

Karen L. Townsend
133 Boon Road
P.O.Box 419
Stow, MA 01775
(978) 567-9632
amayflower@aol.com

January 5, 2023

Zoning Board of Appeals
Town Building 380 Great Rd.
Stow, MA 01775

Attention Members of the Board,

I am writing in regard to the proposed changes for Stow Acres being addressed at the Jan 9, 2023 ZBA meeting, specifically: Stow Acres Maintenance Building and Access Road Special Permit.

My current information is that the request for a new access road off Randall Rd. has been removed. However, if the proposal as it exists today is approved, Stow Acres would be allowed to build a large metal maintenance building (to be located at the rear of their parking lot bordering Randall Rd.). As a neighbor of Stow Acres I want to express my concerns and request that the board block this proposal. My two main concerns are these: maintaining the rural look and feel of the neighborhood, and more importantly traffic safety.

The Stow Town website itself uses these terms to describe Stow:

- " Stow has a four-seasons kind of beauty that makes it ideal as "a place for growing up and a place for coming back"
- "... has an abundance of softly rolling hills and rustic country lanes. "
- " The townspeople, in general, are concerned about preserving Stow's historical past. At the same time they encourage residential growth that is protective of both the people who live here now and the people who will live here in the future."

Additionally the comments below are taken from the Stow Acres Open Space, Recreation, and Housing Page :

" For decades, residents of Stow have been concerned about the future of Stow Acres, the Town's largest (36 hole) golf course and the largest undeveloped parcel in Stow. This 360-acre property contains significant conservation values – including riparian corridors along Elizabeth Brook and the Assabet River, scenic views from Randall Road and Gleasondale Road, and

opportunities for significant large-scale conservation and restoration."

In the near future this neighborhood will be challenged with the changes that will come with the development of the North Course. Our rural, narrow, tree and stone wall lined roads were never intended for heavy traffic and/or to be frequented by large delivery vans and trucks. (note traffic incident at corner of Boon Rd. and Gleasondale Rd. on December 22, 2022). The addition of a large metal building would not add but rather detract from the rural look and feel of our neighborhood. In my opinion, it would create an industrial feeling, blocking views of the course and club house along Randall Road and Cross St., and would not compliment the charm of the historic club house and private properties nearby. A large metal building would have potential to block views from Randall Rd. for anyone traveling by car, foot, or bicycle towards the Cross St. intersection. The shadow cast by such a large building could potentially contribute to the already dangerous winter conditions at that intersection (ice and snow plowed to the side of the road that seems never to get enough sun to melt).

I understand that Stow Acres is looking OUT from their property, making what seems to be purely a business decision. As the Stow Acres management pictures that large/tall metal building at the rear of their parking lot... the traffic driving by on Randall Road, coming down Cross St. and Boon, (as well as the bicyclists, dog walkers, joggers, and neighbors) see the property from the street looking INTO Stow Acres. Their proposed changes will do nothing to improve the view. Ask yourself, is a large metal structure the first thing you want to see as you approach Stow Acres to attend a corporate function or to celebrate a special occasion?

In this proposal I do not see that they have demonstrated any intention to be a good neighbor. In this proposal I do not see any intention to maintain the neighborhood characteristics as rural, scenic, and/or historic. I do not see any plans or intention to improve safe travel on our roads. I am curious if other locations on their 161 acres (South Course) have been considered? Perhaps additions to the already standing buildings would be more appropriate?

In conclusion I want to thank the board for taking your time to read and address my concerns.

Respectfully,

Karen L. Townsend