

Review of Potential District Locations – “MBTA Communities” or “3A” Multifamily Housing

Legend:

	Compliant* land
	Excluded Land (from State)
	Water Resource Protection Overlay District
	Floodplain Overlay District
	Right of Way Parcels
\\ \\ \\ \\ \\ \\ \\ \\	Landfill
/// /// /// ///	Sensitive Land
—————	Selected Parcel
—————	Selected Draft Proposal Area

* Compliant land includes areas that are:

- NOT in the Water Resource Protection Overlay District (would have to waive Special Permit review)
- NOT in the Floodplain Overlay District (would have to waive Special Permit review)
- NOT “excluded land” from the State

- **Excluded land** cannot count towards compliance with the MBTA Communities Law; this land is defined by the State. This data was produced by the State and may exclude local knowledge (i.e. ownership or current use of site).
- Land within the **Water Resource Protection Overlay District** or the **Floodplain Overlay District** cannot count towards compliance; these overlay districts include the requirement to gain a Special Permit to construct housing and the MBTA Communities Law does not allow Special Permits to be required. The Water Resource Overlay District is intended to protect groundwater and groundwater recharge areas in Stow. The Floodplain Overlay District is intended to protect people and property against the hazards of flood water.
- **Sensitive Land** is compliant with the MBTA Communities Law, but contains active agriculture, priority habitats, and/or interim wellhead protection zones. This land may be included but allowing housing on these lands may interfere with other goals, like food security, environmental protection, and clean drinking water. This data was produced by the State and may exclude local knowledge (i.e. which land is being farmed).
- **“I/B/CB/C/LVBD”** will be used to refer to types of business zoned properties, including the following districts: Industrial (I), Business (B), Compact Business (CB), Commercial (C) and Lower Village Business District (LVBD).
- **Roadway classifications** are used in this document to differentiate between the types of roads in Stow and the services the road is intended to provide. We use the following terms:
 - Principle Arterial: provides mobility and speed over local access, primarily serving through-traffic
 - Collectors: provide intra-regional level of mobility, connecting local roadways to arterial network
 - Local Roadways: provide lowest level of mobility, focus on serving immediate neighborhoods
- References to **“avoidance criteria”** are meant to indicate the Planning Board’s interest in avoiding the following types of locations: parcels with active agriculture or open space, sensitive natural resources (as defined by the updated Open Space and Recreation Plan), parcels with historic/ rural views, parcels with historic buildings, and non-residential districts.
- **“OSRP”** refers to the Open Space & Recreation Plan.

Locations Considered Early and Did Not Advance:

Parcels and Description	Map
Lower Village Business District Total Area: 60.9 acres Total Area of Compliant Land: 38.5 acres Rationale against: - State's 3A Law would not allow the district to be located here without significant changes to LVBD Zoning, including: remove bedroom limit of units, increase density, allow free standing multifamily, remove special permit process (even for mixed use), remove allowance to have nonresidential uses on second floor and above. - State limits mixed-use district to 25% for an MBTA Communities district, therefore, if included within the LVBD zoning (altering underlying zoning), it would require another 3A district to have a unit capacity of 104 units (approximately 7 acres). - The required changes in the LVBD zoning, esp. to allow for free standing multifamily housing, would significantly reduce an already very small retail/business district. Less than 5% of Stow is zoned I/B/CB/C/LVBD and not currently used for housing (ie available for business). Town interest in preserving tax diversity. All land within this area is zoned Lower Village Business District.	

