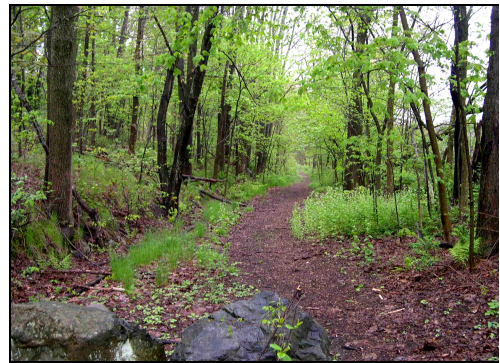


STOW RECONNAISSANCE REPORT

FREEDOM'S WAY LANDSCAPE INVENTORY

MASSACHUSETTS HERITAGE LANDSCAPE INVENTORY PROGRAM



Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation

Freedom's Way Heritage Association

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Cover Photographs

Sudbury River
Gleason Homestead, Gleasondale
Assabet River Rail Trail

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INTRODUCTION

The Freedom's Way Heritage Association includes 37 Massachusetts communities that are linked by historic events that helped to shape America's democratic form of governance and the intellectual traditions that underpin American freedom, democracy, conservation and social justice. Freedom's Way communities extend from Arlington on the east to Winchendon on the west. They represent a wide range of cities and towns, each shaped by the relationship between nature and culture.

Heritage landscapes are special places created by human interaction with the natural environment that help define the character of a community and reflect its past. They are dynamic and evolving; they reflect the history of a community and provide a sense of place; they show the natural ecology that influenced land use patterns; and they often have scenic qualities. The wealth of landscapes is central to each community's character, yet heritage landscapes are vulnerable and ever changing. For this reason it is important to take the first steps towards their preservation by identifying those landscapes that are particularly valued by the community – a favorite local farm, a distinctive neighborhood or mill village, a unique natural feature or an important river corridor. To this end, the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) and the Freedom's Way Heritage Association (FWHA) have collaborated to bring the Heritage Landscape Inventory program (HLI) to communities in the Freedom's Way area. The primary goal of the program is to help communities identify a wide range of landscape resources, particularly those that are significant and unprotected. The focus is on landscapes that have not been identified in previous survey efforts in a given community. Another important goal of the program is to provide communities with strategies for preserving heritage landscapes.

The methodology for the Heritage Landscape Inventory program was developed in a pilot project conducted in southeast Massachusetts and refined in Essex County. It is outlined in the DCR publication *Reading the Land* which has provided guidance for the program since its inception. In summary, each participating community appoints a Local Project Coordinator (LPC) to assist the DCR-FWHA consulting team. The LPC organizes a heritage landscape identification meeting at which interested residents and town officials offer community input by identifying heritage landscapes. This meeting is followed by a fieldwork session including the consulting team and the LPC, often accompanied by other community members. This group visits the priority landscapes identified in the meeting and gathers information about the community. The final product is this Reconnaissance Report, prepared for each participating community. It outlines the history of the community; describes the priority heritage landscapes; discusses planning issues identified by the community; identifies planning tools available in the community; and concludes with preservation recommendations. A list of all of the heritage landscapes identified by the community is included in the Appendix.

STOW HISTORY

Some documentation shows that Native Americans used this area as early as the Middle Archaic Period (8,000-6,000 B.P.). During more recent pre-European settlement periods of development, Stow was known as Pompositticut, a name given by the Native Americans who traveled through this territory, made paths and cleared land on which to grow maize. The first known road passing through Pompositticut (Stow) was laid out in 1646, connecting Sudbury to Lancaster. This was an important step towards European settlement, which occurred later here than in the surrounding towns. The first European settlers arrived in ca.1660 and in 1683 Pompositticut Plantation was incorporated as the town of Stow. The first meetinghouse was built two years later in 1685 on the Common at Lower Village.

Agriculture was the primary economic activity throughout the 18th and the early 19th century. Several sawmills were in operation by the late 18th century and by the turn of the 19th century some farmers turned to coopering, furniture making and shoe manufacturing in the winter.

Other early roads followed presumed Native American trails including the new Lancaster Road of 1715 (now White Pond Road). This road passed through Lower Village which was the commercial and institutional center throughout the 18th and the first quarter of the 19th century. This center had the Lower Common, a meetinghouse, burial ground and a number of fine 18th century dwellings. In 1802-03 Red Acre Road was laid out connecting Stow's Lower Village with Acton. Stage routes passed through Lower Village which was the center point of the stage-coach route between Boston and Lancaster.

