-2	MARSHALL BARBARA A.		67 GLEASONDALE RD	10.25	8.75	1.5
61 B	00R-17 000009	ALBRIGHT ROBERT T	ANNETTE L ALBRIGHT	84 BOXBORO RD	7.25	5	2.25
61 B	00R-18 00B-2A	MINUTE MAN REALTY CORP		BOXBORO RD	45.41	45.41	
61 B	00R-18 00B-3A	MINUTE MAN REALTY CORP		BOXBORO RD	66.3	66.3	
61 B	00R-20 000047	SUDDUTH RUTH H KENNEDY		OFF TUTTLE LN	32	32	
61 B	00R-20 00042C	SUDDUTH RUTH H KENNEDY		WEST ACTON RD	22.74	22.74	
61 B	00R-21 001D-1	SALVIE JAMES H	SFERRA KATHLEEN	74 WEST ACTON RD	6.83	5.33	1.5
61 B	00R-23 000001	ALBRIGHT ANNETTE	TR ACCESS REALTY TRUST	WHITE POND RD	32.08	32.08	
61 B	00R-23 000003	ALBRIGHT ROBERT T/ANNETTE L	TR CROW ISLAND REALTY TRUST	CROW IS	29.83	28.3	1.53
61 B	00R-23 000004	ALBRIGHT ANNETTE	TR ACCESS REALTY TRUST	SUDBURY RD	5	5	
61 B	00R-24 000001	ALBRIGHT ANNETTE	TR ACCESS REALTY TRUST	OFF SUDBURY RD	2	2	
61 B	00R-25 000017	COLLINGS ROBERT F	CAROLINE J COLLINGS	137 BARTON RD	24.9	22.4	2.5
61 B	00R-25 00016A	COLLINGS FOUNDATION	COLLINGS RBT JR & DON RISING &	OFF BARTON RD	16.35	13.35	3
61 B	00R-25 00016B	COLLINGS ROBERT F	CAROLINE J COLLINGS	OFF BARTON RD	14.75	14.75	

Ch.	Parcel ID	Owner	Owner2	Location	Total acres	Chap. Acres	Non- Chap. Acres
61 B	00R-31 000001	SUDDUTH RUTH H KENNEDY		137 TUTTLE LN	5.5	3.5	2

5D. Privately-Owned Lands of Conservation and Recreation Interest

A list of properties identified as being appropriate for consideration for acquisition or other form of permanent protection was included in the original 1972 Open Space Plan. That list was carried over into the 1980 Open Space Plan and has been updated in subsequent plans. This priority list was updated significantly in 2008, enhanced greatly by employing the Town's Geographic Information System (GIS), allowing an analysis of all land greater than five acres in size, as well as selected smaller parcels. The 2008 Plan identified nine broad open space and recreation objectives that guide the Town's open space protection priorities. These priorities have been affirmed in this 2015 Update.

In order of priority, they are:

- 1. Protection of agricultural lands to preserve and enhance Stow's agricultural base and maintain its viability for the long term**

This category includes unprotected parcels currently under cultivation and parcels with high quality agricultural soils. The farms of Stow are one of the primary contributors to the Town's rural character and are an integral part of Stow's heritage. These parcels need particular attention for protection because they generally have excellent development potential and are under heavy pressure for conversion to other uses. Much of the farmland is in orchards, which are one of the most threatened types of agriculture in the state.

- 2. Protection of areas for active and passive recreation including ball fields and trails**

This category includes unprotected parcels with significant recreation potential for a variety of existing and/or potential recreational uses such as trail corridors, recreational fields, golf courses, and potential access points to navigable waters.

- 3. Protection of lands that link existing conservation holdings in Stow and surrounding communities**

This category includes parcels of strategic importance for connecting existing protected lands in Stow and beyond. Such connections are important for the creation of Town-wide trails and maintaining wildlife habitat corridors, as well as enhancing the value and function of existing protected lands.

- 4. Protection of land in areas of Town currently underserved by protected open space**

Review of the Town's existing protected lands indicates that the southwest quadrant of Stow contains very little protected land (see Map 17). Given the large amount of developable land remaining in this area (much of which is currently on the market or "in play"), the Open Space and Recreation Plan identifies this area as a priority for the protection and the creation of recreational trails.

- 5. Protection of significant surface and groundwater resources**

This category includes unprotected parcels with significant surface and/or groundwater resources or with potential to affect these water resources. This includes parcels containing lakes and streams and parcels overlying major aquifers and recharge areas.

- 6. Protection of lands that will preserve Stow's small town nature**

This category includes large and/or highly developable parcels or groups of parcels whose development would add a significant number of homes to Stow. Protecting these lands will help to manage Stow's residential development, thereby minimizing demands for increased municipal services.

- 7. Protection of important natural habitats and wildlife corridors**

This category includes unprotected parcels that have been identified as significant for habitat by the Massachusetts Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program as well as parcels that

were identified in a regional study of areas with habitat significance, based on site visits and aerial photography.

8. Protection of important scenic vistas

This category includes unprotected parcels with significant scenic qualities. This category contains parcels with scenic features that contribute to the character of Stow including parcels that are visible from a public way and from navigable streams and rivers.

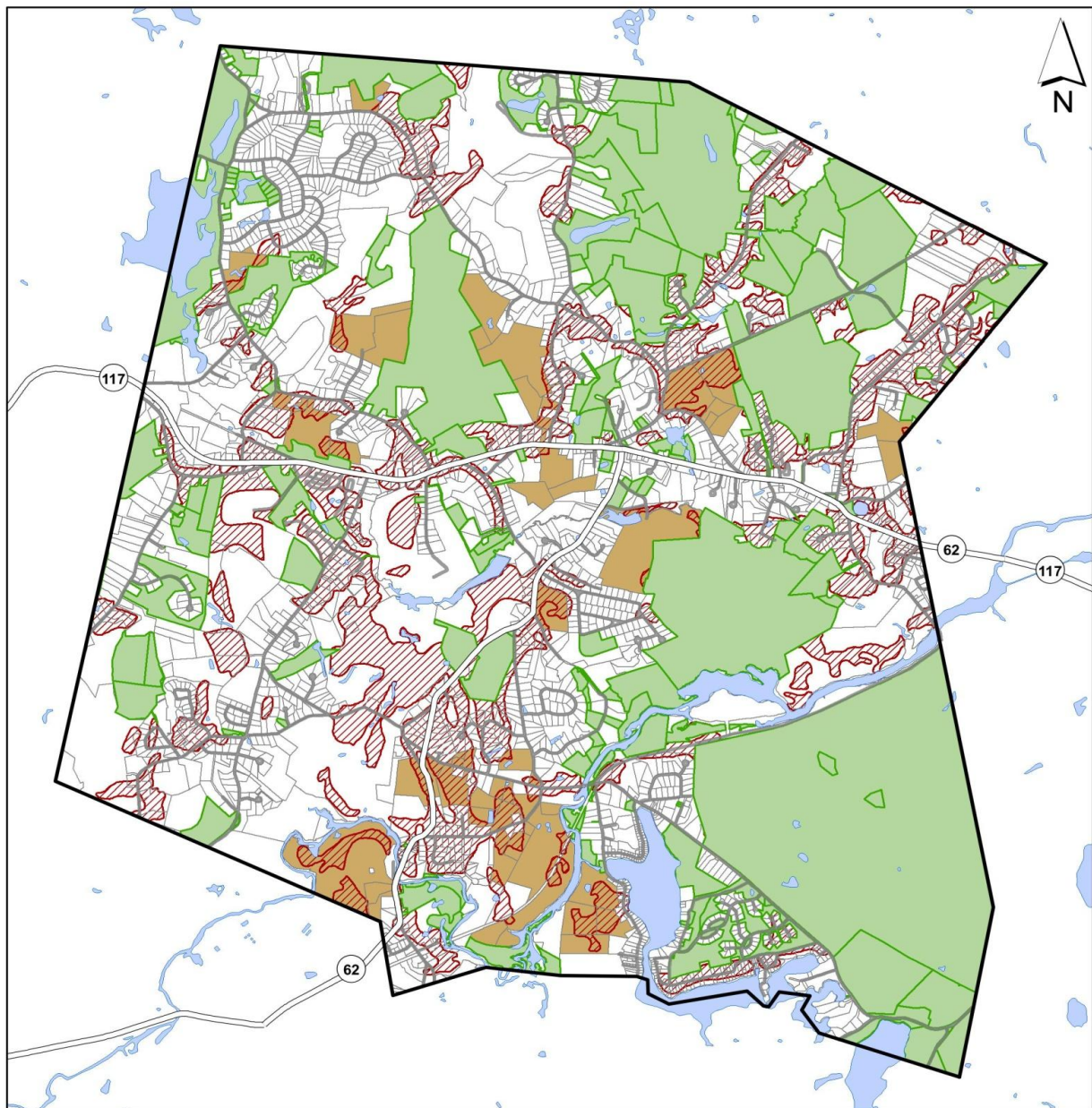
9. Protection of land with significant cultural and historic resources

This category includes important cultural landscapes and unprotected parcels that have historical significance. Unless there are other historic resources present, the fact that a parcel contains a historic home will not qualify it for inclusion on this list.

These objectives are not mutually exclusive, and many of the parcels meet more than one need. The following pages include maps of the parcels that the Plan identifies as significant for each of these objectives. The maps were developed through a detailed parcel-by-parcel analysis by the Open Space and Recreation Plan Subcommittee in 2008, which was updated in 2015. It should be noted that where parcels are smaller than five acres, they may not have been reviewed as part of this process. In some cases, these smaller parcels may be just as important for protection if they serve as key linkages between larger parcels or have scenic or other important attributes.



Stow - Unprotected Parcels with Agricultural Significance



Legend

- Parcels with Agricultural Significance
- Protected Open Space Lands
- Designated Prime Agricultural Soils from U.S. NRCS
- Water
- Stream

0 1 Mile

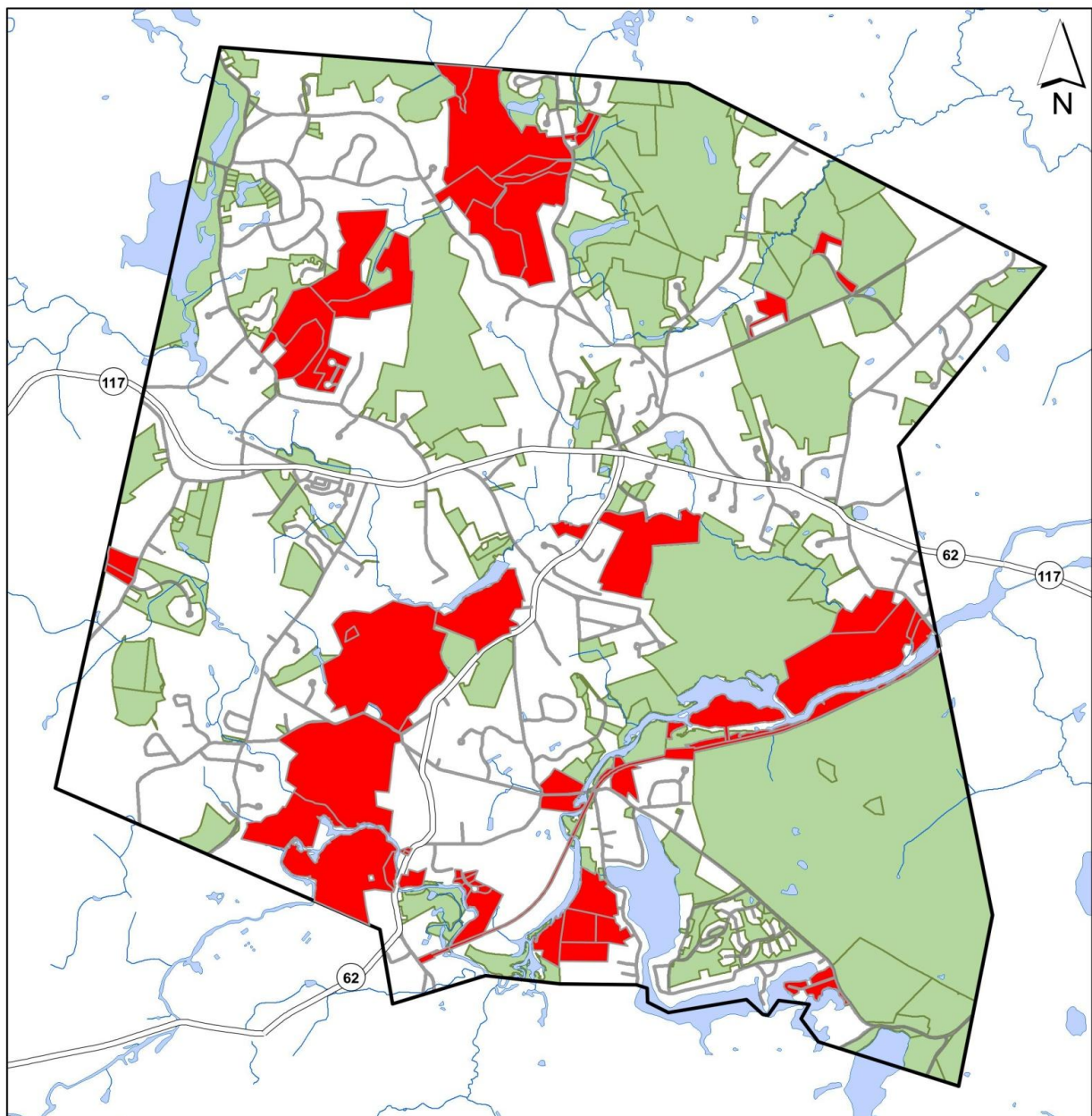
Floodplain data developed by the Town of Stow MA.
Base map features provided by MassGIS.