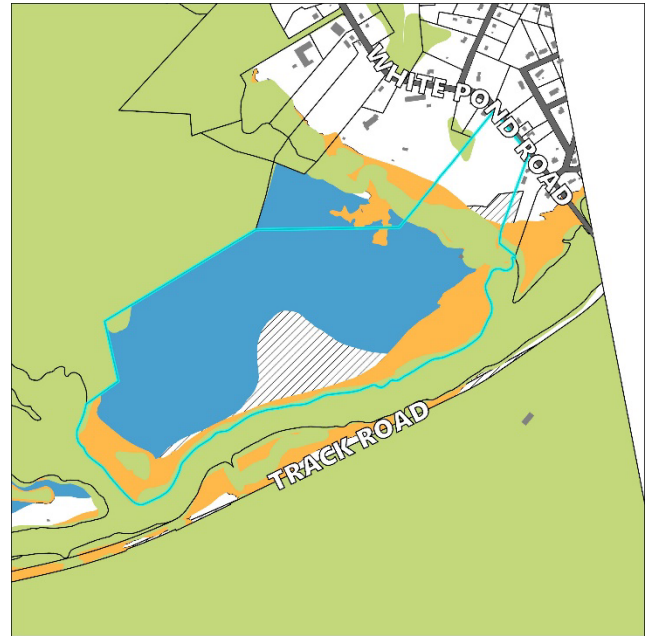
Former Stowaway Golf Course

Total Area: 109.6

Total Area of Compliant Land: 18.9 acres

Rationale against:

- High priority conservation parcel (2024 OSRP) for:
 - Portions of Prime Ag Soils
 - Unprotected parcel with recreational significance
 - Important for linking protected lands
 - Surface Water and Groundwater Significance
 - Unprotected parcels preserving small-town nature
 - Unprotected parcels with habitat significance
 - Unprotected parcels with scenic significance
 - Unprotected parcels significant for climate resiliency
- NEHSP Priority Habitat of Rare Species
- Currently open space (avoidance criteria)
- Avoid non-residentially zoned land as less than 5% of Stow is zoned I/B/CB/C/LVBD and not currently used for housing (ie available for business). Town interest in preserving tax diversity. Land within this parcel is primarily zoned Commercial, with areas around Elizabeth Brook zoned Recreation-Conservation.
- Rural views (avoidance criteria)
- All land under single ownership, which could result in a larger development constructed all at once, rather than allowing incremental change.
- Along a LOCAL roadway with known traffic concerns
- Alignment with Town Plans and Policies:
 - Area noted as "Development Not Preferred" in 2010 Master Plan
 - Area noted as "Development Not Preferred" in 2024 OSRP
- Community engagement: at a forum held in October '24, half of the maps of Stow marked up by Stow residents indicated the desire for no development over Stowaway.



ET&L Site

Total Area: 13.1 Acres

Compliant Acres: 3.7 Acres

This site does not meet the minimum size of 5 acres. Despite the large size, most of the parcel is located within the Water Resource Protection Overlay District.

**Delaney Solar Field**

Total Area: 19.7 acres

Total Area of Compliant Land: 0 acres

This site does not contain any compliant land. The entire site is located within the Water Resource Protection Overlay District, with some portions additionally located within the Floodplain Overlay District.



Pilot Grove Farm

Total Area: 55.8 acres

Total Area of Compliant Land: 33.3 acres

Main farm Property: 28.7 acres (16.5 compliant)

"Back" Lot: 27.1 acres (16.8 compliant)

Rationale against:

- Both parcels are in Ch.61A (agriculture)
- Under active agriculture (avoidance criteria)
- All land under single ownership, which could result in a larger development constructed all at once, rather than allowing incremental change.
- Along a COLLECTOR roadway. Would put pressure on Boxboro/ West Acton/ South Acton intersection
- Near dense development already
- Includes historic buildings (STW.85 and STW.84) (avoidance criteria)
- High priority conservation parcel (OSRP) for:
 - Prime Ag Soils and agricultural significance
 - Important for linking protected lands
 - Surface Water and Groundwater Significance
 - Unprotected parcels preserving small-town nature
 - Unprotected parcels with habitat significance
 - Unprotected parcels with scenic significance
 - Unprotected parcels with historic and cultural significance
 - Unprotected parcels significant for climate resiliency
- Prior feedback has noted this parcel to be a "rural scenic view" to preserve
- Alignment with Town Plans and Policies:
 - Area noted as "Limited or No Development Preferred" in 2010 Master Plan
 - Area noted as "Development Not Preferred" in OSRP

Community engagement: at a forum held in October '24, 1/3 of the maps of Stow marked up by Stow residents indicated the desire for no development over Pilot Grove; a 1/3 indicated development, and 1/3 did not consider Pilot Grove at all. This location has not been brought up since.