In the second quarter of the 19th century there was a shift of the civic center to the west. The new area, Stow Center, was farther west of Lower Village on Great Road, an early east-west route that had been straightened in 1810. The fourth building of the First Parish Church was constructed at Stow Center in 1827, in a location that was more central to residents of Stow. In 1848 the new center was confirmed with the construction of the Stow Town Hall and the reconstruction of the First Parish following a fire that demolished the 1827 structure.

In the early to mid 19th century textile mills had been built on the Assabet and the small industrial village of Gleasondale (first known as Randall Mills) took shape. Small mills, including textile, shoe and box manufacturing, continued to operate throughout the 19th century. A major shift in the manufacturing came in 1850 when the Marlborough Branch of the Fitchburg Railroad opened in the southern part of Stow. The railroad also helped sustain agriculture through the late 19th and early 20th century when dairy farm and orchard owners were able to ship their products.

In addition to Gleasondale, Assabet Village was an industrial center that was part of Stow until it became the separate town of Maynard in 1871. This led to a shift in Stow's historical development and population count which decreased by 800 people and 2,300 acres. Late 19th and early 20th century development included a small summer community on the shores of Lake Boon. Railroad travel and

trolley lines connecting Stow with neighboring communities as well as Boston were used by summer sojourners as well as some workers heading to Hudson and Maynard in the early 1900s. Once the automobile took over, there was a decline in the use of the trolley and railroad, and roads were improved as regional connectors. Great Road (Route 117) continued as the main road through Stow.

Agriculture continued to be an important part of Stow's economy throughout the 20th century with orchards dominating farming activities. In 1960 Stow was still a farming community of just over 2,500 people. There was a shift in population in the last decades of the 20th century as the town became a bedroom community of nearly 6,000 residents. Nevertheless Stow continues to be known for its apple orchards.

PRIORITY HERITAGE LANDSCAPES

Stow's Heritage Landscape Identification meeting, attended by more than 20 residents, some representing town boards and local non-profit organizations, was held on April 12, 2006. During the meeting, residents compiled a lengthy list of the town's heritage landscapes, which is included in the Appendix. Once the comprehensive list was created, attendees were asked to articulate the value of each landscape and the issues relating to its preservation. Based on the information gathered, community members identified a group of priority landscapes to be visited by the consulting team during the fieldwork. Each of the priority landscapes is highly valued, contributes to community character and is not permanently protected or preserved.

Two of these priority landscapes describe village areas associated with Stow's industrial and civic history and demonstrate the multiple layers that many heritage landscapes have. Such layering shows the complexity and interdependence that are characteristics of most heritage landscapes. These priority landscapes, which are listed alphabetically, represent a range of scales and types of resources from individual sites such as a blacksmith shop to a river corridor. The descriptions and recommendations included here are an initial step in identifying resources valued by the community and suggesting action strategies.

Assabet River

The Assabet River winds through the southeast corner of Stow flowing from Westborough where it originates to Concord where it joins with the Sudbury River to become the Concord River. En route the Assabet flows through Hudson, Gleasondale (Stow) and Maynard – all locations of 19th century mills that drew their power from the river. The Assabet River was central to Native American activity in Stow as well as to the industrial development at Gleasondale.

The river and the Assabet Marsh are sensitive areas that are flanked by open land or forest with very few road crossings. The most notable crossing of the Assabet in Stow is the Sudbury Road Bridge where there are fine views of the river and

expansive wetlands. The railroad line crossed the Assabet River south of the Sudbury Road bridge and today only the abutments of that crossing remain. The route of the proposed Assabet River Rail-Trail is easily accessed on the southeast side of the Sudbury Road bridge crossing.

The only other Assabet River crossing in Stow is at Gleasondale where the mills are located. Here the importance of the Assabet River in this industrial village's development is evident. Several early 20th century mill buildings that replaced 19th century mills remain as well as the canal and dam that rerouted the river water into the canal to power the mills.

