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January 18, 2023

Mr. Mark Jones  
Zoning Board of Appeals  
Town Building  
380 Great Road  
Stow, MA 01775

Mr. Jones and Members of the Zoning Board of Appeals,

I am writing to share my concerns about the proposed maintenance building location and general lack of master plan as it relates to the South Course of Stow Acres Country Club. There are 3 concerns I ask the Board to consider before making any further decisions regarding application approvals for the South Course.

1. Location of the proposed maintenance building.
2. Noise risks that accompany the proposed maintenance building location.
3. Lack of Master Plan for the entire property, including both the North and South Courses.

**Location of the proposed maintenance building.**

The location of the proposed maintenance building comes with two major concerns for myself and my family at 41 Randall Road. The first being the extreme proximity to the roadway and my property line. The second being the impact of the building location on the vistas from my home as well as the street. As you may recall, Jesse Steadman (former Town of Stow Town Planner) shared at the Future of Stow Acres Forum held on February 10, 2021 that maintaining open vistas along Randall Road was one of the top priority outcomes for this development project (Stow TV Future of Stow Acres Forum 2 10 21 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zusOJ4QcZ2A>).

As you can see from these photos of the recently laid proposed maintenance building markers the building will have a direct negative impact on those vistas from inside and outside my home, as well as to everyone travelling through that section of Randall Road. The building is also extremely close to my property line (approximately 15 yards) and the school bus pick-up/drop-off location for my two young sons.



Photo 1: Vista from my living room window at 41 Randall Road on January 15, 2023. Note the red barn inclusion in the “iconic landscape” view, as Jesse Steadman called the Stow Acres vistas at the October 31, 2021, Town Forum, and proposed new maintenance building marker’s extreme proximity to the roadway and my property line.



Photo 2: Taken from my living room window of 41 Randall Road on January 15, 2023. Note the new maintenance building marker and proximately to school bus pick-up/drop-off location, as denoted by the star. The distance between those two locations is approximately 15 yards.

**Noise risks that accompany the proposed maintenance building location.**

I appreciate that the golf course requires use of loud, heavy equipment to maintain the functionality and appearance of the course. I am appreciative of the course doing a good job maintaining the upkeep of the course. However, relocating the current equipment to be approximately 85 yards closer to the occupied dwellings that border the course is a poor decision and not in the spirit of being a good neighbor. I believe there are better locations in the available building and development envelope Stow Acres has access to. My home is old and does not have central air conditioning. For large parts of the year my windows remain open. As it stands with the current maintenance buildings locations, the noise the equipment produces can be heard at very early hours, especially in the summer months when the windows tend to be open. That noise will become more intrusive if the maintenance building is moved closer to my home and impact the quality of life for my family.

I am skeptical that the golf course could remain compliant with Zoning Bylaw 3.8.1.3, and sub-bullets ([https://www.stow-ma.gov/sites/g/files/vyhlif1286/f/uploads/november\\_2018\\_zoning\\_bylaw\\_0.pdf](https://www.stow-ma.gov/sites/g/files/vyhlif1286/f/uploads/november_2018_zoning_bylaw_0.pdf)) if the proposed location is approved. Before a vote is taken by the Zoning Board of Appeals, I request a comprehensive noise study is conducted by an independent contractor to determine the noise impact to the lot borders if the proposed maintenance building is relocated to the proposed location.

**Lack of Master Plan for the entire property, including both the North and South Courses.**

During the Stow Acres Open Space, Recreation, and Housing Project Update Oct 13 21 ([https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pdxea\\_CNeNI](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pdxea_CNeNI)) Kathy Sferra (Conservation Director, Conservation Committee) stated we do expect a master plan for the entire property. The fact that a master development plan, including all upcoming proposals for the South Course, does not exist is deeply concerning for several reasons. The Town should not have ever had a vote on the purchase of the property without a comprehensive plan for review prior to the vote. Nearly a year and a half has lapsed since OCT 31, 2021, and a South Course plan still does not exist. Without this plan available to the public, it fosters a non-collaborative environment and makes the Zoning Board of Appeals process feel inefficient as key information is not available. The relocation of the driving range is a good example about the lack of understanding that occurs with the lack of a master plan. While the intention of relocating the driving range was mentioned during the Town Forums, the relocation was never presented as the building of a new structure to include an indoor driving range. That is quite a different situation to merely moving the driving range tee boxes and operation shed to the other side of Randall Road. The detailed master plan is necessary to have a full appreciation of Stow Acres' intentions.

I request that the Zoning Board of Appeals tables all pending applications put forward by Stow Acres until that master plan can be thoughtfully developed, disseminated, and considered by the town people of Stow. The ability to review the entire body of development, including but not limited to the maintenance building, cell phone tower, future of existing structures including the red barn and clubhouse, relocation of the driving range and accompanying proposal for a new building, and whatever else may not be in the public's current knowledge, is necessary in my opinion to make informed decisions required for ZBA application approvals.

Thank you for reviewing my concerns and considering my requests.

Respectfully submitted,



Matthew Gallacher  
41 Randall Road  
Stow, MA 01775

Copy To:

Karen Kelleher, Zoning Board of Appeals Staff Contact, Town of Stow

Valerie Oorthuys, Planning Director, Town of Stow

Megan Birch-McMichael, Chair, Select Board, Town of Stow

Kathy Sferra, Conservation Director, Conservation Committee, Town of Stow

Michael Sallese, Chief of Police, Town of Stow