Melone Property

Total Area: 27.1 acres

Total Area of Compliant Land: 11.2 acres

Rationale against:

- Commercial and Recreation-Conservation zoned land. Avoid non-residentially zoned land as less than 5% of Stow is zoned I/B/CB/C/LVBD and not currently used for housing (ie available for business). Town interest in preserving tax diversity.
- All land under single ownership, which could result in a larger development constructed all at once, rather than allowing incremental change.
- Along a LOCAL roadway with known traffic concerns
- Priority conservation parcel (OSRP) for:
 - Unprotected parcels with recreational significance
 - Important for linking protected lands
 - Surface water and groundwater significance
 - Unprotected parcels preserving small-town nature
 - Portion identified as unprotected parcel with habitat significance
- Alignment with Town Plans and Policies:
 - Area noted as “Development Not Preferred” in 2010 Master Plan
 - Area noted as “Development Not Preferred” in 2024 OSRP
- Community engagement: at a forum held in October '24, residents were divided on whether or not to pursue this location. At a forum in February '25, only one resident brought up this location as a possibility.



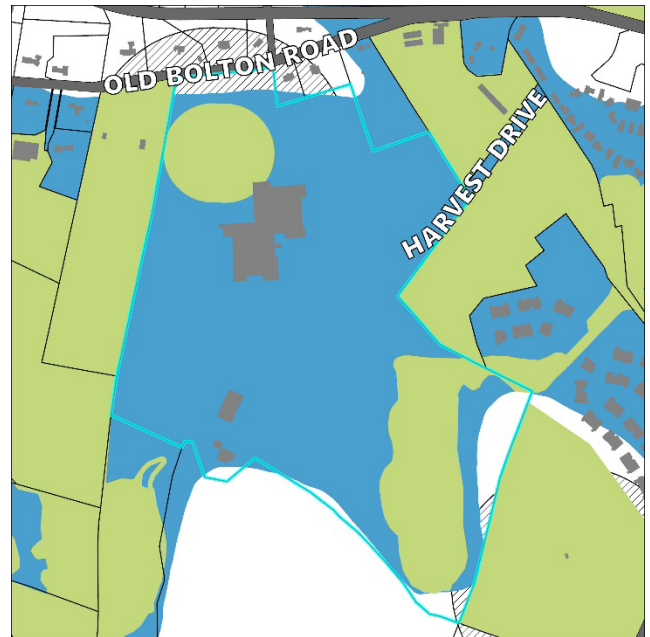
Masters Academy/ Former Bose Property

Total Area: 81.6 acres

Total Area of Compliant Land: 4.9 acres

This site does not meet the minimum area required for a district.

A development agreement exists for the site, rendering this site 'excluded' land.

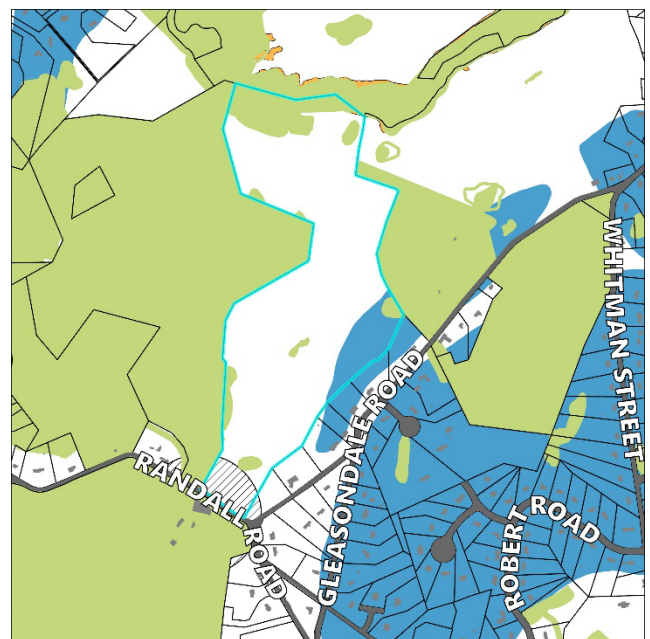
**Stow Acres Housing Parcel**

Total Area: 69.2 acre

Total Area of Compliant Land: 56.3

Rationale against:

- Existing MOU for multifamily housing renders this site 'excluded' land.