Concerns expressed by the community about the Assabet include access to the river, the quality of water in the river and the habitat for various plant and animal species. There is virtually no public access to the river except at the Sudbury Road bridge and even that is difficult. The proposed rail-trail along the railroad right-of-way that runs along side of the river would provide many more views of the river than are available today. An easement over the Track Road-Crowe Island property has been negotiated and signed; however there is other private property involved for which easements are problematic. Recently plans to have the railtrail pass through the Assabet Wildlife Refuge have been addressed favorably. The town of Hudson to the south has successfully completed most of the Assabet River Rail Trail in its community. Stow is the next link.

The Organization for the Assabet River (OAR), a non-profit organization whose mission is to protect and preserve the river and its associated marshland and wildlife, has representation on its Board from most bordering towns except Stow; however there are a number of active members from Stow particularly those interested in water quality issues. Another issue of concern to OAR and towns along the Assabet is that currently the flow is predominately processed sewage from Marlborough; thus it is important for regulations on waste water treatment be held to the highest standard.

Recommendations

- Obtain community representation on the OAR Board and work with them and regional organizations such as the SuAsCo Watershed Association in efforts to preserve the river and marshland.
- Work to resolve issues surrounding rail trail. Contact Hudson for ideas on working with property owners and funding sources.
- Document historic resources along the river, particularly the crossings, the mill village of Gleasondale and Crow Island on MHC survey forms.

Blacksmith Shop

The old blacksmith shop is located on the former Peter A. A. Larsen farm, which the town purchased in 1953. Following the purchase of the Great Road property, buildings were demolished or relocated except for Larsen's blacksmith shop and

a stone apple barn. Larsen's house was sold at auction and moved to an adjacent lot. The Center School was constructed on the land east of the two remaining farm buildings.

A semi-circular drive provides access and egress to the school property and encircles a small knoll where the farmhouse once stood. On the east side of the drive is the school, on the north side the stone apple barn and on the west side the gabled roof wood frame blacksmith shop. This last building is situated on the western property line between an asphalt driveway and stone wall that marks the property boundary. Windows of the shop have been boarded up. The main entrance is in the gable end facing Great Road where there is a sliding barn door on an exterior track and hay loft openings above. The stone apple barn is reported to have been built by Larsen in the early 20th century.

The building, which became a blacksmith shop, was moved to this spot from Maynard in 1914. Local Stow blacksmiths continued to operate it, the last being Larsen who had emigrated from Denmark where he had trained as a blacksmith. The old forge has been dismantled.

In 1974 Town Meeting voted to preserve the blacksmith shop and appropriated \$250 for its repair at that time. Today the building is used for storage. Thirty years later the building is again in need of repair. Many clapboards need replacing, windows are missing, and the foundation needs support. The roof appears to be in better shape and the building is dry. The chimney has been dismantled down to the roof line but is in tact on the interior.

Recommendations

The town has committed to retaining the blacksmith shop which could be made useful as storage or as a workshop. The Historical Commission may consider further documentation and planning for the building to ensure its preservation.

- Document the blacksmith shop by first preparing an MHC Form B. Consider additional documentation by an historic structures report which would include measured drawings. Enlist the assistance of technical high school students and/or eagle scouts to measure, photograph and stabilize building.
- Develop a reuse and preservation plan. Consider town needs for various types of space.
- Listing in the National Register (as part of a nomination for a Stow Center historic district) may make the blacksmith shop eligible for Massachusetts Preservation Projects Fund, a bricks and mortar program funded by the state legislature. Contact the MHC to learn of MPPF status when ready to pursue rehabilitation of the shop.

Gleasondale

Gleasondale is a good example of the multiple layers of heritage landscapes. The village evolved on the Assabet River and along Gleasondale Road (Rt. 62) with farms, mills, a dam, mill housing for workers and owners, a church, stores and the village post office. The village first was known as Randall's Mills for Abraham Randall who bought the ca. 1735-50 saw and grist mills in 1776. These early mills had been built in the valley of the Assabet River. Randall built his Georgian style house just outside the village and in 1813 he added a cotton mill on the northwest side of the river. During the construction of the cotton mill the laborers had to dig down to "rock bottom" after which the village was called Rock Bottom. By the mid 19th century the textile mills here were owned by Samuel Dale and Benjamin Gleason. Samuel Dale died following a disastrous fire in the mills. Ebenezer Dale took over until his death in 1871 when Gleason bought out Dale's heirs. However, the name Gleasondale did not become official until 1898. Other industries, which operated at Gleasondale, included shoe making and furniture making.