Map produced 4/3/2015 by J P Kern

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Map 17: Unprotected Land with Agricultural Significance

Stow - Unprotected Parcels with Recreational Significance



Legend

- Parcels with Recreational Significance
- Protected Open Space Lands
- Water
- Stream

0 1 Mile

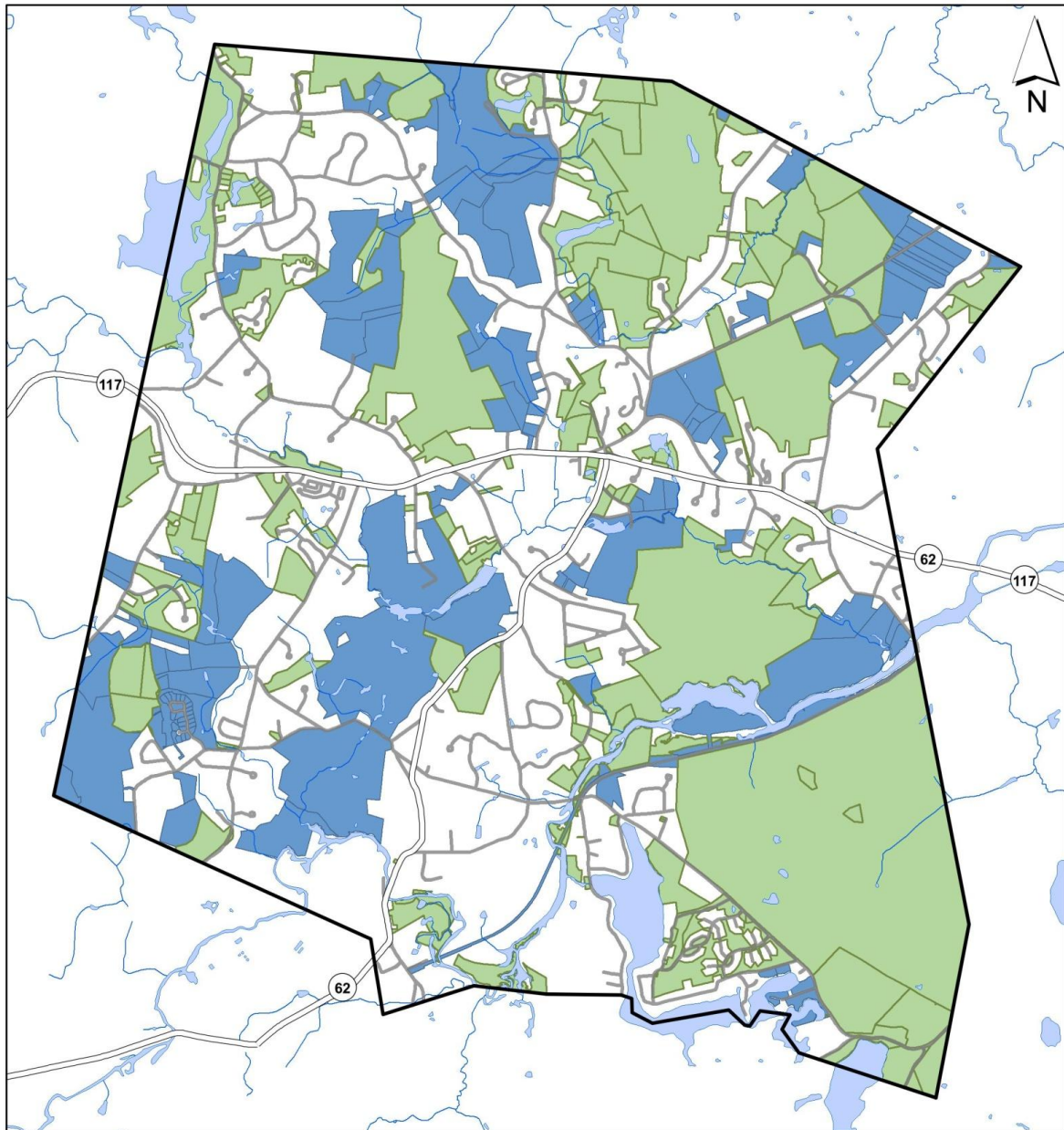
Floodplain data developed by the Town of Stow MA.
Base map features provided by MassGIS.

Map produced 3/18/2015 by J P Kern

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Map 18: Unprotected Land with Recreational Significance

Stow - Parcels Important for Linking Protected Lands



Legend

- Parcels Important for Linkage
- Water
- Protected Open Space Lands
- Stream

0 1 Mile

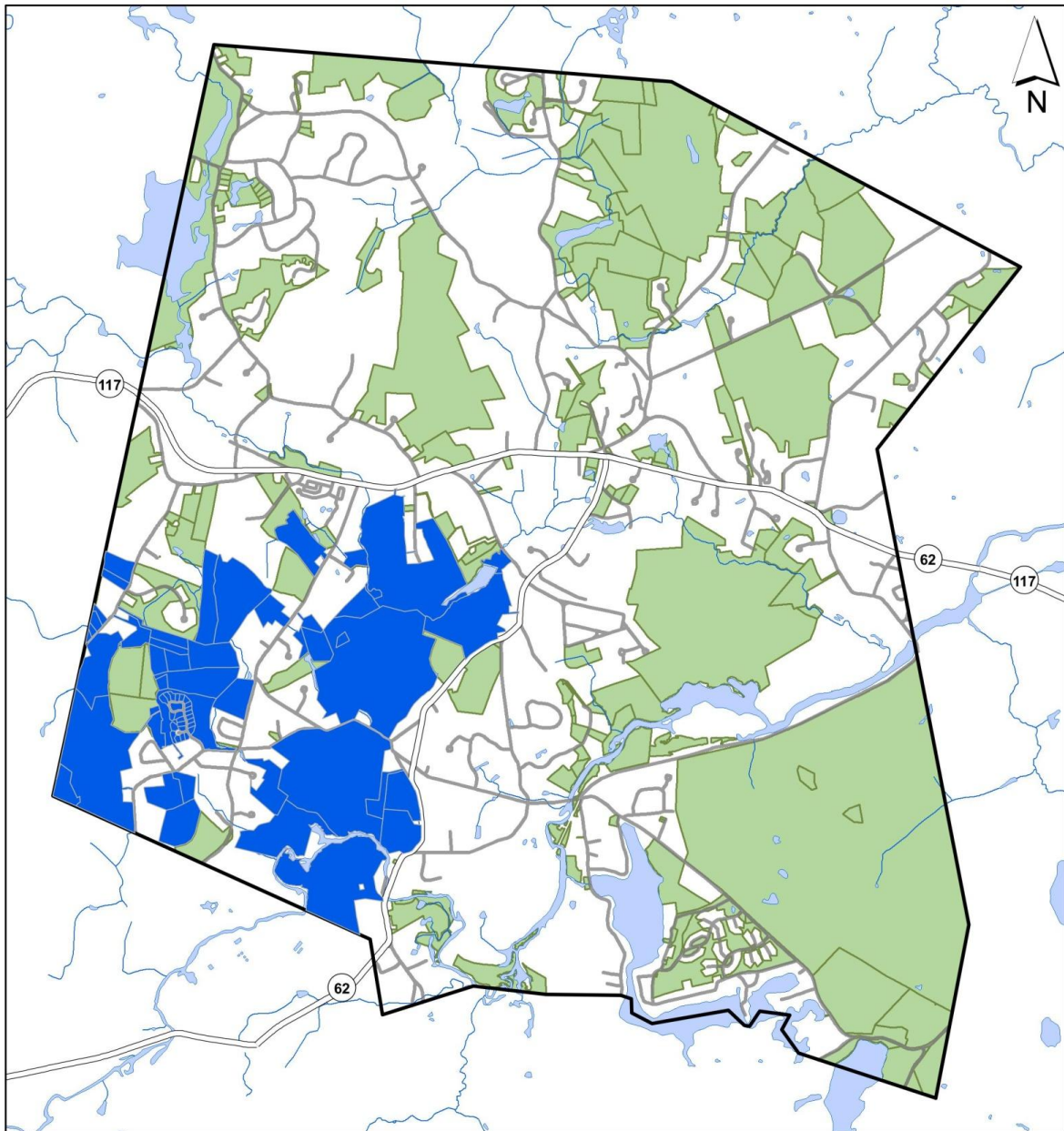
Floodplain data developed by the Town of Stow MA.
Base map features provided by MassGIS.

Map produced 7/20/2015 by J P Kern

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Map 19: Parcels Important for Linking Protected Lands

Stow - Unprotected Parcels of Significance in the Underserved Quadrant



Legend

- Parcels of Significance in Underserved Quadrant
- Protected Open Space Lands
- Water
- Stream

0 1 Mile

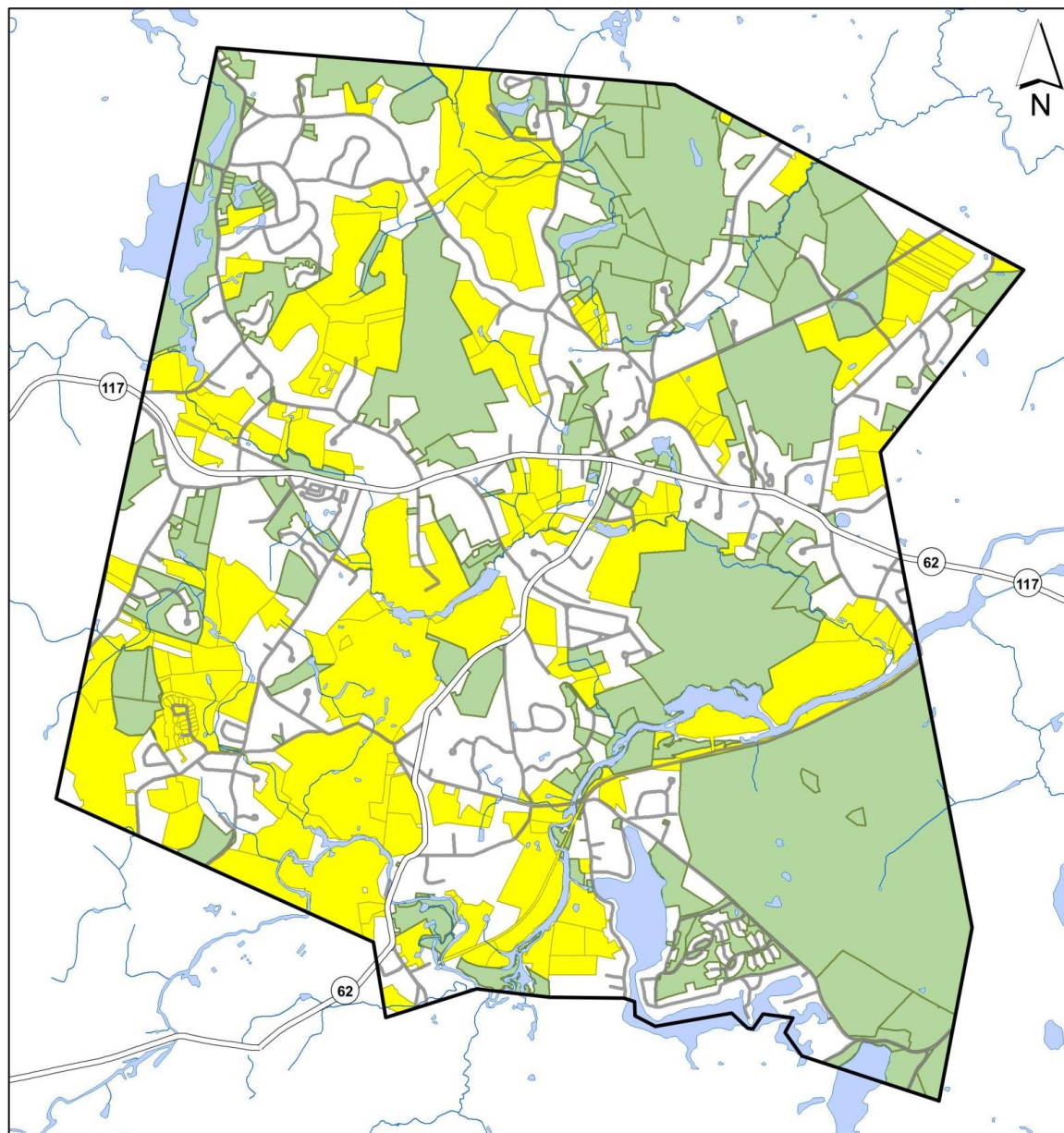
Floodplain data developed by the Town of Stow MA.
Base map features provided by MassGIS.

Map produced 3/11/2015 by J P Kern

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Map 20: Unprotected Parcels of Significance in the Underserved Quadrant

Stow - Parcels of Surface Water and Groundwater Significance



Legend

- Parcels of Surface and Groundwater Significance
- Protected Open Space Lands
- Water
- Stream

0 1 Mile

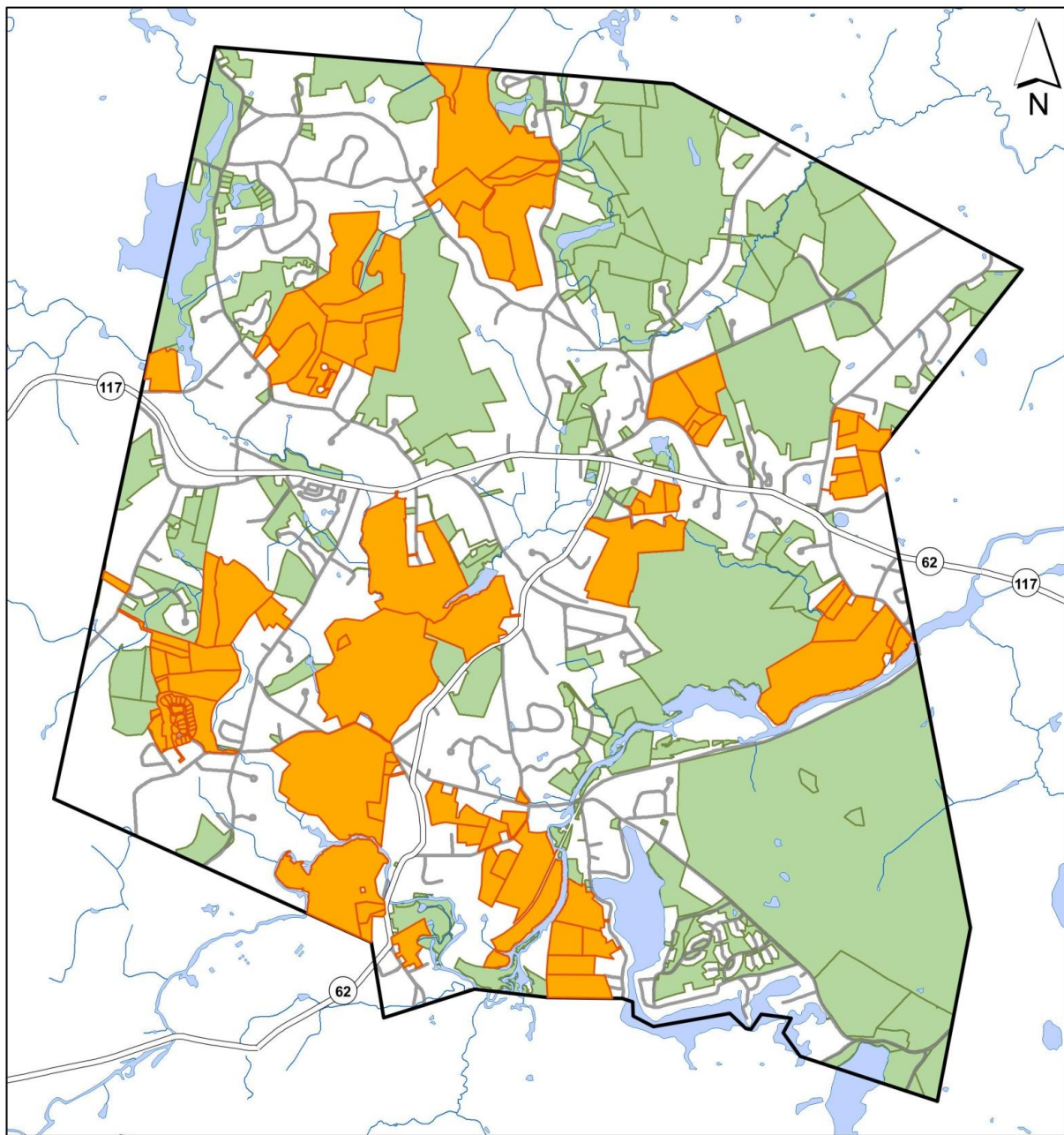
Floodplain data developed by the Town of Stow MA.
Base map features provided by MassGIS.