Minuteman Airfield

Total Area: 115.5 acres

Total Area of Compliant Land: 38.6 acres

Rationale against:

- Industrially zoned land (avoidance criteria). Avoid non-residentially zoned land as less than 5% of Stow is zoned I/B/CB/C/LVBD and not currently used for housing (ie available for business). Town interest in preserving tax diversity.
- Parcel within Ch.61B
- All land under single ownership, which could result in a larger development constructed all at once, rather than allowing incremental change.
- Along a MINOR street
- Near dense development already
- Priority conservation parcel (OSRP) for:
 - Unprotected parcels with recreational significance
 - Parcels important for linking protected lands
 - Surface water and groundwater significance
 - Unprotected parcels preserving small-town nature
 - Unprotected parcels with habitat significance
 - Unprotected parcels significant for climate resiliency
- Alignment with Town Plans and Policies:
 - Area noted as “Development Not Preferred” in 2010 Master Plan
 - Portions noted as “Limited or No Development Preferred” in 2024 OSRP
- Community engagement: at a forum held in October '24, only 2 (of 6) maps of Stow marked up by residents indicated the desire for development over the airfield. This location has not been brought up by residents since.



Locations Removed from Consideration During Planning Process after Feedback and Further Review:

West Stow Proposal

Total Area: 13.9 acres

Total Area of Compliant Land: 7.9 acres*

**This location would require a second area of at least 5 acres to comply or a higher than required density*

Rationale against:

- Includes parcels in the Business District (avoidance criteria)
- Located in an area of Stow experiencing fast growth and change (near Cottages at Wandering Pond, Masters Academy, and Residences at Stow Acres)
- Desire to not locate additional multifamily housing next to Villages at Stow under the parameters of Section 3A: the Board may be interested in the future to allow mixed-use development, but not under the constraints of this State law.
- If allowing mixed use, the Special Permit process would be waived; mixed use would only count towards 25% of the unit capacity
- Given the proximity to wetland resources, any development would be restricted even further, impacting each parcel within the district by requiring a higher density.
- Timing of MassWorks grant for construction of a signalized intersection. The plans don't consider multifamily housing at this location.
- Alignment with Town Plans and Policies:
 - Portions noted as "Development Not Preferred" in 2010 Master Plan
 - Small portion noted as "Development Not Preferred" in 2024 OSRP
- Did not make top 3 options in Board & Committee survey
- Only 22% of forum participants and community survey respondents favored this location



South Red Acre Proposal

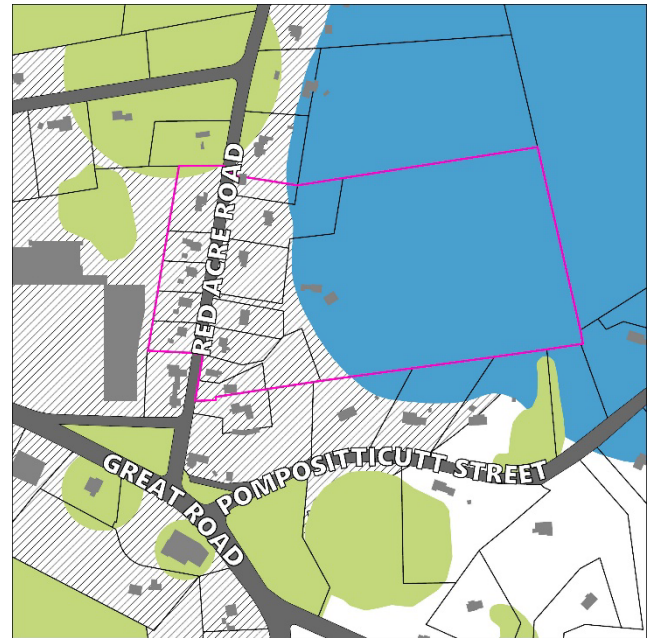
Total Area: 20.2 acres

Total Area of Compliant Land: 7.4 acres*

**This location would require a second area of at least 5 acres to comply or a higher than required density*

Rationale against:

- Includes parcel with active agriculture (avoidance criteria)
- Includes naturally occurring affordable housing (non-deed restricted)
- Located on a LOCAL road with existing significant traffic problems. Concern for impact on Great Road intersection.
- Includes historic properties (avoidance criteria)
- Located entirely within sensitive land with large portions located within the Water Resource Protection Overlay District
- Priority conservation parcel (OSRP) for:
 - Portions of prime agricultural soils
 - Surface water and groundwater significance
 - Unprotected parcels preserving small-town nature
- Alignment with Town Plans and Policies:
 - Portions noted as “Development Not Preferred” in 2024 OSRP
- Did not make top 3 options in Board & Committee Survey
- Only 30% of forum participants and community survey respondents favored this location



North Red Acre Proposal

Total Area: 12.4 acres

Total Area of Compliant Land: 8.5*

**This location would require a second area of at least 5 acres to comply or a higher than required density*

Rationale against:

- Includes naturally occurring affordable housing (non-deed restricted)
- Located on a LOCAL road with existing significant traffic problems
- Located entirely within sensitive land with large portions located within the Water Resource Protection Overlay District
- Priority conservation parcel (OSRP) for:
 - Unprotected parcels with agricultural significance
 - Unprotected parcels preserving small-town nature
 - Unprotected parcels with habitat significance
- Alignment with Town Plans and Policies:
 - Portions noted as “Limited or No Development Preferred” in 2024 OSRP
- Least desired location from Board & Committee survey



Crescent Corner Proposal

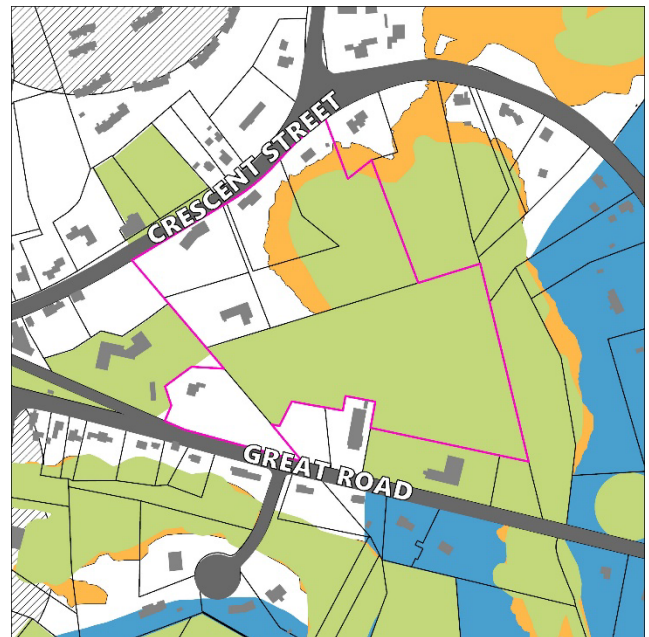
Total Area: 18.6 acres

Total Area of Compliant Land: 5.9 acres*

**This location would require a second area of at least 5 acres to comply or a higher than required density*

Rationale against:

- Historic property (avoidance criteria)
- Conservation concern for increase in activity at Town Center Park, alteration of views to Minister's Pond
- Interest in providing multifamily housing in Town Center, though not with the provisions of Section 3A. Town Center neighborhood planning is on the Board's work plan.
- Most access would be along a COLLECTOR roadway (Crescent Street)