Gleasondale Road winds down into the village center from Sudbury Road where the first miller, Jonathan Randall, built his homestead in ca. 1710 at 6 Sudbury Road. The road passes many good examples of workers' houses from multiple eras of the mill village such as the 1830 Dale Cottage on the east side of the road and the ca. 1830 Severance Houses on the west side, next to the 1916 Gleasondale Mill Worker Housing. On the west side of the road near the entrance to the village is the 1836 Gleason Homestead. Updated by Gleason in the late 19th century, this large Second Empire house has an attached New England barn. Next door is the 1892 Howard Gleason House, an architect-designed Queen Anne dwelling constructed on land subdivided from the earlier Gleason property.

Farther south Gleasondale Road crosses a dam (1883) and canal that runs behind some of the mill buildings. Many of the mill buildings burned several times during the 19th century so that the extant buildings are from the late 19th and early 20th century. The main mill building dates back to the 1870s. Situated on an esker west of the village is the Orchard Hill Farm with two farmhouses (1820 and 1870), 1851 barn complex which was added to over the decades and agricultural fields sloping down to the Assabet River. This was a mill farm that produced food for the mill workers; it continues to operate as a farm today.



Today the mill buildings house a few small businesses; however the complex is for sale. Issues are related to maintenance of the dam and to the septic system necessary for such a complex on the banks of the river.

Recommendations

Documentation of Gleasondale was completed in the early 1980s. The Stow Historical Commission and the Historical Society can work together to develop more thorough documentation, National Register listing and other protective measures.

- Document the Gleasondale heritage landscape on an MHC Area Form and update key individual resource inventory forms taking into account methodology that is more comprehensive for inventory than was the practice 25 years ago and includes landscapes as well as buildings.
- Evaluate for appropriate National Register boundaries and prepare National Register nomination.
- Pursue local historic district designation for this well preserved village. Development of grass roots support should be a major component of the local historic district study report process.
- Seek input on tax advantages that could be used to rehabilitate and reuse mill complex, specifically the Federal Rehabilitation Investment Tax Credit and the Massachusetts Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit and work with the sellers to promote these advantages to prospective buyers.

Lower Village

Stow's first village center was located at Lower Village where the first meetinghouse (1685, no longer extant), the Minister's Manse (1686), the Common and the Lower Village Cemetery (1683) were established at the intersection of Red Acre Road, White Pond Road and Pompositticut Street with Great Road (Route 117). An 1820 painting of the Lower Common area depicts a bucolic scene with cows on the common, elegant houses and some minor commercial activity with a blacksmith shop and lawyer's office. Today Great Road has a shopping center with large parking lot in front dominating the landscape. This section of Great Road was lined with historic houses and shops, some of which were demolished for construction of the shopping center while others were moved back to Samuel Prescott Drive, which circles behind the shopping center.

Great Road encroaches on the stone wall and steps at the Lower Cemetery edge. The ancient burial ground had a gate at the corner which had been smashed and a Hosmer Hearse House which was demolished after the hearse was purchased by Henry Ford and sent to his Dearborn Michigan museum. There is interest in repairing the wall, steps and gate of the Cemetery.

The town is engaged in two current planning efforts – a village study focusing on the challenges of traffic circulation and a Lower Village Planning Project conducted by Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC). The loss of historic fabric has contributed to concerns about the character of this area, making the retention of historic and possible archaeological assets an important factor in preserving a sense of place at Lower Village.



Recommendations

The two studies that are currently under way are focusing on practical issues and solutions to preserve Lower Village while making vehicular and pedestrian travel safe. It is important for consultants and residents alike to be reminded often of the many historic resources that make up this heritage landscape. This Reconnaissance Report may be used to reinforce the findings of the other studies and to emphasize the need for thorough documentation. The Historical Commission should participate in the above mentioned studies and be ready to advocate for the important heritage resources including road patterns, landscapes, objects, and buildings.

- Document the Lower Village heritage landscape on an MHC Area Form and update 1980s individual property forms taking into account methodology that is more comprehensive for inventory than was the practice 25 years ago when Stow's inventory was completed.
- Evaluate for appropriate National Register boundaries and prepare National Register nomination, particularly for the area near White Pond Road, Red Acre Road, Pompositticut Street and Great Road including historic houses, the cemetery and the Common.
- Work with the Planning Board to study and develop a village center bylaw that develops a pedestrian streetscape by placing buildings close to the road consistent with extant historic buildings and locating parking behind and screened.

