



June 2, 2025

Lori Clark, Karen Kelleher, Valerie Oorthuys
Planning Board
Stow Town Building
380 Great Road
Stow, MA 01775

Dear Lori, Karen, and Valerie,

Thank you for taking the time to meet with us to discuss the potential selection of the East Lower Village to satisfy the MBTA 3A requirement, and the impacts on residents and abutters of the area.

We feel we haven't had much of a voice in the Planning Board meetings. We appreciate you meeting with us outside of an official scheduled Planning Board meeting to have more of a dialogue where we could explain our concerns in more detail. And hear back about some of the processes the Planning Board has undertaken, and the reasoning behind those processes. There is limited time to actually speak in a Planning Board meeting in an interactive way. There are always multiple items on the agenda that the Planning Board needs to discuss.

We felt like the conversation humanized us as residents, and also humanized the Planning Board members to us. We have not had the opportunity to convey our concerns with you in a dialogue.

You heard from Sara, a service-connected disabled veteran who is recovering from PTSD and how new residential developments would impact her recovery. As an abutter, developments according to the mandate's requirements would negatively impact the natural habitat, which would also adversely impact her recovery. She also described how dangerous it is for anyone to pull out of their driveway onto Great Rd., even currently, in the East Lower Village. She would have a tough time finding a new place given her financial circumstances. We know that lower income residents are likely to get displaced in upzoned districts.

Paulette described how she moved here 36 years ago to follow relatives here. Before moving to Stow, she would swim in Lake Boone, paddle the Assabet River, and walk her dogs in Delaney—all things that drew her to move to Stow. She never thought she would be able to afford it here, but found a house, though on a busy street. Developments in this area would alter her landscape and increase traffic on the busy road she lives on. She wants to live here another 20 years, and then sell her home to afford assisted living. She would also have a tough time finding a new place.

Lastly, you heard from Catherine, a widow who also followed family here, and who in turn had additional family follow her to Stow. She wants to remain in this house and is the matriarch of three households in Stow. She wants to leave her house as a legacy to her five children and

four grandchildren. She asked us to consider the human toll that is taken when any residents are faced with potential displacement. In addition, she urges you to consider the toll on the wildlife and natural habitat on her 2.5 acres.

While all other potential sites will have *abutters*, there are undeveloped sites that wouldn't currently impact *residents*. We would like to see alternative sites being considered, where the human toll is less. Valerie indicated that she would send us overlaid maps of how much space is available to be considered at ET&L and how much space at the South Acton site is usable.

From the state's perspective, we pointed out that even if the East Lower Village selection does the minimum to meet the current MBTA 3A requirements, that in the future this may fall under scrutiny if there is little to no development. One of the goals stated in choosing the ELV site is that the developments would be incremental, subject to other applicable laws that might limit development.

If the goal is to expand housing and affordable housing, building on undeveloped land would lead to increased more affordable housing. It was also mentioned that some towns are doing more than the minimum. Rumel conveyed that additional municipal anti-discrimination bylaws could help Stow diversify its population base.

Again, thank you for taking the time to meet with us--and in some cases taking time off from your day job to meet with us.

We look forward to hearing more from you and being collaborators with you in the future.

Sincerely,

Catherine Michael
19 Great Rd.

Sara Monte
15 Great Rd.

Paulette Boudrot
12 Great Rd.

Rumel Mahmood
32 Peabody Dr.