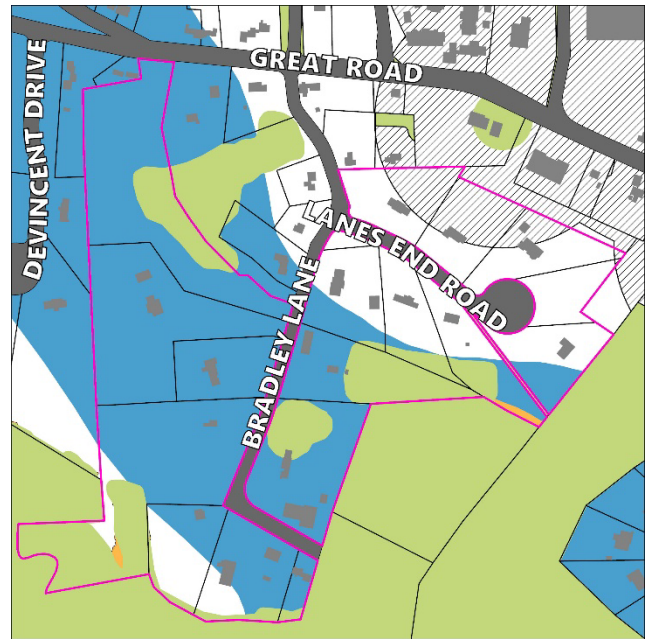
West Lower Village Proposal

Total Area: 36.9 acres

Total Area of Compliant Land: 10.9 acres

Rationale against:

- Primary access to the districts is on a LOCAL, dead-end road—creates public safety and traffic concern. East Lower Village and South Red Acre each offer proximity to businesses and services without impacting a dead-end
- Existing traffic concern with events at Memorial Field
- Parts of excluded land of the proposal will need to be removed to achieve gross density of 15 units per acre (the high percentage of excluded land reduces the overall density)
- Scored 7th of 8 locations in Board & Committee Survey



East Hartley Proposal

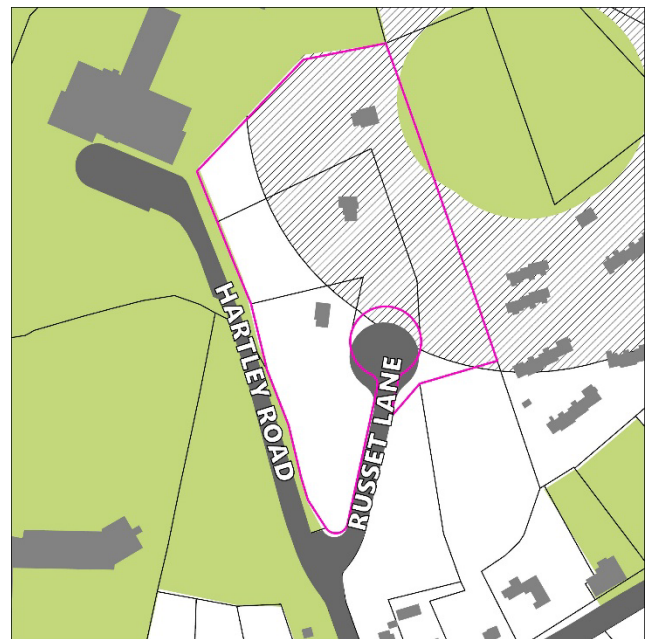
Total Area: 7.4 acres

Total Area of Compliant Land: 7.4 acres*

**This location would require a second area of at least 5 acres to comply or a higher than required density*

Rationale against:

- Access to the sites would be from Hartley Road, a LOCAL, dead-end road. This creates a public safety and traffic concern
- Known traffic concerns from schools at peak hours
- Interest in providing multifamily housing in Town Center, though not with the provisions of Section 3A. Town Center neighborhood planning is on the Board's work plan.
- Scored low in Board & Committee survey



South Central Proposal

Total Area: 10.4 acres

Total Area of Compliant Land: 3.9 acres

This site does not meet the minimum area required for a district.



Locations Requested to be Reviewed Further:

Stow Landfill

Total Area: 32.3 Acres

Total Area of Compliant Land: 24.5 Acres

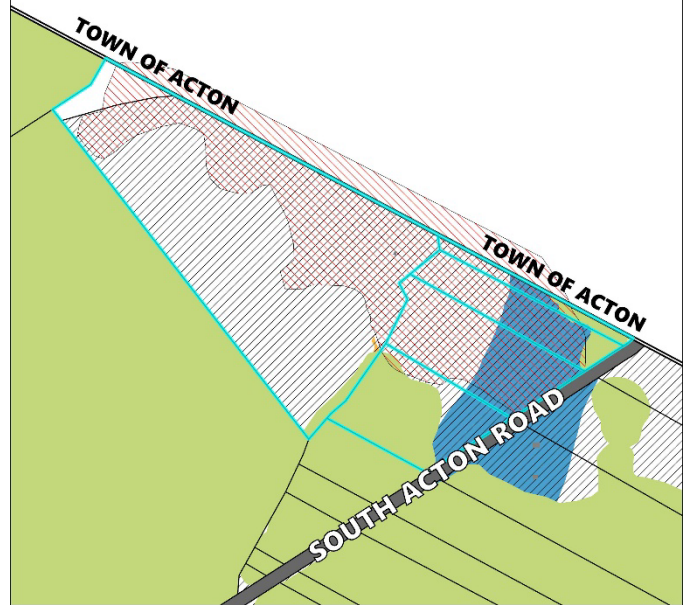
Total Area of Stow Landfill (in highlighted area): 15.7 acres

Compliant Land WITH Landfill: 12.4

Compliant Land WITHOUT Landfill: 12.1 acres

Rationale against:

- Site of an inactive landfill (Stow Landfill – DEP Account Number 172973) that is unlined and uncapped. The State has verbally indicated landfills could be deemed non-compliant (excluded) land.
- Concern about locating housing adjacent to land fill.
- The 11.9 acres of land outside of the landfill area would have no frontage.
- In Ch.61- forestry.
- All land under single ownership, which could result in a larger development constructed all at once, rather than allowing incremental change.
- Not within existing villages. Would further sprawl by creating a new pocket of population far from businesses and services, which goes against planning best practices.
- Minimizes benefits: no direct economic development improvement benefit to Stow
- On a COLLECTOR roadway. Would put pressure on Boxboro/ West Acton/ South Acton intersection
- Priority parcel on the 2024 OSRP for:
 - Linking protected land
 - Unprotected habitat significance
 - Climate resilience
 - Prime agriculture soils (small portions of non-landfill portion)
 - Unique features (very small portion contains part of a drumlin)
- Alignment with Town Plans and Policies:
 - Area noted as “Development Not Preferred” in 2010 Master Plan
 - Area noted as “Limited or No Development Preferred” in 2024 OSRP



Gleasondale Mill

Total Area: 4.9 acres

Total Area of Compliant Land: 3.1 acres

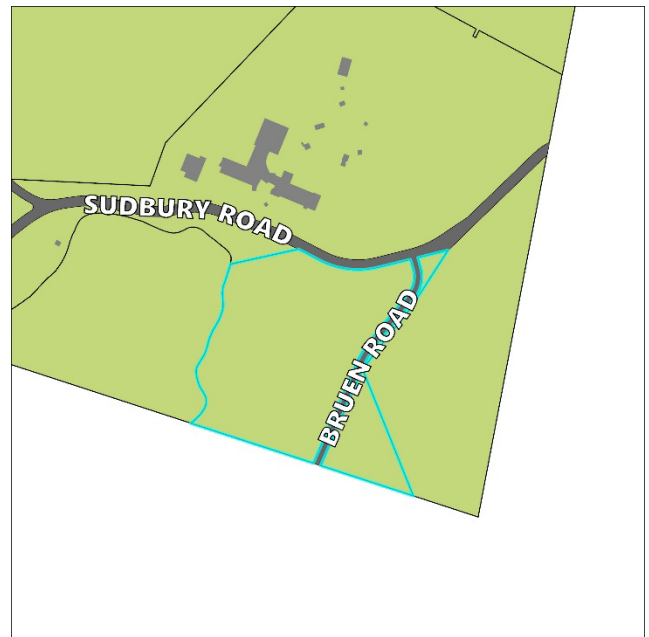
This site does not meet the minimum area required for a district.

**Bruen Road Parcels**

Total Area: 21.3

Total Area of Compliant Land: 0 Acres

This site does not meet the minimum area required for a district.