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- Consider neighborhood architectural conservation district designation in order to address size, scale and materials of new construction and additions, consistent with extant historic resources.

Lake Boon and Cottage Neighborhoods

Lake Boon is a state-designated Great Pond that straddles the Hudson-Stow line. The irregular shape of the lake, the wooded shore line, the town beach, small cottage developments and the causeway at the narrows all contribute to Lake Boon's scenic quality. The lake was named after Matthew Boon who explored the area in the 1660s, lived on Boon Hill off Barton Road, and was killed in King Philip's War in 1676 when only a short distance from his home.

The lake is formed by damming and provided water power to the mills in Maynard and was initially called Boon Pond. The area was known as Boon Plains because the water level changed periodically leaving the area drained of water. Once the dam was no longer opened and the lake was no longer the source for water power the lake became a permanent feature. The Lake is divided into three sections that are connected by the Narrows and that are linked to the Assabet River by Bailey's Brook into which the lake flows at the dam outlet.

Primary land use around the perimeter is now residential with many former summer cottages that have been updated and expanded to become year-around residences. There is a boat access point off of Sudbury Road. The first cottage, Pine Point or the Jackson Cottage, was constructed in 1888. Other summer cottages, also with names, sprang up in subsequent years. The Parker cottages are noteworthy. Once 24 small bungalows (only six remain) on the lake edge constructed in the early 1900s, they were used by family members and rented out to vacationers. By the early 1900s there were enough summer residents to form the Lake Boon Association, a social organization concerned with preserving the quality of life on the lake.



Presently the town of Stow owns the rights to the dam and the Town Beach, called Pine Bluffs, which is the only part of the Lake open to the public. The Town Beach is adjacent to the Parker Cottages many of which were demolished to create the Town Beach. Planning issues related to the lake include over development – particularly the aggrandizement of existing houses or demolition for major construction – the problem of septic systems for properties along the lake and the minimal access to the lake for the majority of Stow and Hudson residents.

Recommendations

Two organizations are concerned with the preservation and protection of the environmental, aesthetic, recreational and economic health of Lake Boon. The Lake Boon Commission is a town agency authorized in 1941 by the State Legislature. The Lake Boon Improvement Association is a private non-profit organization incorporated in 1921. The Historical Commission, working with these two organizations, is the appropriate agency to document and coordinate preservation strategies for Lake Boon and the cottages surrounding it.

- Document the Lake Boon neighborhood on an MHC Area Form and individual forms for certain cottages, the dam and town beach.
- Develop a preservation plan considering neighborhood architectural conservation district designation.
- Encourage the Planning Board to consider limiting development of large dwellings on the lake shore. Consider potential use of special permit process particularly in the event that an existing cottage is demolished to build a new house.

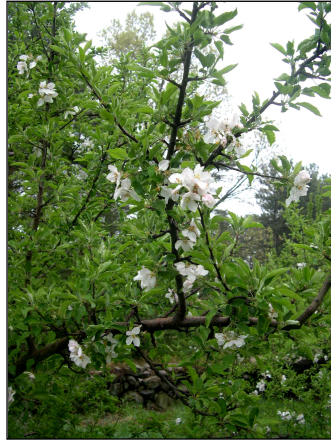
CRITICAL CONCERNS

In addition to the priority landscapes listed in the previous section, residents also identified critical issues related to heritage landscapes and community character. Critical issues are town-wide concerns that are linked to a range or category of heritage landscapes, not to a particular place. These issues are listed in alphabetical order. Community members also expressed interest in learning about preservation tools and strategies that have been effective in other Massachusetts communities and in identifying sources for preservation funding.

Farms

Stow has always been known for its many farms, particularly the orchards, which have been the mainstay of the local economy. These orchards are important economically, and they embody some of the most renowned heritage landscapes. Hence they are important for produce, their scenic quality and as recreational activity of family outings to visit the orchards. Several orchards have farm stores that sell the local products, pick-your-own fruit activities and trails on the

property. Honey Pot Hill Orchard is known for its apples, pears and blueberries, its sunflower display in the summer and the 1810 Whitman House, which is the farmhouse associated with the property. Carver Hill Orchards has been run by the same family, the Lords, since the 1850s. It is known for its cider mill as well as its apples and vegetables.