Map produced 3/11/2015 by J P Kern

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Map 21: Parcels of Surface Water and Groundwater Significance

Stow - Unprotected Parcels Preserving Small-Town Nature



Legend

- Parcels that will help preserve Stow's small-town nature
- Protected Open Space Lands
- Water
- Stream

0 1 Mile

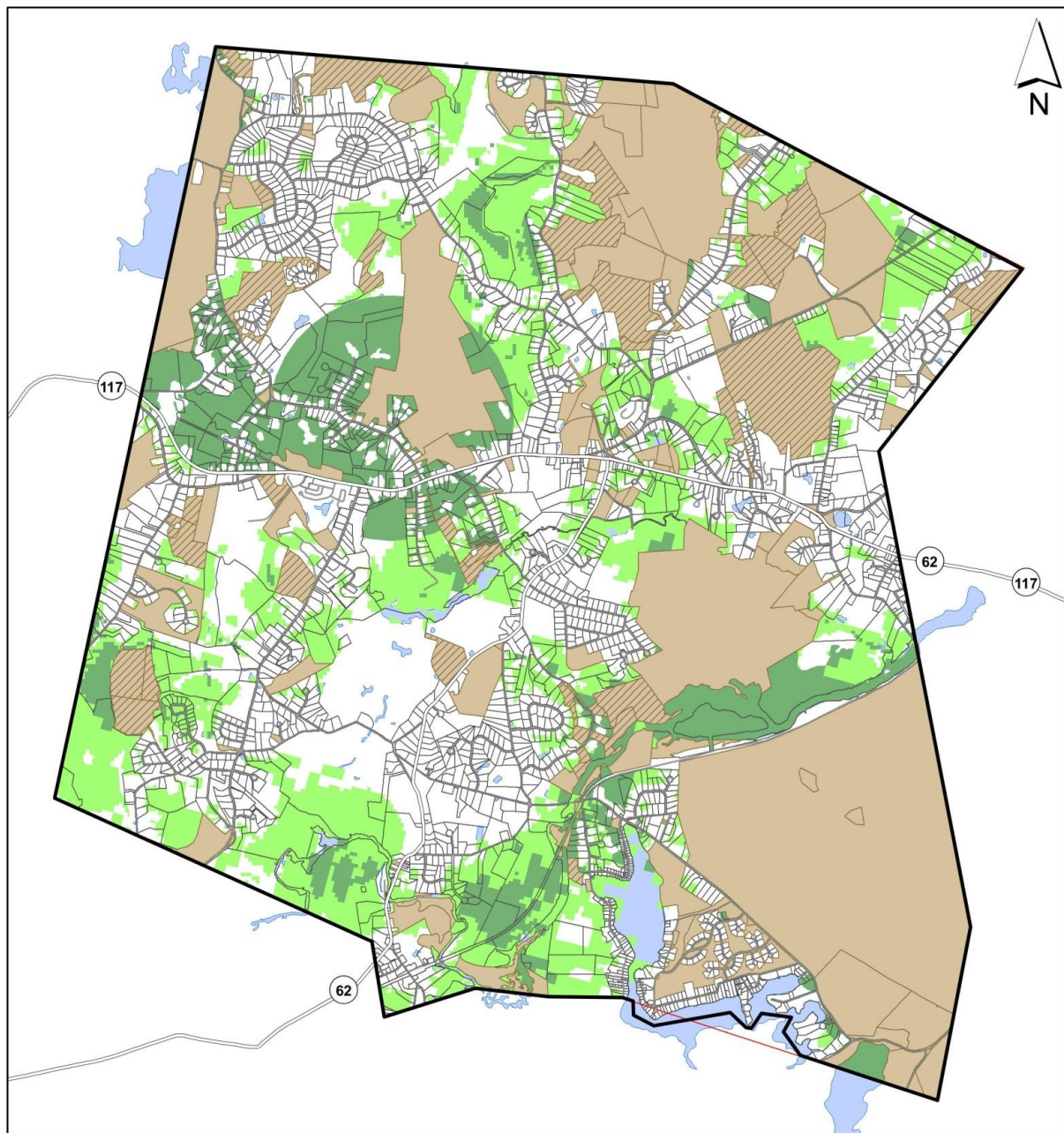
Floodplain data developed by the Town of Stow MA.
Base map features provided by MassGIS.

Map produced 3/11/2015 by J P Kern

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Map 22: Unprotected Parcels Preserving Small Town Nature

Stow - Unprotected Parcels with Habitat Significance



Legend

Conservation Priority - SVT Study

- Above-average ranking
- Average ranking

- CR or APR
- Stow Open Space
- Water Body

0 1 Mile

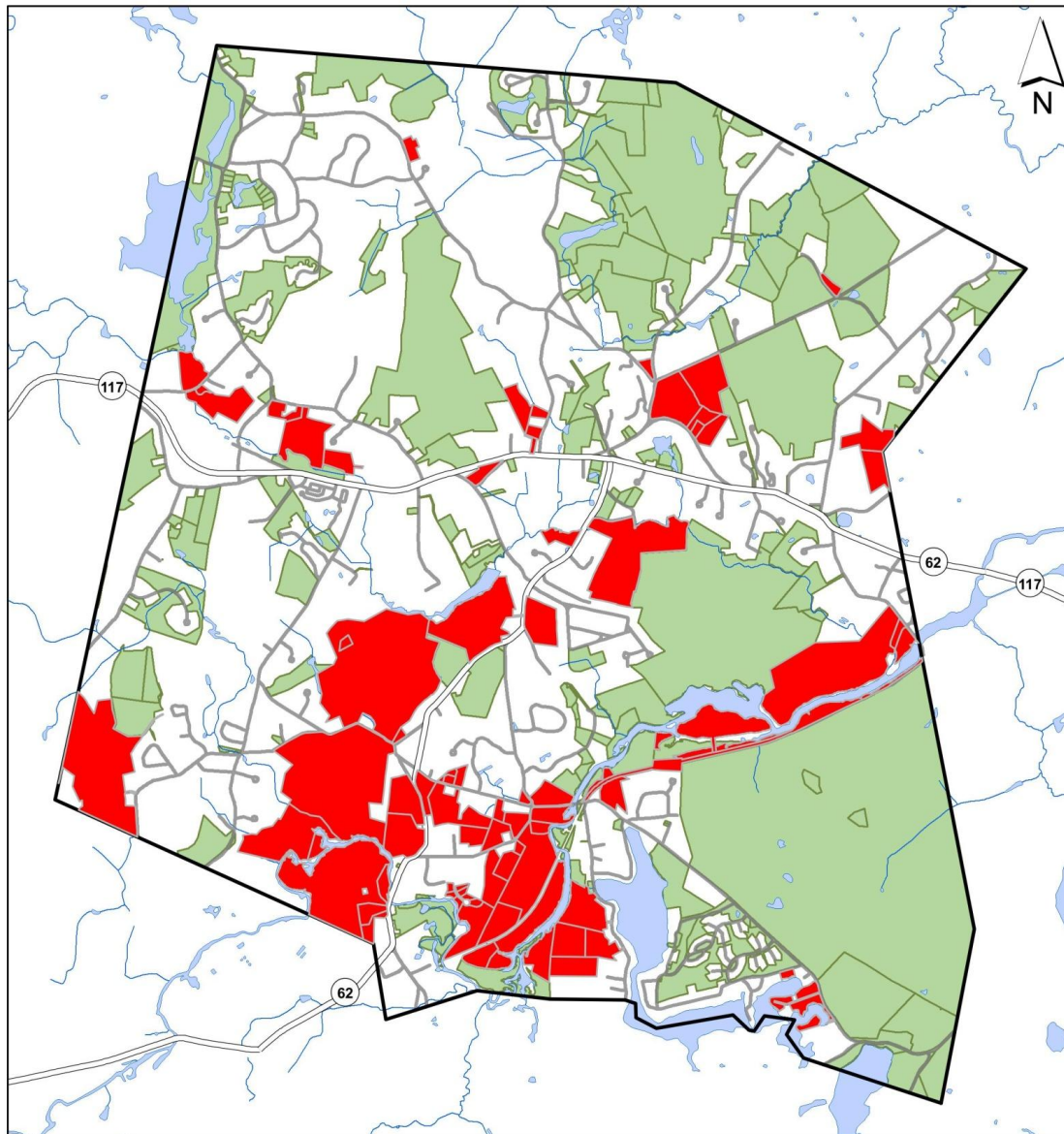
Floodplain data developed by the Town of Stow MA.
Base map features provided by MassGIS.

Map produced 7/6/2015 by J P Kern

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Map 23: Unprotected Parcels with Habitat Significance

Stow - Unprotected Parcels with Scenic Significance



Legend

- Parcels with Scenic Significance
- Protected Open Space Lands
- Water
- Stream

0 1 Mile

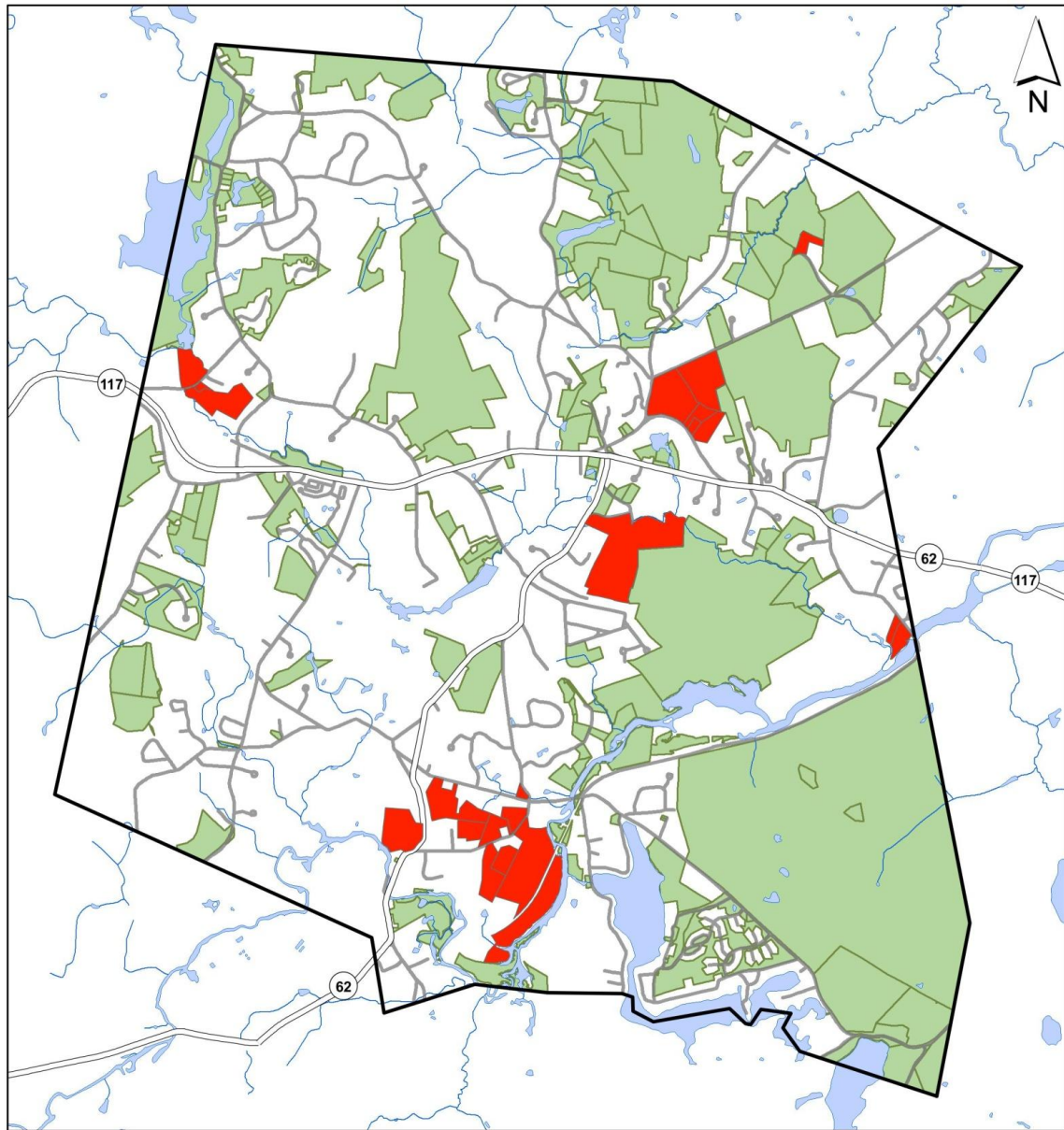
Floodplain data developed by the Town of Stow MA.
Base map features provided by MassGIS.

Map produced 3/6/2015 by J P Kern

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Map 24: Unprotected Parcels with Scenic Significance

Stow - Unprotected Parcels with Historic and Cultural Significance



Legend

- Parcels with Historic and Cultural Significance
- Protected Open Space Lands
- Water
- Stream

0 1 Mile

Floodplain data developed by the Town of Stow MA.
Base map features provided by MassGIS.

Map produced 3/4/2015 by J P Kern

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Map 25: Unprotected Parcels with Historic and Cultural Significance

Section 6

Community Vision

6A. Description of Process

The Open Space and Recreation Plan Subcommittee was formed by the Stow Conservation Commission in 2014 to update the Town's 2008 Open Space and Recreation Plan. The Subcommittee is composed of representatives of the Conservation Commission, Open Space Committee, Stow Conservation Trust and Recreation Commission and staffed by the Conservation Coordinator, with mapping support from the Planning Department. Much of the background information from the 2008 Open Space and Recreation Plan was retained and updated as needed. The needs and goals have been developed anew in response to current and projected conditions, as well as considerable progress that has been made on action items from the 2008 Plan.

The Open Space and Recreation Plan Subcommittee met monthly in open session to update the Plan. A residents' survey was undertaken to inform the Plan during the winter of 2015 and all of the maps in the Plan were updated. Drafts were reviewed and discussed by the Subcommittee and a final draft version was prepared. Representatives of the Subcommittee met with other Town boards to present the Plan and solicit feedback. The report was circulated to numerous Town boards and committees for their comments and a public forum was held in which citizen input was obtained. These comments were used to prepare the final Plan.

6B. Statement of Open Space and Recreation Goals

Stow is a very special place. Despite increasing development pressures, Stow has managed to maintain a rural flavor that has been lost in most, if not all, surrounding communities along the Route 495 corridor. A wide range of agricultural products including fruit and vegetables, lamb, Christmas trees, and greenhouse and cut flowers continue to be produced in Stow and are a major element of our community's heritage and economy. Economically viable farms preserve open space and contribute in many other ways to Stow's quality of life. Many roads are lined with historic stone walls and there are numerous highly valued scenic vistas such as Pilot Grove Farm, Carver Hill, Lake Boon, the Assabet River, and the Town's many beautiful golf courses. With fewer than 7,000 residents, Stow still has a "small town" feel – it is town where you know the people you see in the post office and in the grocery store. And where annual events such as Springfest, the Stow Gobbler 5K, and the Lake Boon Water Carnival are important aspects of the community's character. Other less tangible aspects of small town character prevail – the skies are still dark at night, affording excellent stargazing opportunities, and on summer afternoons the rustling of leaves and the songs of birds are more noticeable than sirens or traffic noise.

The last Master Plan Survey in the early 2000s indicated that most people chose to move to Stow for what it still is, more than for what it could become. At that time, sixty two percent of residents said that rural character (open space, farms and orchards, Lake Boon) was the main reason they decided to live in Stow. Almost half cited "small town community" as the main reason. The 2015 Open Space and Recreation Plan survey conducted as part of this Plan update confirmed this finding, with "rural or small town character" being the #1 reason 63% of residents said they moved to Stow or remain here. Other top responses were: protected open space and trails, safe neighborhoods/low crime, good schools, farmland and orchards, and quiet.