Parcels off Asa Whitcomb Way

Total Area (North parcel): 25 acres

Total Area of Compliant Land (North parcel): 0 acres

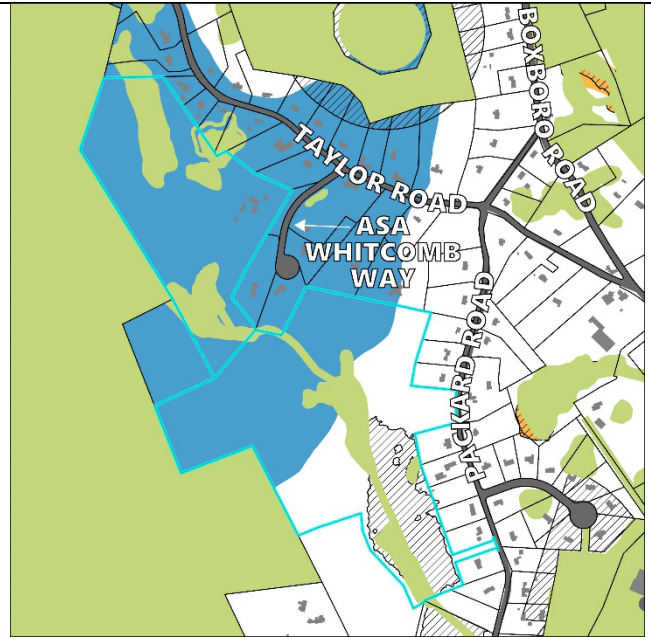
This site does not meet the minimum area required for a district.

Total Area (south parcel): 47 acres

Total Area of Compliant Land (south parcel): 19.8 acres

Rationale against:

- Along LOCAL roadway rather than PRINCIPLE ARTERIAL
- Portion of historic farm (STW.15) (avoidance criteria)
- Priority parcel within OSRP:
 - Agricultural significance
 - Unique features – eastern portion of drumlin
 - Linking protected lands
 - Surface Water and Groundwater significance
 - Unprotected parcels with habitat significance
 - Unprotected parcels significant for climate resiliency
- Within Ch.61
- All land under single ownership, which could result in a larger development constructed all at once, rather than allowing incremental change.
- Not within existing villages. Would further sprawl by creating a new pocket of population far from businesses and services, which goes against planning best practices.
- Minimizes benefits: no direct economic development improvement benefit to Stow
- Alignment with Town Plans and Policies:
 - Area noted as “Limited or No Development Preferred” in 2010 Master Plan
 - Area noted as “Limited or No Development Preferred” in 2024 OSRP

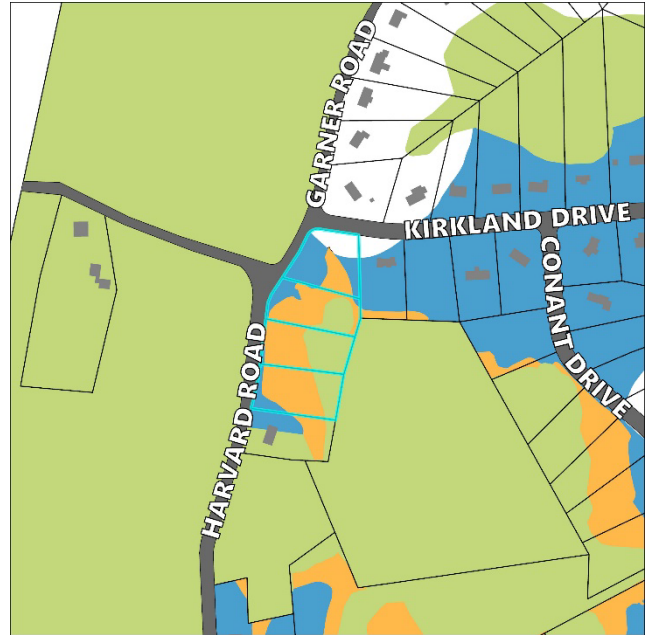


Vacant Parcels off Harvard Road, Garner Road, and Kirkland Drive (North)

Total Area: 3.7 acres

Total Area of Compliant Land: 0.2 acres

This site does not meet the minimum area required for a district.



Parcels at the end of Wedgewood Road

Total Area (east parcel): 29.3 acres

Total Area of Compliant Land (east parcel): 0.007 acres

Total Area (west parcel): 30.5 acres

Total Area of Compliant Land (west parcel): 1.1 acres

Site does not meet the minimum area required for a district.