The cost of doing business, the liabilities of having visitors on these properties and the many regulations that come with food production make it difficult for orchards and farms to stay in business. Often the value of the land for housing far exceeds the farm or orchard proceeds. Thus these businesses and the heritage landscapes that are embodied in the properties are vulnerable to change that would adversely affect the character of the town. The town recently adopted an Agricultural Commission that will begin to identify initiatives to assist farmers and orchardists in conducting business in Stow.

Golf Courses

Stow has four golf clubs that have a total of four 18-hole courses and one 9-hole course. Collectively these include over 500 acres of open space used for recreation. Wedgewood Pines is private; while the other three, Butternut Farm Golf Course, Stowaway Golf Club and Stow Acres Country Club, are public. Each is tucked away on a narrow road off the beaten path. Stow Acres is the largest with two courses on the former Randall Estate. In the 1920s the property was converted to a country club with one golf course and the Randall House as the clubhouse. The second course was added in 1958. This club, originally known as Mapledale, is distinguished for hosting the first national championship for African Americans in 1926 at a time when blacks were unable to play golf at most clubs.

Concern about the economics of golf clubs may be higher in Stow due to the number of courses and the fate of the land should a club or course not be able to sustain this recreational activity. The fact that three of the clubs are public with facilities for events provides opportunity for the general public to enjoy the resource and perhaps share an interest in their futures. Master planning for the town should address potential ways in which to preserve the golf courses.

Scenic Roads



Stow has many scenic roads that retain their narrow width, stone walls, and tree canopies. At the Heritage Landscape Identification meeting residents listed Maple Street, Red Acre Road, Tuttle Lane, Walcott and Whitman Streets among others. These convey a sense of the rural character particularly where farms, orchards and historic dwellings are viewed from the roads. Gleasondale Road (Route 62) also retains all of the scenic qualities mentioned above. Residents are concerned about preserving the quality of the rural roads, especially given the increase in traffic and development on these scenic roads. No protective mechanisms are currently in place. See **Scenic Roads** in General Preservation Planning Recommendations.

EXISTING RESOURCE DOCUMENTATION AND PLANNING TOOLS

Stow already has important planning tools in place to document current conditions within the town; identify issues of concern to town residents; and develop strategies for action. This section of the Reconnaissance Report identifies some of the existing planning documents and tools that provide information relevant to the Heritage Landscape Inventory program.

Inventory of Historic and Archaeological Assets

The Massachusetts Historical Commission's (MHC) Inventory of Historic and Archaeological Assets is a statewide list that identifies significant historic resources throughout the Commonwealth. In order to be included in the inventory, a property must be documented on an MHC inventory form, which is then entered into the MHC database. This searchable database, known as MACRIS, is now available online at <http://www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc>.

According to the MHC, Stow's inventory documents nearly 200 historic resources ranging from the late 17th century to the early 20th century. Most of the work was completed in the early 1980s when the town undertook a town-wide survey.

Stow has 27 documented ancient Native American sites dating back to the Middle Archaic Period (8,000-6,000 B.P.) and 23 documented historic archaeological sites. Although these numbers are higher than many other communities in the region, it still is likely that there is significantly more archaeology potential in the town, which someday may yield information about Paleo-Indian occupation as early as more than 12,000 years ago.

State and National Registers of Historic Places

The National Register of Historic Places is the official federal list of districts, sites, buildings, structures and objects that have been determined significant in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering and culture. There are five properties listed in the National Register of Historic Places; four of which are early dwellings that are listed under the thematic nomination “First Period Buildings of Eastern Massachusetts.” They include: the Brown-Stow House (172 Harvard Road, ca. 1669); the Hapgood Hezekian House (76 Treaty Elm Lane, ca. 1726); the Tenny Homestead (156 Taylor Road, ca. 1700); and the Walcott-Whitney House (137 Tuttle Lane, ca. 1725). The other listing is the Randall-Hale Homestead. All are automatically listed in the State Register of Historic Places.

Planning Documents and Tools

The Master Plan entitled *Stow 2000* was adopted in 1996. Updating began in May 2005 and was to have been completed by the end of 2005. The Stow Open Space Plan was adopted in 1997; an update is in progress. *Preserving Villages, Archaeological Sites and Archives: Common Themes and Proposed Guidelines for Acton, Groton and Stow* was written in 1993 by BU Preservation Studies students.