At the same time, these aspects of Stow that are prized by residents also draw newcomers, making the continued growth of Stow inevitable. Without careful planning and continued open space protection this growth could jeopardize the very qualities that make Stow a desirable community. One traffic light becomes two. The intersection of Rt. 62 and 117 becomes increasingly congested. It is harder to take a left turn out of your driveway. A patch of woods is subdivided for large new homes. Classroom sizes increase. Little by little, the sense of “elbow room” is diminished. Our demographics are also changing – with homeownership increasingly out of reach for many and those on fixed incomes struggling to keep up with rising property taxes. At the same time, there is a strong desire to maintain the existing small town character in Stow for its many benefits. Growth will continue to affect our tax base, requiring costly services such as increased police and fire protection and additional classroom space. Protection of our important remaining open lands can maintain or enhance our quality of life and be beneficial to the Town’s budget in the long run.

We are used to looking at the landscape and imagining that what we are used to seeing and experiencing will always be there. Yet, build out studies developed for Stow depict a future – where all of the existing unprotected open land has been developed – that seems unimaginable. Many Stow residents do not fully appreciate the magnitude of the changes that will occur with buildout or the speed with which it is likely to occur. Many communities in eastern Massachusetts are looking at a “buildout” time horizon of 5 to 15 years. The reality is that the decisions that are made within the next five to ten years will play a major role in shaping the future of Stow. To the extent that the existing buildout projections are undesirable, the Town must act now to change this blueprint and to create the “green infrastructure” that will sustain this community over the long term.

This Plan calls for specific actions on several fronts – including active efforts to acquire or otherwise protect priority lands and provide recreational opportunities for Stow’s residents. It is clear that given the short amount of time remaining, the Town needs a strong, ongoing and well-prioritized land protection effort that makes use of all of the “tools” in the toolbox – encouraging donation of land and conservation restrictions, purchasing key properties, and making use of limited development, zoning incentives and creative land protection partnerships with private organizations that can assist with raising funds. We need to continue our efforts to meet the recreational needs of families and older residents, who are increasingly seeking opportunities for easy walking for exercise and health. In addition, more attention needs to be given to coordinated marketing and support of Stow’s assets – its farms, orchards, golf courses, bed and breakfasts, recreational lands, and small businesses. We should be able to purchase Stow apples in the supermarket and should encourage more visitors to consider Stow as a weekend getaway. In addition, the Town needs to ensure that land use and open space decisions are coordinated, so that infrastructure and capital facilities decisions support efforts to preserve important lands and do not conflict with open space priorities, and the various staff, boards and organizations involved in open space protection maximize their effectiveness. Finally, the Plan looks across Stow’s borders to identify key linkages with open space and greenway efforts in surrounding towns and within the region, and opportunities to collaborate with neighboring towns.

Section 7

Analysis of Needs

This Open Space and Recreation Plan identifies several clear open space and recreational needs for the Town of Stow for the coming five years and as it grows toward build out. The highest priority needs are discussed below, however there are additional needs addressed in the Action Section of this Plan in Section 8. Several of these items are consistent with needs identified in the Massachusetts Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) completed by the Commonwealth in 2012.

7A. Highest Priority Resource Protection Needs

1. Protection of Priority Parcels identified in this Plan

As part of the process of preparing this Open Space and Recreation Plan in 2008, GIS mapping was used to estimate the percentage of land in Stow that has been developed and protected, as well as the amount of land whose fate remains to be determined. This data indicates that approximately 30% of the land in Stow has been developed and approximately 30% of the land was protected as of 2008. See Table 7-1 below. This leaves the largest percentage of land in Town – nearly 40% – as potentially available for development. This high percentage of “remaining” land means both that Stow still has the potential to grow and change significantly. These percentages have not changed significantly in the intervening years. **Stow residents may perceive that there is a lot more “open space” in town than has actually been protected. A full 70% of the land in Town appears green and open, but less than half of that “perceived open space” has legal protections that ensure it will remain that way.** Notably this includes many of the orchards, golf courses, and scenic vistas that many town residents assume will remain in their current use in future years – despite their lack of legal protection. In fact, at least 25% of this “remaining” land (approximately 1100 acres) includes large golf course and farm properties.

The 2015 Stow Open Space and Recreation Survey asked residents what the right balance of future protection and development should be – and the results indicated continued strong support for protection of as much land as possible in Stow. This Plan identifies high priority parcels to meet a variety of community needs: maintaining our agricultural land base, water resource protection, wildlife habitat, and scenic views, among others. It also identifies those parcels where development could have the greatest impact on the build out of Stow. In order to maintain the balance between protected and developed land in Town, the Plan calls for protection of *at least* one acre for every acre that is developed in the future – a goal that was supported by 80% of survey respondents (44% supported even more ambitious protection efforts). This may happen in many ways – through donations of land and conservation restrictions, purchases of land and conservation restrictions, or open space set-asides in development projects. This is an easily determined “metric” to ensure that the Town stays on course with the goals of the Plan.

Table 7-1: Change in Stow Land Status as of 2008 - 2105

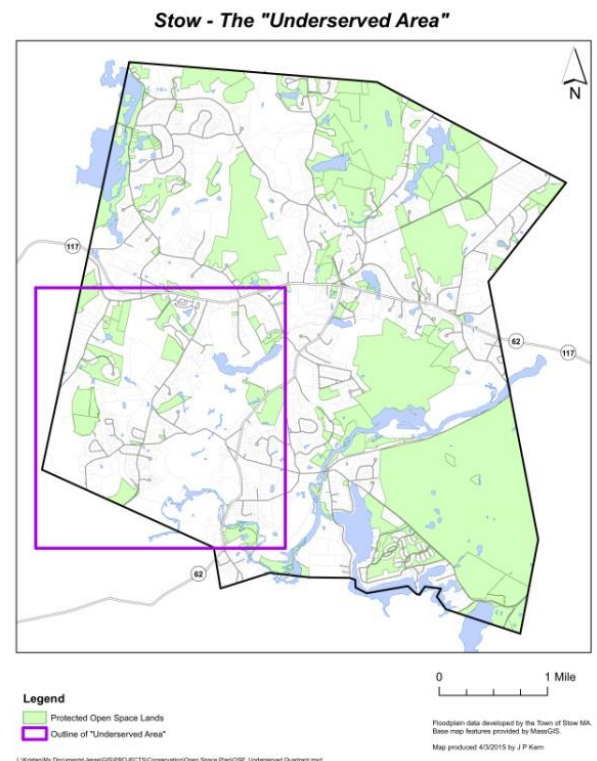
Type of Land	Percent of Total – 2008 (est)	Percent of Total – 2015 (est)
Protected Lands	32.4%	33.8%
Developed Lands	29.1%	29.9%
Not Developed and Not Protected	38.5%	36.3%

2. Protection of Stow's Agricultural Base

The farms of Stow are one of the primary components of the Town's rural character and are an integral part of Stow's heritage and economy. Agricultural parcels need particular attention for protection because they generally have excellent development potential and are under heavy pressure for conversion to other uses. Much of the farmland is in orchards, which is one of the most threatened types of agriculture in the Commonwealth. Massachusetts has an Executive Order designed to protect agricultural lands from conversion to other uses, including a requirement for mitigation whenever a state permit or funding is required for a development project on land that contains prime agricultural soils. A copy of that Executive Order can be found in the 2008 Open Space and Recreation Plan. A map of prime farmland in Stow is also contained in Section 4D of this Open Space and Recreation Plan.

3. Continued Protection of Land in the "Underserved Area" and Development of Recreational Opportunities

One area of Stow where there is very little protected land and a high potential for land use change is the Southwest Quadrant of Town, defined as the area west of Gleasondale Road (Rt. 62) and south of Great Road (Rt. 117). Several of the Town's large golf courses are located in this area and there is additional undeveloped land west of Hudson Road. All of this land is subject to future changes in use. The Town has made some progress in protecting land in this area since this need was highlighted in the last Open Space and Recreation Plan, and a large block of land including the former Hale and Corzine properties is planned to be supplemented by additional open space set aside through the Hemenway Farm development, which will also enhance public access and parking for this area. The Plan identifies this area as important for continued open space protection – focused on protecting a large "core" area as well as



creating connections between protected parcels – enabling this area to connect into Stow’s “Emerald Necklace.” A key next step is to do some “pre-planning” of areas that are a priority for protection at the parcel scale – particularly Stow’s Golf Courses -- and create a land protection plan for this portion of Stow.

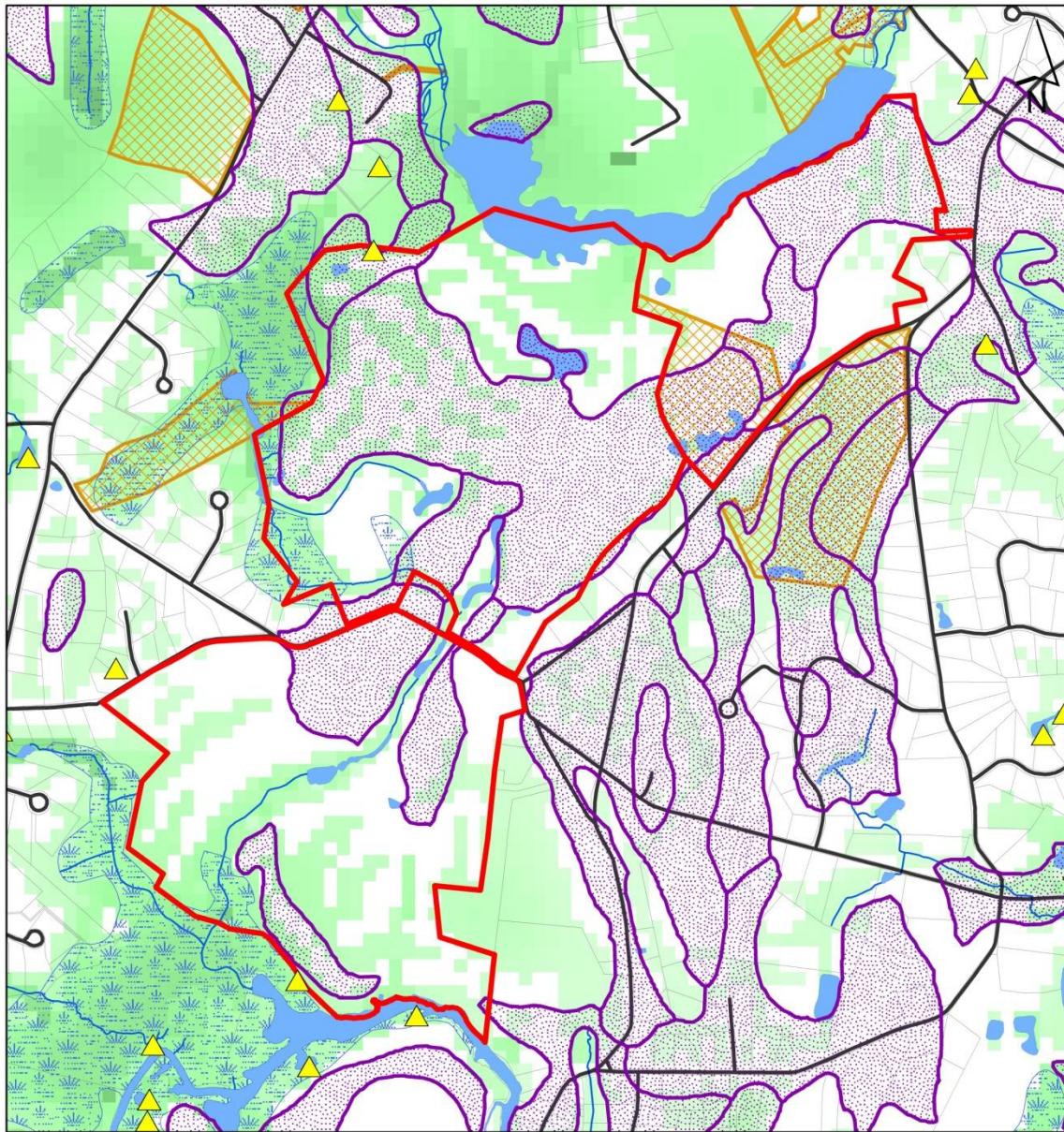
In addition, a recent study of Gleasondale Village, also in the “underserved area” identified the need for enhanced recreation and pedestrian opportunities. Specifically, the Board of Selectmen-controlled Kane land, roughly across Route 62 from Gleasondale Mill, emerged as a key opportunity to create an accessible trail for a Village that lacks many of the opportunities afforded other areas of Stow. Currently a Gleasondale Neighborhood group is developing a proposal to create and manage a trail on town land in this area. Additionally, the study emphasized the importance of recreational opportunities such as the development of a canoe landing, connection with the Assabet River Rail Trail, and increased walkability in the Village to spur future investment and enhance the Village’s natural amenities.

4. Planning for Protection of “At-Risk” Golf Course Parcels

Stow’s four golf courses – collectively approximately 600 acres – hold tremendous potential for land use change in Stow, particularly given concerns about the possible decline in economic viability of golf. As this Open Space and Recreation Plan was being finalized, Stow Acres Country Club’s management and ownership was in the process of being transferred, reigniting community concerns about the potential for large-scale residential development.

Using GIS, we have prepared a preliminary identification of significant resource areas at Stow Acres, Butternut, Wedgewood Pines and Stowaway golf courses. A more detailed evaluation should be completed on these lands and an overlay district considered that would direct any future development to the most appropriate locations on the properties, identify areas that should be protected as open space and recreation lands, and ensure that future development does not adversely affect community character or finances. Notably all of these properties are enrolled in Chapter 61B, with the exception of Stowaway Golf Course.

Stow Acres and Butternut - Areas of Habitat Significance



Legend

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| Golf Course | Estimated Habitat of Rare Species | Water |
| ● Certified Vernal Pools | Prime Agricultural Soils | Wetland |
| ▲ Potential Vernal Pools | Protected Open Space Lands | Stream |
| Green overlay: Areas of Habitat Significance, top 50% | | |

0 1,000 Feet

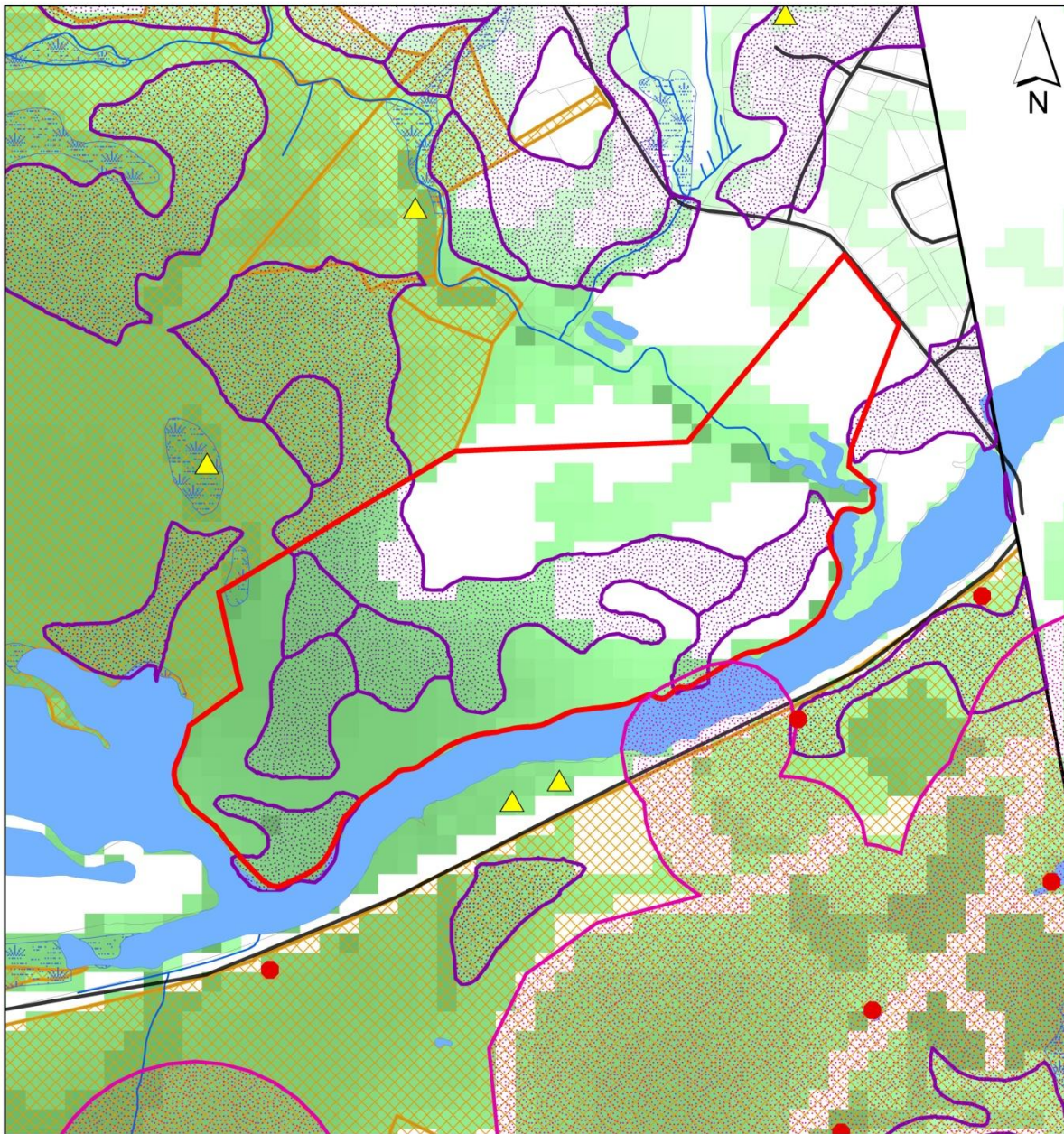
Floodplain data developed by the Town of Stow MA.
Base map features provided by MassGIS.

