



# Town of Stow PLANNING BOARD

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1.16.2018

Stow Board of Selectmen  
380 Great Road  
Stow, MA 01775

## **RE: Gleasondale Kane Land Trail Development**

Dear Mr. Burke,

The purpose of this letter is to provide information pertaining to the Selectmen's consideration of a vote to allow recreational trails on the Kane Land property in Gleasondale Village. In December of 2015, a group of residents in Gleasondale Village wrote a letter to the Board of Selectmen regarding construction of a recreational trail on Town owned land currently under the care and custody of the Board of Selectmen. Later that winter representatives from the *Gleasondale Neighborhood Association* met with the Board of Selectmen to discuss their ideas for the proposed trail network. Since that time, residents in Gleasondale have organized cleanup efforts at the property and worked with neighbors and Town staff to prepare for recreational opportunities at the property.

The Planning Board continues to support the idea of a trail system on the "Kane land" as safe options for pedestrians are limited in Gleasondale Village. This past fall, Planning and Conservation Department staff attended a site-walk with residents of Gleasondale Village as a follow up to the original discussion with the Selectmen. The site-walk allowed residents and staff to better understand the potential access points to the property, in the event the property is used for passive recreation. The notes from that site-walk are attached to this letter.

Below is a list outlining key aspects of the property, considerations for trail use, and next steps in the process.

### **Parcel History**

- **Kane Property** – The "Kane land," shown on the attached map, was a gift from Roger and Shirley Kane, accepted by Article 4 of the December 1992 Special Town Meeting without restrictions. It was deeded over later that month for a consideration of \$100.
- **Water Supply Source** – Although no formal restrictions were placed on the property, discussions at the time of conveyance marked the potential of the property for future water supply infrastructure. The recent UMASS project, also noted the geographic importance of such a use in relation to redevelopment of the Gleasondale Mill.

### **Status of the Land**

- The Kane land is currently under the control of the Board of Selectmen, and therefore not encumbered by Article 97, such as with lands under the care and custody of the Conservation Commission. This

lack of restriction on the property's use provides the opportunity for consideration of uses that could complement the potential public water supply use.

- **Survey** – The Planning Board funded a survey of the “Kane Land” property boundaries for the purpose of eliminating disputes with abutting property owners and mitigating any conflicts between public and private uses. A copy of the survey is attached.

### **Management**

- **Responsibility for Work** - The Gleasondale Neighborhood Association has offered to develop a management and maintenance plan. Given that the property is not subject to Recreation or Conservation Commission management, it may be helpful for the Board to review the management agreement for the open space in the Wildlife Woods Planned Conservation Development. In that instance, the Board of Selectmen and Homeowners Association entered into a Memorandum of Agreement for the homeowners to take on responsibility for agreed upon aspects of the open space management.
- **Liability** - Liability questions often arise when volunteers take on management concerns. The Gleasondale residents, on several occasions, coordinated cleanups of area properties, including the Kane Land, through the designation of a project leader and by providing Selectmen staff the required signatures for insurance purposes. This process can be replicated for future work at the property that does not involve machinery operation.

### **Next Steps**

- **Boundary Flagging**  
Iron pipe has been set at several locations along the lot lines of the Kane land to aid in limiting any trespass between trail users and abutting property owners. Once the snow has melted, flagging tape should be added to the pins to clearly identify boundaries for planning purposes.
- **Permits** – As seen on the attached map, there are some wetland areas on the parcel that may require a filing with the Conservation Commission. No other permits are anticipated.
- **Determination on Use**  
In order for the residents to take the next steps, the Board of Selectmen will need to consider a vote on whether or not such a use should be permitted on the property. The Gleasondale Neighborhood Association is prepared to submit a Request for Determination of Applicability to the Conservation Commission for the purpose of identifying wetland resources in the vicinity of the potential trail location. The Association has already approached local organizations regarding the donation of time and materials for a potential boardwalk segment, should wetland resources be identified.

The Planning Board appreciates your consideration of the above matter. Should there be any questions involving further specifics, Planning Department staff are able to assist in connecting the Board of Selectmen to contacts within the Gleasondale Neighborhood Association.

Sincerely,

Lori Clark – Chair

Cc: Kathy Sferra | Conservation Commission; Eve Fischer | Gleasondale Neighborhood Association