In 2001 Stow adopted the Community Preservation Act at a 3% surcharge on real estate taxes; a portion of the proceeds must be used for historic preservation. Historic preservation projects have included improvements to the Old West School and the Blacksmith Shop, both town-owned property. The 2006 Town Meeting voted to set aside \$75,000 for each of the following uses: Acquisition and Preservation of Historic Buildings and Landscapes; Acquisition and Preservation of Open Space and Recreation Land; and Acquisition and Support of Affordable Housing.

In December 2005 the town through an act of town meeting established an Agricultural Commission to help sustain farming, particularly orcharding, in Stow and adopted a right-to-farm bylaw. The Spring 2006 Town Meeting adopted a zoning bylaw to phase growth by limiting new construction to 35 units of single family houses per year. In addition the town has contracted with Metropolitan Area Planning Council to conduct a Lower Village and Gleasondale Village Planning Project in the form of studies and recommendations for each of these villages.

GENERAL PRESERVATION PLANNING RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations pertaining to priority heritage landscapes can be found beginning on page 4. This section of the Reconnaissance Report offers more general recommendations relevant to preserving the character of the community that would be applicable to a wide range of community resources.

Stow's residents place high value on the community's strong sense of place, which is created by its varied natural features and land use patterns that made use of the fertile land. The town has already taken measures to document and evaluate its most significant buildings and natural areas. It is now looking beyond the traditional resources to the landscapes, streetscapes, rural roads, neighborhoods and other natural and cultural assets that define the overall fabric of the community. Like most municipalities, Stow is facing multiple pressures for change that threaten land-based uses and natural resources, especially its remaining farming areas. Special places within the community that were once taken for granted are now more vulnerable than ever to change.

Preservation planning is a three-step process: **identification, evaluation and protection**. Four useful documents to consult before beginning to implement preservation strategies are:

- Department of Conservation and Recreation, *Reading the Land*
- Freedom's Way Heritage Association, *Feasibility Study*
- Massachusetts Historical Commission, *Survey Manual*
- Massachusetts Historical Commission, *Preservation through Bylaws and Ordinances*

Recommendations that apply to a broad range of resources are discussed below. These recommendations are listed in the order in which they are most logically addressed when applying the three-step preservation planning process as described above. Thus the goal will be to (1) identify, (2) evaluate, (3) protect.

Inventory of Heritage Landscapes and other Historic Assets

The vital first step in developing preservation strategies for heritage landscapes is to record information about the resources on MHC inventory forms. One cannot advocate for something unless one knows precisely what it is – the physical characteristics and the historical development.

The survey work completed in the 1980s identified many parts of the heritage landscapes noted in the heritage landscape master list in the appendix. However, survey methodology has advanced and more inclusive methodology would argue for an expanded inventory project looking at resources in a more comprehensive

and connected way than may have been done in the early 1980s. Thus, using the Massachusetts Historical Commission survey methodology:

- Compile a list of resources that are under-represented or not sufficiently documented, beginning with heritage landscapes.
- Document unprotected resources first, beginning with the most threatened resources.
- Make sure to document secondary features on rural and residential properties, such as outbuildings, stone walls and landscape elements.
- Record a wide range of historic resources including landscape features and industrial resources.
- Conduct a community-wide archaeological reconnaissance survey to identify patterns of ancient Native American and historic occupation and to identify known and probable locations of archaeological resources associated with these patterns. Known and potential ancient Native American and historic archaeological sites should be documented in the field for evidence of their cultural association and/or integrity. All survey work should be completed by a professional archaeologist who meets the professional qualifications (950 CMR 70.01) outlined in the State Archaeologist Permit Regulations (950 CMR 70.00). The Inventory of Archaeological Assets of the Commonwealth contains sensitive information about archaeological sites. The inventory is confidential; it is not a public record (G.L. c. 9, ss. 26A (1)). Care should be taken to keep archaeological site information in a secure location with restricted access. Refer to the MHC article "Community-Wide Archaeological Surveys" which appeared in the Preservation Advocate, Fall 2005 which can be found at the following MHC link:
<http://www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc/mhcpdf/pafall05.pdf>.