Map produced 8/12/2015 by J P Kern

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Map 26: Stow Acres and Butternut – Areas of Habitat Significance

Stowaway - Areas of Habitat Significance



Legend

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| Golf Course | Estimated Habitat of Rare Species | ~ Water |
| ● Certified Vernal Pools | Prime Agricultural Soils | ~ Wetland |
| ▲ Potential Vernal Pools | Protected Open Space Lands | ~ Stream |
| Green overlay: Areas of Habitat Significance, top 50% | | |

0 1,000 Feet

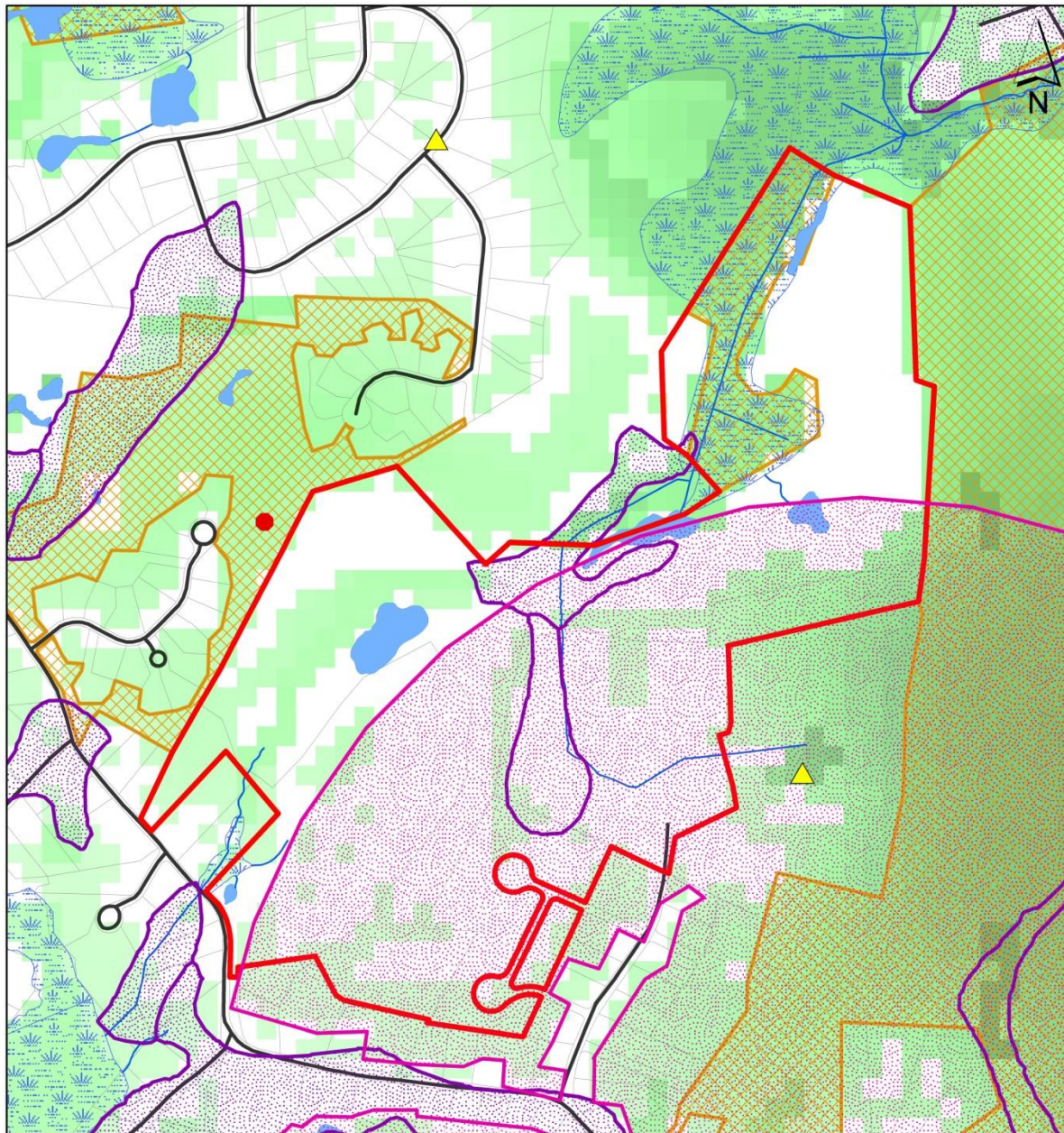
Floodplain data developed by the Town of Stow MA.
Base map features provided by MassGIS.

Map produced 8/12/2015 by J P Kern

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Map 27: Stowaway – Areas of Habitat Significance

Wedgewood - Areas of Habitat Significance



Legend

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| Golf Course | Estimated Habitat of Rare Species | Water |
| ● Certified Vernal Pools | Prime Agricultural Soils | Wetland |
| ▲ Potential Vernal Pools | Protected Open Space Lands | Stream |
| Green overlay: Areas of Habitat Significance, top 50% | | |

0 1,000 Feet

Floodplain data developed by the Town of Stow MA.
Base map features provided by MassGIS.

Map produced 8/12/2015 by J P Kern

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Map 28: Wedgewood – Areas of Habitat Significance

7B. Highest Priority Community Needs

Four specific community needs were identified during the development of this Plan:

- 1) Enhanced Accessibility at Existing Conservation and Recreation Areas
- 2) Creation of Additional Walking and Cycling Opportunities
- 3) Improved Access to Water-Based Recreation
- 4) Continued Support for Active Recreational Facilities

These are discussed in more detail below.

1. Enhancing Accessibility at Existing Conservation and Recreation Areas

Changing demographics, including a surge in Stow's senior population, and a strong interest in walking and outdoor recreation for its health benefits are increasing demand for accessible features at the Town's existing conservation and recreation areas. In the last year, the Town has implemented plans to increase accessibility at Pine Bluffs Recreation Area (bathrooms, deck, pavilion, and new driveway to Town Beach) and has recently completed development of a new recreational facility called Stow Community Park on Old Bolton Road. The next priority is to increase accessibility at one or more conservation areas.

This Open Space and Recreation Plan includes an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Self-Evaluation in Appendix B. The Committee evaluated each of Stow's major conservation and recreation facilities to determine the level of accessibility that exists at present for individuals with disabilities. Many of the Town's facilities have steep grades – for example, Marble Hill, Spindle Hill, or Flagg Hill, but several other areas were identified and prioritized for follow up to explore the feasibility of improving access. It should be noted that such improvements would also help those pushing carriages or strollers, as well as Stow's growing senior population – the most rapidly growing segment of the population. The areas with the greatest promise for improvement include:

- a. New Town Center Park at 323 Great Road with accessible parking and walking trails.
- b. Town Forest – where a one-way trail may be able to be constructed from the parking lot over, and then alongside the river.



Recent Improvements at Pine Bluff – Pavilion and Deck

- c. Captain Sargent Conservation Area – where a short loop trail might be created around the community gardens for recreational walking, and raised gardens beds might be considered.
- d. Track Road – where resurfacing and modest amenities might increase accessibility for all.

The Plan recommends that the Conservation Commission and Recreation Commission work together to evaluate these opportunities further and design a plan for improvements, and that any new recreational field complex be designed to be accessible to people with disabilities.

2. Creation of Additional Walking and Cycling Opportunities

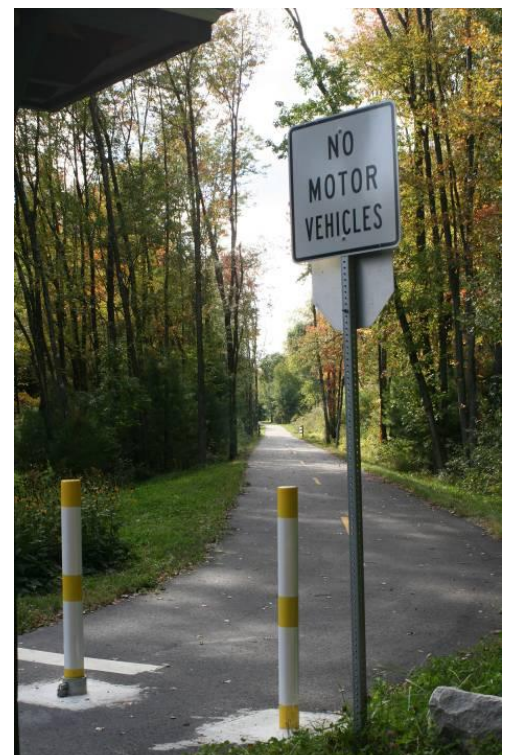
The top need identified in the townwide survey was for additional walking and cycling opportunities. There are a number of opportunities that could be considered.

a) *Update Sidewalk Study* – The Planning Board should update its current list of sidewalk construction priorities to take into consideration access to conservation areas and other pedestrian destinations, the new community center at the former Pompositticut School, the Emerald Necklace and recent new developments, and should seek an annual appropriation at Town Meeting for the construction of walking paths and sidewalks as well as explore opportunities for Community Preservation Act funding for such facilities. One approach might be to develop “mini” walking plans such as the plan below for the “West Stow” area at Great Road and Hudson Road.

b) *Complete Streets* – The Town is currently in the process of developing a Complete Streets initiative designed to encourage alternate modes of transportation such as cycling and walking whenever roadways improvements are made. This should be adopted by the Board of Selectmen and Town Meeting and implemented by the Town.

c) *Assabet River Rail Trail (ARRT)* - The ARRT is an effort to complete a 12.5 mile multi-use recreational trail that will serve the communities of Marlborough, Hudson, Stow, Maynard and Acton, primarily using an abandoned rail bed of the former Marlborough Branch railroad, which was active between 1853 and 1980. While sections of the trail are now open and receiving significant use, a large gap remains between Route 62 on the Stow/Hudson line, heading east through Stow. The Acton/Maynard portions of the project are also moving forward. A clear priority is to identify potential routes to bridge this gap. Stow has acquired easement rights along Track Road, which runs along the Assabet River. Whether or not this becomes a formal part of the ARRT, it is an important walking and cycling resource. Additional information about the status of the Assabet River Rail Trail can be found at <http://www.arrtinc.org/>.

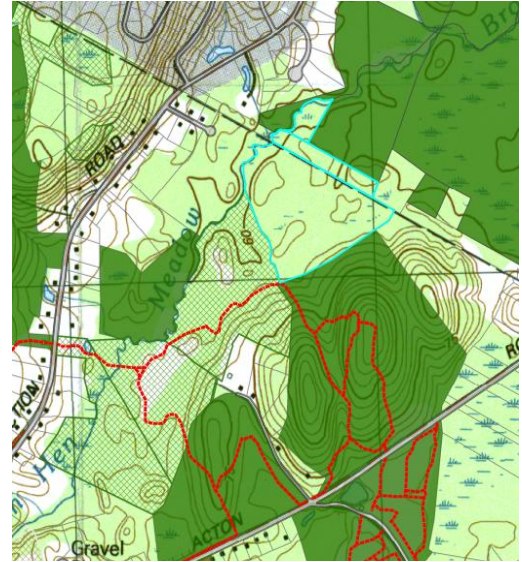
d) *Completion of Stow’s “Emerald Necklace”* - The Stow Conservation Trust is actively working with the Town and private landowners to complete the first phase of Stow’s “Emerald Necklace” – a walking path network that will connect both private and public conservation areas. Several hikes have been done in recent years to demonstrate the feasibility of this network, with just a few missing links identified as in need of protection. The Trust and the Town should consider identifying a loop that could connect to the Southwest Quadrant of Stow, so that the location can be a factor in evaluating future development proposals.



Assabet River Rail Trail in Hudson

e) *Completion of Stow-Acton Trail Connector* – Creation of a formal trail connecting Flagg Hill, Captain Sargent, and conservation land in Acton has long been a priority for both towns. With the pending purchase of the Dunn property spanning the Stow-Acton boundary (shown outlined in blue on the map to the right), it appears that this trail can finally become a reality. Both towns should work together to identify and post signage for the connector trail, located between South Acton and West Acton Roads.

f) *Development of a Bicycle Study for Stow* – Stow, Harvard and other communities in the region are a major destination for recreational cycling and large numbers of cyclists use regional roadways like South Acton Road, Boxboro Road and Harvard Road. Similarly with sections of the ARRT terminating in Stow, cyclists will be using area roadways to “bridge the gap.” Stow should examine heavily used roads and consider making safety improvements such as “Share the Road” signs, wayfinding signs (for example pointing the way to Lower Village up White Pond Road, or to Pine Bluffs from Track Road), and look for ways to maximize the economic return from cyclists (such as bike racks in Lower Village and other local eateries).



Location of Stow-Acton Trail Connector between South and West Acton Roads

3. Improved Access to Water-Based Recreation

Another recreational need is enhanced access to both the Assabet River and Lake Boon.

- Need – Improved canoe/kayak landing and access to the Assabet River at Sudbury Road

Currently there is a canoe/kayak access at this site known as Magazu’s Landing. But the site is becoming overgrown with Japanese Knotweed and needs regular maintenance. The site should be transferred to the Recreation Commission’s management. In addition, the private land on the opposite side of the river is being used without formal permission as a landing and for parking. This usage should be formalized and improved.

- Need – Improved Boating Access to Lake Boon

Suggest formalized ownership/control, improvements to signage/parking on Sudbury Road, and possibly an aquatic invasive species inspection program. Additional information is needed with regard to fishing access points in Stow. Also the Conservation Commission should evaluate the possibility of using the Kingland Road conservation parcels for non-motorized boat access.

- Need – Improved canoe/kayak access and portage site around Gleasondale Dam/Route 62, including a sign or other safety notification for boaters regarding the presence of the dam.



- Need – Focus on identification and publication of “blue trails” for water based recreation in Stow.

Hudson Road / Great Road Area Walking Paths



Legend

— Proposed Bose Trail	— Sidewalk	Protected Open Space Lands
— Existing Trail	- - - Crosswalk	
- - - Road Connection		
- - - Gap		

0 1,000 Feet

Floodplain data developed by the Town of Stow MA.
Base map features provided by MassGIS.

Map produced 7/27/2015 by J P Kern

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Map 29: Hudson Road/Great Road Area Walking Paths

4. Continued Support for Active Recreational Facilities

Since the last Open Space and Recreation Plan update, Stow has developed a major active recreational facility on Old Bolton Road, Stow Community Park, with the support of Stow Community Preservation funds. This has helped alleviate the need for new active playing fields, however, the Recreation Department still does not have the ability to “rest” a field during its busy season. The Town should continue to identify and acquire suitable sites to needs for active recreation for youth, and to secure sufficient funds for field development. The preference is to find a larger site (which can support multiple activities), that is flat enough for easy construction of field space, and relatively convenient access to roads and utilities.

7C. Highest Priority Management Needs

1. Education Regarding the Community and Fiscal Importance of Open Space

Stow has done a good job protecting open space over the years. The community regularly faces the need for land to meet other municipal needs resulting from growth and development, including schools, playing fields, public safety, affordable housing and other uses. Inevitably there are residents who look to conservation land as a “free” solution to meet these needs. In addition, there remains another misperception that conservation land “costs” the Town money since it does not generate tax revenue. This is not necessarily true, and studies have repeatedly shown that residential development costs the Town money, whereas commercial/industrial development and open space offer a net benefit. For example, a 2013 study by the Trust for Public Land shows a \$4 return for every \$1 spent on land conservation. However, this Plan also recommends that there be additional community education and outreach led by the Stow Conservation Trust and Stow Open Space Committee on these issues. The residents’ survey completed for this Plan indicates that there remains a lot of uncertainty around the question of taxes and open space with one-third of residents unsure about this issue. It is hoped that this Plan will be a good first step in highlighting the continuing need to protect open space in Stow. In addition, this Plan recommends that there be additional study of and community education regarding this issue.

2. Expand Land Stewardship Efforts

With approximately 1400 acres of land in the Town’s ownership, the Conservation Commission has a significant responsibility for monitoring and managing the Town’s land holdings. This responsibility includes posting boundaries and working with adjacent landowners, maintaining trails and parking lots, mowing open fields, managing invasive plant species, issuing permits for group and special events, and educating the public on appropriate uses of Town conservation land. The Commission has a part-time Land Steward who assists with many of these tasks, as well as two Department staff who devote a portion of their time to land management activities. The Stow Highway Department also provides assistance with plowing parking lots, removing bulky trash items, and more. This Plan contains a variety of recommendations focused on enhancing land management and monitoring efforts, integrating more volunteers into the Commission’s land stewardship efforts, as well as evaluation of specific land management issues such as deer management, forest management, invasive species management and monitoring of user conflicts at Town Forest.

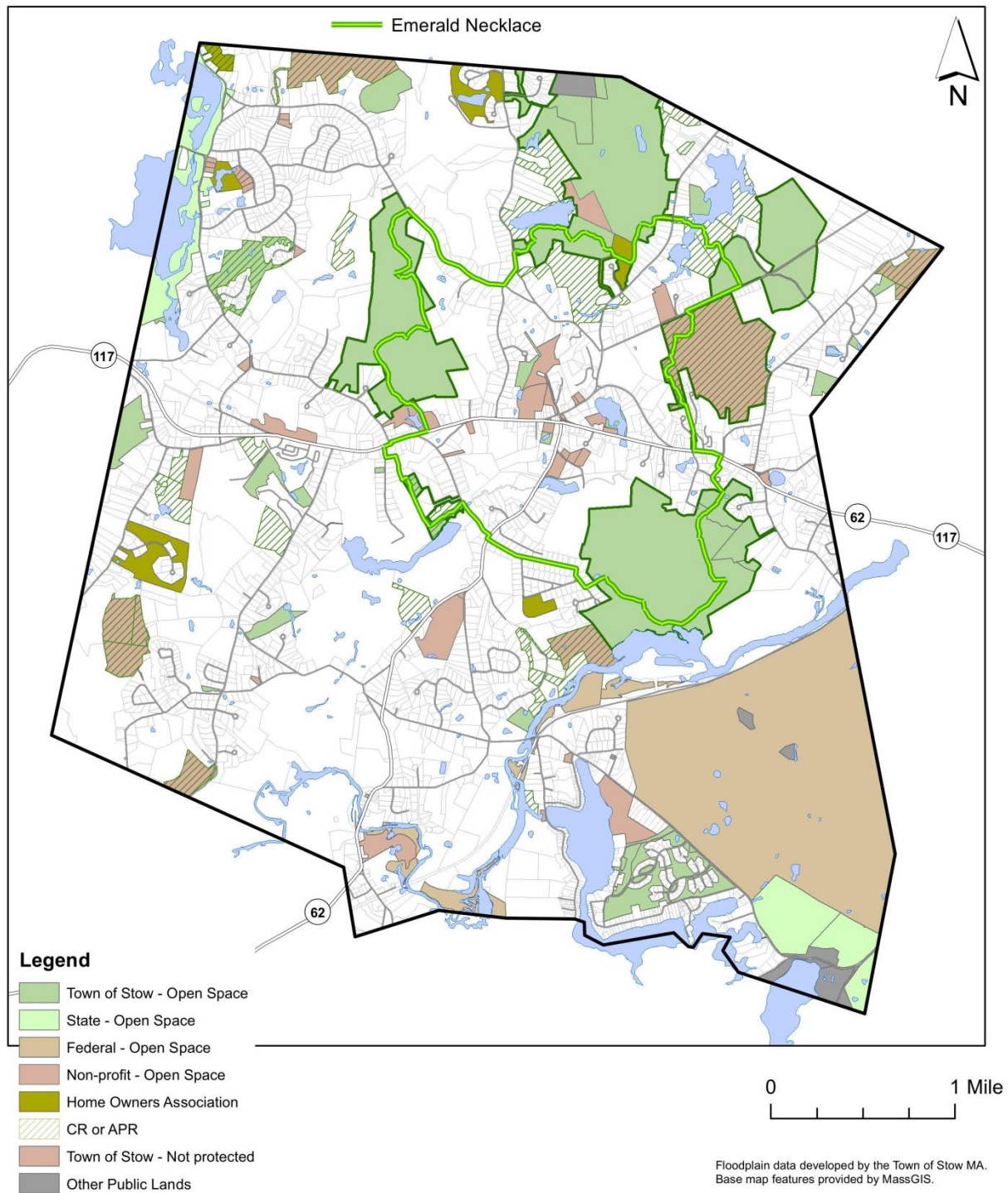
7D. Consistency with Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan

As noted above, many of the items in this Plan are consistent with the Goals and Objectives outlined in the Massachusetts Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) completed in 2012. This includes increasing the availability of trails for pedestrian and cycling recreational needs, increasing the availability of water-based recreation, and creating neighborhood connections to local conservation and recreation areas. Worth noting from the SCORP is a stated goal by Mass

Department of Transportation to triple the amount of travel occurring by bicycle, walking and transit in Massachusetts both to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions and for the health benefits and cost savings associated with reducing vehicle trips.



Stow - Emerald Necklace



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Map 30: Stow Emerald Necklace

Section 8

Goals and Actions for Meeting These Needs

The following Goals and Actions have been identified based on the Needs Analysis in Section 7. A plan for the completion of these actions is contained in Section 9. In many cases, multiple departments or committees will be involved in a particular action item, however we have listed the primary department(s) or board(s) here. To the extent funding is needed to carry out any of these recommendations it is anticipated that costs would be covered by existing departments/ staff, funded through Community Preservation Funds, or a special appropriation would be sought at Town Meeting. In some cases, it may be possible to obtain grant funds.

KEY:

BOA – Board of Assessors
 BOS – Board of Selectmen
 CC – Conservation Commission/Department
 CPC – Community Preservation Committee
 GIS – GIS Coordinator
 HWY – Highway Department
 LBA – Lake Boon Association
 OARS – Organization for the Assabet River
 OSC – Open Space Committee
 PB – Planning Board/Department
 RC – Recreation Commission/Department
 SCT – Stow Conservation Trust
 SMAHT – Stow Municipal Affordable Housing Trust
 SVT – Sudbury Valley Trustees

A. Preserve, protect and enhance Stow's open space and important natural resources using both traditional and creative open space protection tools.

Goals:

1. Protect agricultural lands to preserve and enhance Stow's agricultural base, and maintain its viability for the long term, with a particular focus on Agricultural Preservation Restrictions and Conservation Restrictions that allow farmland to remain in productive use.
2. Protect lands that provide areas for active and passive recreation including ball fields and trails.
3. Protect lands that link existing conservation holdings in Stow and surrounding communities.
4. Protect lands in areas of Town currently underserved by protected open space.
5. Protect lands with significant surface and groundwater resources.
6. Protect lands that will preserve Stow's small town nature.
7. Protect important natural habitats and wildlife corridors, including areas important to minimizing and mitigating the impacts of climate change.
8. Protect important scenic vistas – both large and small.
9. Protect lands with significant historical or cultural resources.

Actions:

A.1. The Open Space Committee should continue to evaluate parcels of open land in conjunction with the Conservation Commission and assist the Town in working proactively to protect the most important areas and in making decisions about priorities as parcels become available to the Town. Consideration

should be given to the factors above, as well as the Open Space Committee's parcel ranking methodology.

Responsibility: OSC, CC

Priority: High

A.2. The Open Space Committee should continue to work with the Agricultural Commission to monitor the status of Stow's key agricultural properties and work with farmers to maintain the viability and sustainability of local farms and/or seek funds to assist with farmland preservation.

Responsibility: OSC, Agricultural Commission

Priority: High

A.3 The Conservation Commission should update its wetlands bylaw regulations to address protection of wetland buffers and vernal pools.

Responsibility: CC

Priority: High



A.4 The Town should continue to protect land in the southwest quadrant of Stow and create a network of sidewalks and trail linkages in this part of Town. The Planning Board should consider an overlay zone in this area that encourages or requires planned conservation development with a land conservation "master plan" for the open space designed to foster such linkages. The Open Space Committee should develop a land conservation master plan for this area.

Responsibility: OSC, CC, PB, SCT

Priority: High

A.5 Use GIS mapping to evaluate Stow's golf courses and determine which areas are most important for future conservation and which areas are most suitable for future development, should a change of use be proposed.

Responsibility: PB, CC, GIS

Priority: High

A.6 The Planning Board should continue to work with the Conservation Commission, Open Space Committee and Stow Conservation Trust on the set-aside of open space in conjunction with development projects. A "model" conservation restriction and deed should be developed and provided to applicants. The Planning Board should incorporate into their regulations provisions that address the timing of these conveyances and payment of due diligence costs, boundary marking, and stewardship funding.

Responsibility: PB, CC, OSC, SCT

Priority: High

A.7 The Town should track re-enrollment of lands in current use taxation programs and periodically reach out to landowners of high priority parcels to make them aware of land conservation options. Similarly, the town should track "term" conservation restrictions and encourage landowners to make these restrictions permanent.

Responsibility: CC, OSC, BOA

Priority: Medium

A.8 Revise and update Planned Conservation Development bylaw to reflect lessons learned with these projects to date.

Responsibility: PB

Priority: Medium

A.9 When priority parcels are proposed for development, the Planning Board should either encourage the land to be developed as a Planned Conservation Development or take advantage of the provision of Section 81U of the Subdivision Control Law which allows the temporary set aside of park and open space that the Town may be interested in purchasing in the future.

Responsibility: PB, CC

Priority: Medium

A.10 The Conservation Commission should educate owners of vernal pools in Stow about these resources and encourage their certification and protection.

Responsibility: CC

Priority: Low

A.11 The Conservation Commission should continue to seek opportunities to lease existing appropriate parcels of conservation land for agricultural purposes.

Responsibility: CC

Priority: Low

B. Provide additional opportunities for active and passive recreation

Goals

1. Enhance accessibility at selected conservation and recreation lands to make these areas more inviting for seniors and those who desire easy walking opportunities.
2. Provide additional playing fields to meet municipal needs.
3. Encourage completion of Assabet River Rail Trail to link with Maynard and Hudson and foster use of Track Road in Stow.
4. Encourage completion of "Emerald Necklace trail" linking conservation areas with walking trails.
5. Provide additional public access points to Lake Boon, improve Sudbury Rd. Assabet River access, and identify water "blue trail" opportunities in Stow.
6. Explore expansion of biking trails and biking lanes to afford residents more safe bicycling opportunities, and enhance Stow's desirability as a destination for recreational cycling. Enhance safety, amenities, and wayfinding signage along existing cycling routes.
7. Encourage implementation of the recommendations contained in the UMass Gleasondale studies with regard to access to open space and the Assabet River.

Actions:

B.1 Continue to advance proposal to create Town Center Park, a community park with accessible trails at 323 Great Road. Seek funding for design and construction as needed.

Responsibility: CC, OSC, RC, SCT

Priority: High

B.2 Complete a more detailed evaluation of the feasibility/design of improving access for persons with disabilities at the conservation and recreational areas identified in Section 7. Build accessibility into any new recreational facility development. Complete at least two accessibility projects in addition to Pine Bluffs. Possibilities include: 323 Great Road, Captain Sargent/Garden Loop, Town Forest, Track Road.

Responsibility: CC, RC

Priority: High

B.3 Continue to expand the Town's sidewalk network, including making connections to conservation and recreation areas. Create targeted walking plans for specific neighborhoods in Stow and continue to seek an annual appropriation for sidewalk construction. Address issue of winter maintenance in any planning.

Responsibility: PB, HWY

Priority: High

B.4 Identify and work to protect or secure easements over missing links in the Emerald Necklace walking trail network. Expand Emerald Necklace "Concept" Plan to include a loop into southwestern Stow.

Responsibility: SCT, OSC, CC

Priority: High-Medium

B.5 Develop a Bicycle Plan for Stow focused on both safety and wayfinding improvements and measures to enhance convenience for recreational cyclists using regional roadways and the Assabet River Rail Trail as well as Town conservation areas. Consider opportunities to maximize the economic benefits of cycling to Stow.

Responsibility: PB, CC, HWY

Priority: High-Medium



B.6 Continue to monitor efforts to develop the Assabet River Rail Trail and make connections to Track Road in Stow. The various Town departments that are involved with Track Road should work together with the landowner to develop a management/maintenance plan for Track Road and facilities to enhance its use for walking and biking.

Responsibility: BOS, CC HWY

Priority: Medium

B.7 Finalize and adopt a Complete Streets Policy for Stow, create a Complete Streets Working Group and explore incorporation of pedestrian and bike facilities as part of roadway projects.

Responsibility: PB, HWY

Priority: Medium

B.8 Evaluate walking and outdoor recreational opportunities in the vicinity of the new Fire Station/Community Center on Great Road. As part of this process, consider revitalizing or modifying the existing Head Life Course at Marble Hill.

Responsibility: CC, RC

Priority: Medium

B.9 Re-establish the canoe/kayak access at Pine Bluffs near the pumphouse.

Responsibility: RC

Priority: Medium

B.10 Seek opportunities to protect additional land around Lake Boon and to improve the boat ramp to the lake.

Responsibility: OSC, RC, CC

Priority: Medium

B.11 Improve canoe/kayak put-in, portage, and take-out opportunities near Gleasondale Mill. Work with abutting private landowners to secure formal access in these areas and explore feasibility of creating a small parking area for boaters in Gleasondale. Continue to evaluate the possibility of a trail connection to the Assabet River Rail Trail from this area. Work with OARS on signage.

Responsibility: RC, OARS

Priority: Medium

B.12 Work with the Town of Acton to create a new north-south trail from Acton's Heath Hen Conservation area through the newly protected Dunn Estate property to Captain Sargent. Determine management responsibilities and install signage.

Responsibility: CC, SCT

Priority: Medium

B.13 Identify and designate blue trails along major waterways in Stow.

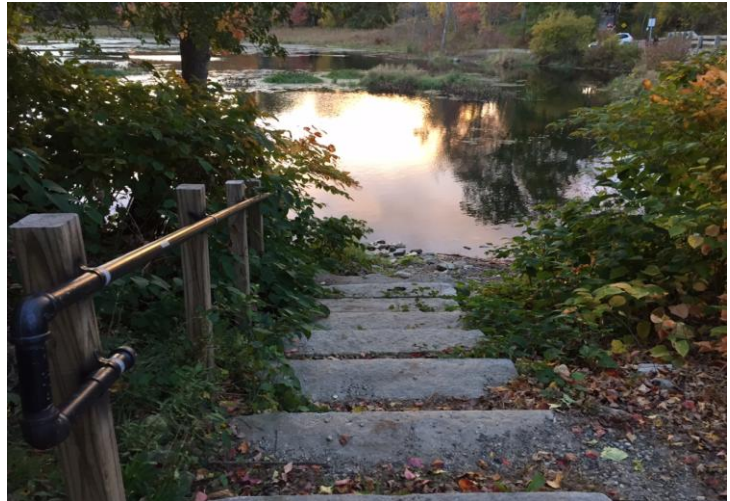
Responsibility: RC, CC, OARS

Priority: Low

B.14 Continue to coordinate with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on the review and implementation of their management plan for the Assabet River National Wildlife Refuge. Encourage expansion of the Refuge boundary to allow for important future acquisitions.

Responsibility: OSC, CC, BOS

Priority: Low



B.15 Work with the private landowner abutting the current Assabet River boat ramp at Sudbury Road to secure this site permanently through acquisition by the Town or conservation restriction/easement. Improve access on both sides of the River at Sudbury Road and transfer the Town-owned parcel to the custody of the Recreation Commission.

Responsibility: CC, RC

Priority: Low

B.16 Evaluate use of the “School Lot” in Gleasondale and the feasibility of using this lot for either a neighborhood park or to provide parking for canoe/kayak launching.

Responsibility: RC, OARS

Priority: Low

B.17 Evaluate use of the Kingland Rd. Conservation parcels for a canoe/kayak launch for Lake Boon.

Responsibility: CC, RC

Priority: Low

B.18 Identify and secure a site for construction of additional active recreational facilities including at least one playing field and two tennis courts.

Responsibility: RC, CPC

Priority: Low

C. Increase public use and awareness of the value and importance of Stow’s open space, agricultural, and recreational lands through increased public access and educational forums in order to increase funding available for protection of lands in Stow.

Goals:

1. Educate Stow residents about the importance and fiscal benefits of open space and agricultural land protection.
2. Help Stow residents visualize the implications of build out and the anticipated timeframe for change.
3. Make information about Stow’s conservation and recreational lands more widely available to the public.
4. Educate the public about the links between open space and climate change mitigation and adaptation.
5. Maintain strong partnerships between Town boards, and among boards and the Stow Conservation Trust
6. Maintain support for continued Town funding (through CPA and general appropriations as needed) for protection of important parcels and continued protection and stewardship of existing conservation holdings.

7. Protect at least one additional acre of land for every additional acre that is developed in Stow to maintain the balance between developed and protected land.

Actions:

C.1 Update and publish a guide to Stow's conservation and recreation lands – either in print or electronic form. Include a section focused on easy/accessible walks in Stow.

Responsibility: CC, GIS; SCT

Priority: High

C.2 Develop and disseminate simple invasive species fact sheets for homeowners on identification and control of the most common invasive species.

Responsibility: CC

Priority: High

C.3 Update and distribute a "Guide to Living on Lake Boon" with information on water pollution control, control of common invasive species (aquatic and terrestrial), permitting for docks, retaining walls, etc. native plantings, minimizing lawn/fertilizer, rainwater recharge and other low-impact suggestions.

Responsibility: CC, LBA

Priority: High

C.4 The Town should continue to make an annual appropriation of funds to the Town's conservation fund to provide seed money for land acquisitions and assist with land management and maintenance.

Responsibility: CC, BOS

Priority: High

C.5 Provide high quality, credible information to municipal leaders, civic organizations and residents about the property tax implications of various growth scenarios. Enlist the assistance of the Stow Conservation Trust in such an outreach effort where appropriate.

Responsibility: OSC, CC, SCT

Priority: Medium

C.6 Advocate for continued enrollment in the Community Preservation Act and continue to demonstrate a good track record of identifying and recommending projects that address Stow's needs for open space, affordable housing, historic preservation and recreation.

Responsibility: CPC

Priority: Medium

C.7 Priority for the open space portion of CPA funds should be given to acquisition of land and rights in land and to projects that are consistent with the Open Space and Recreation Plan. Projects that leverage funds from other sources should be given additional priority.

Responsibility: CPC, OSC, CC

Priority: Medium

C.8 Monitor progress toward the 1:1 land protection to land development goal in this Plan. Included in the protected category should be land permanently set aside as open space through the development review process.

Responsibility: CC, OSC

Priority: Medium



C.9 Plan a year of celebration of Stow's Open Space centered around the 50th anniversary of the Town Forest acquisition in 2017-2018.

Responsibility: CC, OSC, SCT

Priority: Medium

C.10 Continue to sponsor 2-3 guided walks on Conservation Land annually to make residents aware of these resources.

Responsibility: CC

Priority: Medium

C. 11 Publicize and support the Farm Friendly Neighborhood Program

(<http://farmfriendlyneighbor.wordpress.com>) by customizing their brochure for use in Stow. This public education effort could be a bridge between open space, economic development and agricultural interests to help maintain farm viability as development occurs on land surrounding farms.

Responsibility: PB, Ag Commission

Priority: Medium

C.12 Encourage joint affordable housing-open space projects where appropriate to the site in order to foster support for both of these important municipal needs.

Responsibility: CPC OSC, CC, SCT, SMAHT

Priority: Low

C.13 Educate residents on the local impacts of climate change and steps that they can take to prepare. These educational efforts should include the importance of land conservation for increasing resilience to climate change and identification of key parcels that advance this goal.

Responsibility: OSC, CC, PB

Priority: Low

C.14 Identify areas that are at risk for flooding due to increased frequency and intensity of rain events, including culverts that may be undersized. Develop a plan for hazard mitigation in these areas.

Responsibility: OSC, CC, PB

Priority: Low

D. Better coordinate public and private efforts in order to effectively accomplish open space protection goals given the limited window of opportunity for land conservation in Stow.

Goals:

1. Maintain strong inter-board communication on issues important to open space protection
2. Incorporation of open space values in capital project planning and siting.
3. Continue to emphasize small scale solutions to the affordable housing issue (e.g. deed restrictions on existing units, small Town-sponsored projects) as an alternative to large 40B developments.

Actions:

D.1 The Open Space Committee, Conservation Commission, Community Preservation Committee, Stow Conservation Trust and Sudbury Valley Trustees should continue to work as partners to protect open space and should seek to employ the strengths of each entity in a coordinated fashion. An Open Space Coordinating Council comprised of representatives from each body should foster this coordination and continue to meet as needed – perhaps 2-3 times/ year.

Responsibility: OSC, CC, SCT, SVT

Priority: High

D.2 The Board of Selectmen and Capital Planning Committee should be proactive in working with the Open Space Committee, Planning Board, Conservation Commission and others to identify and secure sites to meet future (long-term) municipal needs.

Responsibility: BOS

Priority: High

D.3 In contemplating taking and disposition of tax title lands, the Board of Selectmen and Treasurer should consult with the Open Space Committee, Conservation Commission, Planning Board and other

key municipal boards. Lands that are important for conservation should be transferred to the control of Conservation Commission; other lands important for other uses should be transferred to the control of the appropriate Town Board.

Responsibility: BOS, CC, OSC, PB, BOA

Priority: Medium

D.4 The Board of Selectmen should continue to review notices of withdrawal or sale of lands enrolled in Chapter 61, 61A and 61B in accordance with the adopted procedures that ensure that such parcels are given due consideration by all Boards for all municipal needs.

Responsibility: BOS

Priority: Medium

E. Manage the Town's Conservation Land in a manner that is designed to maintain its ecological and wildlife habitat values while encouraging appropriate visitor use.

Goals:

1. Ensure that boundaries and trails are well marked for users and neighbors
2. Ensure that conservation land regulations are well publicized and easy to understand, and that the reasons for permitted and prohibited uses are communicated clearly.
3. Minimize conflicts among conservation land users.
4. Engage in scientifically thoughtful long-term decision-making about such activities as forest management, invasive species control and deer management.

Actions:

E.1 The Conservation Commission should post and routinely monitor the boundaries of Town conservation areas, following up with abutting landowners to address issues with dumping and encroachments as needed. Flyers with information about conservation land should be distributed to abutting residential landowners, as well as realtors and lawn care companies.

Responsibility: CC

Priority: High

E.2 The Conservation Commission should review its regulations for the use of conservation land and standardize the permitted/prohibited uses insofar as feasible. Regulations should be available on the Commission's website and at major trailheads.

Responsibility: CC

Priority: High

E.3 The Conservation Commission should monitor use of conservation areas with a goal of minimizing user conflicts. In particular, the regulations relative to dog walking (on leash/off leash) may need additional attention and/or enforcement.

Responsibility: CC

Priority: High

E.4 The Conservation Commission should develop a long-term plan for carrying out its land management responsibilities including mowing, trail maintenance, invasive species management, and boundary posting and monitoring. Additional funding and/or volunteer resources will likely be needed for personnel and equipment. Opportunities to collaborate with the Highway, Cemetery, and Recreation Departments, as well as Stow Conservation Trust should be explored.

Responsibility: CC

Priority: High

E.5 The Conservation Commission should conduct mapping of invasive species at Town conservation areas and prioritize key areas for management, bringing proposals to the Community Preservation Committee as appropriate. The Commission should also assist other Town land-managing departments (e.g. Recreation, Highway) in addressing invasive species issues.

Responsibility: CC

Priority: High



E.6 The Conservation Commission should explore the possibility of deer management and/or forest management on select Town conservation areas, with a focus on forest health and ecology.

Responsibility: CC

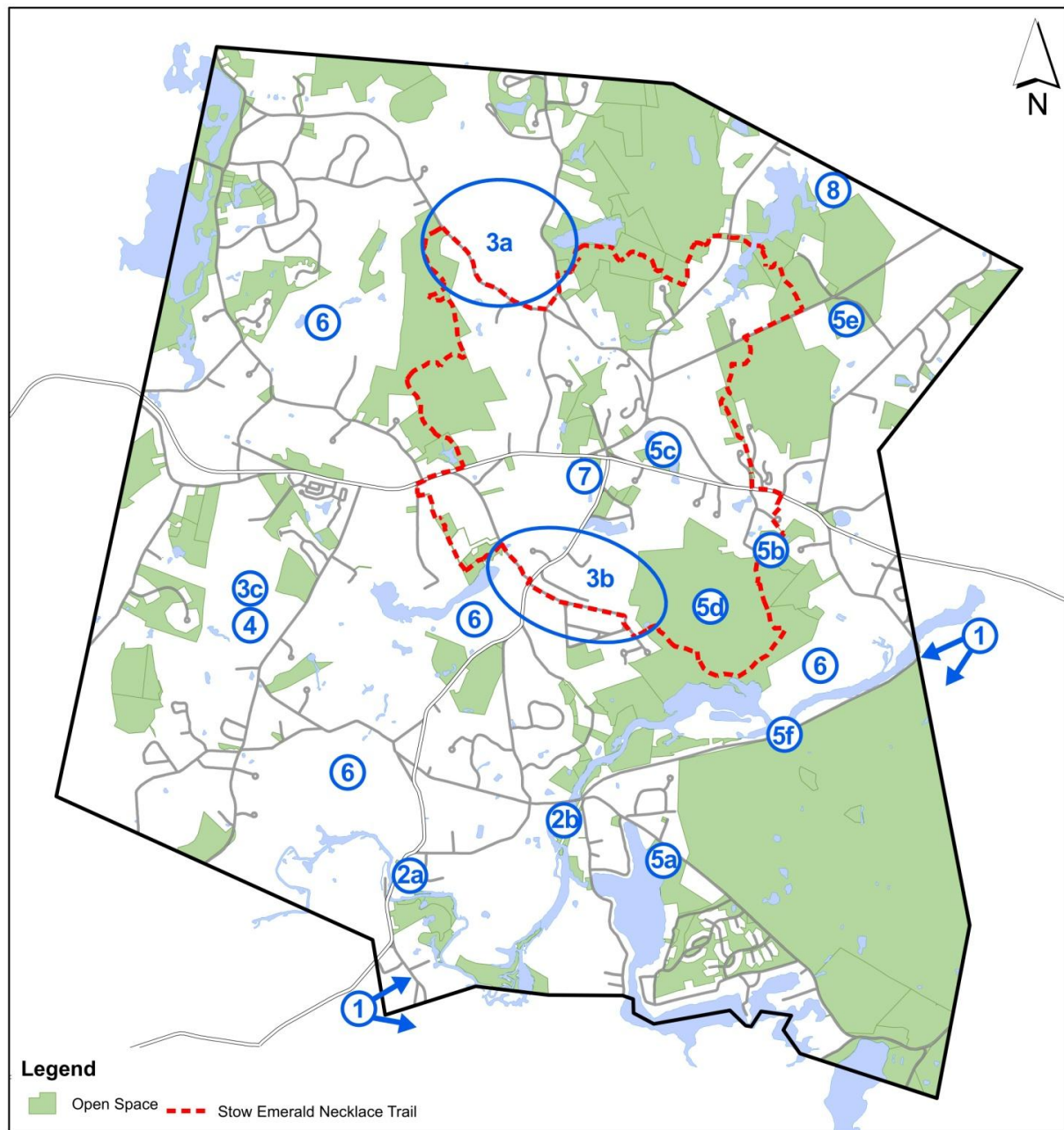
Priority: Medium

E.7 The Conservation Commission should evaluate its land holdings to determine whether there is an additional site that would be suitable for community gardens, particularly in the southern half of Stow.

Responsibility: CC

Priority: Low

Stow - Open Space Action Plan



Action Plan Items

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Assabet Rail Trail Completion | 5. Accessibility |
| 2. Canoe Access Improvement | 5a. Pine Bluff |
| 2a. Gleasondale Rd Access | 5b. Memorial Field |
| 2b. Sudbury Rd Access | 5c. Ministers Pond |
| 3. Emerald Necklace Completion | 5d. Town Forest |
| 3a. Marble Hill to Heath Hen / Flagg Hill | 5e. Captain Sargent gardens |
| 3b. Town Forest to Spindle Hill | 5f. Track Road |
| 3c. Expand to Underserved Area | 6. Plan for Protection of At-Risk Parcels |
| 4. Additional Land Protection in Underserved Area | 7. Update Sidewalk Study and Complete Bike Study |
| | 8. Stow-Acton Trail Connector at Dunn Property |

0 1 Mile

Floodplain data developed by the Town of Stow MA.
Base map features provided by MassGIS.

Map produced 7/27/2015 by J P Kern

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Map 31: Open Space Action Plan

Section 9
Seven Year Action Plan

(For the full text of each action item, see the preceding section)

The following schedule represents our current estimate of the time scale of the action items in this Plan. This schedule will be controlled largely by the availability of funding and active volunteers. The seven-year action plan is an effort to put the recommendations in this plan in priority order for implementation – with those highest priorities being completed in the early years of Plan Implementation.

Ongoing Action Items - Years 1 through 7		
Action	Primary Responsibility	Funding
The Open Space Committee should continue to evaluate parcels of open land in conjunction with the Conservation Commission, and should assist the Town in working proactively to protect the most important areas and in making decisions about priorities as parcels become available to the Town.	OSC, CC	Volunteer Efforts
The Town should continue to make an annual appropriation of funds to the Stow Conservation Fund to provide seed money for land acquisitions and assist with land management and maintenance.	CC	Town Budget
Priority for the open space portion of CPA funds should be given to acquisition of land and rights in land and to projects that are consistent with the Open Space and Recreation Plan. Projects that leverage funds from other sources should be given additional priority.	CPC, OSC, CC	Volunteer Efforts, CPA Funds
The Open Space Committee, Conservation Commission, Community Preservation Committee, Stow Conservation Trust and Sudbury Valley Trustees should continue to work as partners to protect open space and should seek to employ the strengths of each entity in a coordinated fashion. An Open Space Coordinating Council comprised of representatives from each body should foster this coordination and continue to meet as needed – perhaps 2-3 times/ year.	OSC, CC, SCT, SVT, others	Volunteer Efforts, CPA Funds, Town Budget, Private Fundraising
The Open Space Committee should continue to work with the Agricultural Commission to monitor the status of Stow's key agricultural properties and work with farmers to maintain the viability and sustainability of local farms and/or seek funds to assist with farmland preservation.	OSC, Agricultural Comm.	Volunteer Efforts, CPA Funds, Town Budget, Private Fundraising
Advocate for continued enrollment in the Community Preservation Act and continue to demonstrate a good track record of identifying and recommending projects that address Stow's needs for open space, affordable housing, historic preservation and recreation.	CPC	Volunteer Efforts

Action	Primary Responsibility	Funding
Continue to expand the Town's sidewalk network, including making connections to conservation and recreation areas.	PB, HWY	Town Budget, Grants
The Board of Selectmen should continue to review notices of withdrawal or sale of lands enrolled in Chapter 61, 61A and 61B in accordance with the adopted procedures that ensure that such parcels are given due consideration by all Boards for all municipal needs.	BOS	Volunteer Efforts
Monitor progress toward the minimum 1:1 land protection to land development goal in this Plan. Included in the protected category should be land permanently set aside as open space through the development review process.	CC	Town Budget/Staff
The Selectmen and Capital Planning Committee should be proactive in working with the Open Space Committee, Planning Board, Conservation Commission and others to identify/ secure sites to meet future (long-term) municipal needs.	BOS	Volunteer Efforts, Town Budget
The Planning Board should continue to work with the Conservation Commission, Open Space Committee and Stow Conservation Trust on the set-aside of open space in conjunction with development projects.	PB, CC, OSC,SCT	Volunteer Efforts, Town Budget/Staff
When priority parcels are proposed for development, the Planning Board should either encourage the land to be developed as a PCD or take advantage of provisions which allow the temporary set aside of park and open space that the Town may be interested in purchasing in the future.	PB, CC	Volunteer Efforts, Town Budget/Staff
In contemplating taking and disposition of tax title lands, the Board of Selectmen and Treasurer should consult with the Open Space Committee, Conservation Commission, Planning Board and other key municipal boards. Lands that are important for conservation should be transferred to the control of Conservation Commission; other lands important for other uses should be transferred to the control of the appropriate Board.	BOS, CC, OSC, PB,BOA	Volunteer Efforts, Town Budget/Staff
The Conservation Commission should continue to seek oppotunities to lease existing existing parcels of conservation land for agricultural purposes.	CC	Town Budget/Staff
Encourage joint affordable housing-open space projects where appropriate to the site in order to foster support for both of these important municipal needs.	CPC, OSC, CC, SCT, SMAHT	Volunteer Efforts, Town Budget/Staff, CPA Funds, Grants
Short Term Action Items – Years 1 and 2 (2016-2017)		
The Town should continue to protect land in the southwest quadrant of Stow and create a network of sidewalks and trail linkages in this part of Town. The Planning Board should consider an overlay zone in this area that encourages or requires planned conservation development with a land conservation “master plan” for the open space designed to foster such linkages. The Open Space Committee should develop a land conservation master plan for this area.	OSC, CC,PB,SCT	CPA Funds, Grants, Town Budget/Staff

Action	Primary Responsibility	Funding
Use GIS mapping to evaluate Stow's golf courses and determine which areas are most important for future conservation and which areas are most suitable for future development, should a change of use be	PB, CC, GIS	Town Budget/Staff, Volunteer Efforts
Complete a more detailed evaluation of the feasibility/design of improving access for persons with disabilities at the conservation and recreational areas identified in Section 7. Build accessibility into any new recreational facility development. Identify, design and permit one access project. Possibilities include: 323 Great Rd, Captain Sargent/Garden Loop, Town Forest, Track Rd.	CC, RC	Town Budget/Staff, Volunteer Efforts, CPA Funds, Grants
Create targeted walking plans for specific neighborhoods in Stow and continue to seek an annual appropriation for sidewalk construction.	PB, HWY	Town Budget/Staff
Update and publish a print/electronic guide to Stow's conservation and recreation lands . Include a section focused on easy/accessible walks in Stow.	CC, GIS, SCT	Town Budget/Staff, Grants
Develop and disseminate simple invasive species fact sheets for homeowners on identification and control of the most common invasive species.	CC	Town Budget/Staff, Volunteer Efforts
The Conservation Commission should update its wetlands bylaw regulations to address protection of wetland buffers and vernal pools.	CC	Town Budget/Staff, Volunteer Efforts
A "model" conservation restriction and deed should be developed and provided to applicants. The Planning Board should incorporate into their regulations provisions that address the timing of these conveyances and payment of due diligence costs, boundary marking, and stewardship funding.	PB, CC, OSC, SCT	Town Budget/Staff, Volunteer Efforts
Continue to advance proposal to create Town Center Park, a community park with accessible trails at 323 Great Road. Seek funding for design and construction as needed.	CC, OSC, RC, SCT	Town Budget/Staff, CPA Funds, Grants
The Conservation Commission should post and routinely monitor the boundaries of Town conservation areas, following up with abutting landowners to address issues with dumping and encroachments as needed. Flyers with information about conservation land should be distributed to abutting residential landowners, as well as realtors and lawn care companies.	CC	Town Budget/Staff, Volunteer Efforts
The Conservation Commission should review its regulations for the use of conservation land and standardize the permitted/prohibited uses insofar as feasible. Regulations should be available on the Commission's website and at major trailheads.	CC	Town Budget/Staff/Volunteer Efforts
The Conservation Commission should monitor use of conservation areas with a goal of minimizing user conflicts. In particular, the regulations relative to dog walking (on leash/off leash) may need additional attention and/or enforcement.	CC	Town Budget./Staff, Volunteer Efforts
The Conservation Commission should conduct mapping of invasive species at Town conservation areas and prioritize key areas for management, bringing proposals to the Community Preservation Committee as appropriate. The Commission should also assist other Town land-managing departments (e.g. Recreation, Highway) in addressing invasive species issues.	CC	Town Budget/Staff, Volunteer Efforts, CPA Funding, Grants
Revise and update Planned Conservation Development bylaw to reflect lessons learned with these projects to date.	PB	Town Budget/Staff; Volunteer Efforts

Action	Primary Responsibility	Funding
Finalize and adopt a Complete Streets Policy for Stow, create a Complete Streets Working Group and explore incorporation of pedestrian and bike facilities as part of roadway projects.	PB, HWY	Town Budget/Staff, Grants
Re-establish the canoe/kayak access at Pine Bluffs near the pumphouse.	RC	Town Budget/Staff
Plan a year of celebration of Stow's Open Space centered around the 50 th anniversary of the Town Forest acquisition in 2017-2018.	CC, OSC, SCT	Town Budget/Staff
Continue to sponsor 2-3 guided walks on Conservation Land annually to make residents aware of these resources.	CC	Town Budget/Staff
Mid-Term Actions – Years 3 and 4 (2018-2019)		
Complete implementation of one accessibility project: plan and design second project. Possibilities include: 323 Great Road, Captain Sargent/Garden Loop, Town Forest, Track Road.	RC, CC	Town Budget/Staff, CPA Funding, Grants
Identify and work to protect or secure easements over missing links in the Emerald Necklace Walking Trail network. Expand Emerald Necklace "Concept" Plan to include a loop into southwestern Stow.	SCT, OSC, CC	Town Budget/Staff, CPA Funding, Grants
Develop a Bicycle Plan for Stow focused on both safety and wayfinding improvements and measures to enhance convenience for recreational cyclists using regional roadways and the Assabet River Rail Trail as well as Town conservation areas. Consider opportunities to maximize the economic benefits of cycling to Stow.	PB, CC, HWY	Town Budget/Staff, Volunteer Efforts
Update and distribute a "Guide to Living on Lake Boon" with information on water pollution control, control of common invasive species, permitting for docks, retaining walls, etc. native plantings, minimizing lawn/fertilizer, rainwater recharge and other low-impact suggestions.	CC, LBA	Town Budget/Staff, Grants, Volunteer Efforts
Provide high quality, credible information to municipal leaders, civic organizations and residents about the property tax implications of various growth scenarios. Enlist the assistance of the Stow Conservation Trust in such an outreach effort where appropriate.	OSC, CC, SCT	Town Budget/Staff, Volunteer Efforts
The Conservation Commission should explore the possibility of deer management and/or forest management on select Town conservation areas, with a focus on forest health and ecology.	CC	Volunteer Efforts, Town Budget/Staff
Continue to monitor efforts to develop the Assabet River Rail Trail and make connections to Track Road in Stow. The various Town departments that are involved with Track Road, should work with the landowner to develop a management/maintenance plan for Track Road and facilities to enhance its use for walking and biking.	BOS, CC, HWY, RC	Town Budget/Staff, CPA Funds
The Conservation Commission should develop a plan for carrying out land management responsibilities including mowing, trail maintenance, invasive species management, and boundary posting/monitoring. Funding and/or volunteer resources will likely be needed for personnel and equipment. Opportunities to collaborate with the Highway, Cemetery, and Recreation Departments, as well as Stow Conservation Trust should be explored.	CC	Town Budget/Staff, Volunteer Efforts

Action	Primary Responsibility	Funding
Evaluate walking and outdoor recreational opportunities in the vicinity of the new Fire Station/Community Center on Great Rd. Consider revitalizing or modifying the existing Head Life Course at Marble Hill.	CC, RC	Town Staff/Budget, Volunteer Efforts
Seek opportunities to protect additional land around Lake Boon and to improve the boat ramp to the lake.	OSC, RC, CC	Town Staff/Budget, Volunteer Efforts, CPA Funds
Improve canoe/kayak put-in, portage, and take-out opportunities near Gleasondale Mill. Work with abutting private landowners to secure formal access in these areas and explore feasibility of creating a small parking area for boaters in Gleasondale. Continue to evaluate the possibility of a trail connection to the Assabet River Rail Trail from this area. Work with OARS on signage.	OARS, RC	Volunteer Efforts, CPA Funds
Work with the Town of Acton to create a new north-south trail from Acton's Heath Hen Conservation area through the newly protected Dunn Estate property to Captain Sargent. Determine management responsibilities and install signage.	CC, SCT	Town Staff/Budget, Volunteer Efforts
The Town should track re-enrollment of lands in current use taxation programs and periodically reach out to landowners of high priority parcels to make them aware of land conservation options. Similarly, the town should track "term" conservation restrictions and encourage landowners to make these restrictions permanent	CC, OSC, BOA	Town Staff/Budget
Continue to sponsor 2-3 guided walks on Conservation Land annually to make residents aware of these resources.	CC	Town Staff/Budget
Publicize and support the Farm Friendly Neighborhood Program (http://farmfriendlyneighbor.wordpress.com) by customizing their brochure for use in Stow. This public education effort could be a bridge between open space, economic development and agricultural interests to help maintain farm viability as development occurs on land surrounding farms.	PB, Ag Comm	Town Staff/Budget

Long-Term Actions – Years 5 and 6 (2020-2021)		
Action	Primary Responsibility	Funding
Complete 2nd accessibility project begun in Year 4	RC, CC	Town Budget/Staff, CPA Funding, Grants
The Conservation Commission should educate owners of vernal pools in Stow about these resources and encourage their certification and protection.	CC	Town Staff/Budget, Volunteer Efforts
Continue to coordinate with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on the review and implementation of their management plan for the Assabet River National Wildlife Refuge. Encourage expansion of the Refuge boundary to allow for important future acquisitions.	OSC, CC, BOS	Town Staff/Budget
Work with the private landowner abutting the current Assabet River boat ramp at Sudbury Road to secure this site permanently through acquisition by the Town or conservation restriction/easement. Improve access on both sides of the River at Sudbury Road and transfer the Town-owned parcel to the custody of the Recreation Commission.	CC, RC	Town Staff/Budget, Volunteer Efforts, CPA Funds
Evaluate use of the “School Lot” in Gleasondale and the feasibility of using this lot for either a neighborhood park or to provide parking for canoe/kayak launching.	RC, OARS	Town Staff/Budget, CPA Funds
Evaluate use of the Kingland Rd. Conservation parcels for a canoe/kayak launch for Lake Boon.	CC, RC	Town Staff/Budget, CPA Funds
Identify and designate blue trails along major waterways in Stow.	RC, OARS, CC	Volunteer Efforts
The Conservation Commission should evaluate its land holdings to determine whether there is an additional site that would be suitable for community gardens, particularly in the southern half of Stow.	CC	Town Staff/Budget
Identify and secure a site for construction of additional active recreational facilities including at least one playing field and two tennis courts.	RC, CPC	Town Staff/Budget, Volunteer Efforts, CPA Funds, Grants
Educate residents on the local impacts of climate change and steps that they can take to prepare. These educational efforts should include the importance of land conservation for increasing resilience to climate change and identification of key parcels that advance this goal.	OSC, CC, PB	Town Staff/Budget, Volunteer Efforts
Identify areas that are at risk for flooding due to increased frequency and intensity of rain events, including culverts that may be undersized. Develop a plan for hazard mitigation in these areas.	CC, PB, OSC	Town Staff/Budget
Continue to sponsor 2-3 guided walks on Conservation Land annually to make residents aware of these resources.	CC	Town Staff/Budget

Final Actions and Open Space and Recreation Plan Review – Year 7 (2022)		
Action	Primary Responsibility	Funding
Update Open Space and Recreation Plan	CC	Town Staff/Budget, Volunteer Efforts

Section 10

Comments from the Public and from Town Boards

As part of the process of producing this Open Space and Recreation Plan, a draft of this Plan was circulated to the relevant Town Boards. Copies of the draft Plan were placed in the Randall Library, and a public forum was held in the fall of 2015 to obtain the opinions of the public. The plan was also distributed electronically via the Town's website, and sent to communities surrounding Stow. Formal written comments were received from several boards, and a handful of residents. Comments have been incorporated into this final Plan and copies of comment letters can be found in Appendix G.

Section 11

Resources

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