National Register Program

Survey work will require an evaluation as to whether resources meet the qualifications for National Register listing. This will provide new information about the eligibility of properties. Using the information generated in the survey work and the accompanying National Register evaluations, expand Stow's National Register program by considering National Register nominations for village centers such as Gleasondale, Stow Center and part of Lower Village.

- Develop a National Register listing plan, taking into consideration a property's integrity and vulnerability. Gleasondale, which is in need of recognition in order to advance preservation strategies, should be given priority.

Village and Rural Neighborhood Character

Nearly all preservation strategies address village and neighborhood character in some manner. As described above, thorough documentation on MHC inventory forms is an important first step in the preservation planning process, followed by National Register listing where appropriate. There are three traditional preservation strategies that have been effective in some nearby communities: a demolition delay bylaw, a local historic district bylaw and designation (M.G.L. Chapter 40C) and a neighborhood architectural conservation district bylaw and designation. Each of these is an appropriate mechanism worthy of Stow's consideration.

- **Demolition delay bylaws** provides a time period in which towns can explore alternatives to demolition. The Stow Historical Commission should work with MHC staff to develop a bylaw that would best suit Stow's needs and should work with other town groups to publicize the advantages of a demolition delay bylaw to the community. Many demolition delay bylaws apply to structures that were built more than 50 years ago. The most common delay of demolition is six months; however many communities are finding that a one-year delay is more effective. A demolition delay bylaw requires a majority vote of Town Meeting.
- **Local historic districts**, adopted through a local initiative, recognize special areas within a community where the distinctive characteristics of buildings and places are preserved and protected by the designation. These districts are the strongest form of protection for the preservation of historic resources. They are adopted by a 2/3 vote of Town Meeting and administered by a district commission appointed by the Board of Selectmen. Gleasondale and Upper Village / Stow Center may benefit from local historic district designation.
- **Neighborhood architectural conservation districts** also are local initiatives that recognize special areas within a community where the distinctive characteristics of buildings and places are preserved and protected. They are less restrictive than local historic districts but still embrace neighborhood character. Neighborhood architectural conservation district designation is appropriate for residential neighborhoods that may have less integrity and where more flexibility is needed. The Stow Historical Commission should work with MHC staff to determine how a neighborhood architectural conservation district can help to preserve Stow's Lower Village.

Agricultural Landscapes

Preservation of agricultural landscapes means preservation of the farming activities; otherwise, it simply is the preservation of land as open space. There are instances in which up-to-date farming technology does not make it possible to preserve some of the elements of the settings such as historic barns and silos. It is important to know what the features of an agricultural setting are and which features the community treasures in order to make a case for preservation of

these settings. Stow is aware of the possibilities as it has recently created the Stow Agricultural Commission and adopted a right-to-farm bylaw which supports farming activities. The Stow Historical Commission is encouraged to form a close relationship with this new commission, since there are some common goals. Some preservation tools that the Commission will no doubt explore to preserve the actual farming and orchard activities include:

- Use Community Preservation Act funds to purchase development rights on farms or to assist farmers in the restoration of historic farm buildings for which the owner would be required to donate a preservation restriction (PR) in accordance with M.G.L. Chapter 184, Sections 31-33.
- Continue public-private partnerships to preserve farm land through purchase of conservation restrictions (CRs also using MGL Chapter 184, Sections 31-33) or agricultural preservation restrictions (APRs).
- Adopt a cluster bylaw that requires a buffer between development and farmland.

Scenic Roads

Scenic roads are an integral part of the historic fabric of the community. They are highly valued by Stow residents and visitors alike and were listed as a critical issue. Roads must also accommodate modern transportation needs and decisions regarding roadways are often made with travel requirements as the only consideration. Stow has not yet adopted the Scenic Roads Act (MGL Chapter 40-15C) and designated roads for which there would be review and approval for the removal of trees and stone walls that are within the right-of-way. In addition to roadway issues, much of what we value about scenic roads – the stone walls, views across open fields and the many scenic historic buildings – is not within the public right-of-way. The preservation and protection of scenic roads therefore requires more than one approach.

- Complete an inventory with descriptions and photo documentation of each of the roads in Stow including the character defining features that should be retained.
- Adopt a scenic roads bylaw and designate roads as scenic. Add design criteria to be considered when approving removal of trees and stone walls. Add other design criteria such as a provision allowing only one driveway cut per minimum lot property fronting on scenic roads. Coordinate procedures between Highway Department and Planning Board.
- Consider a scenic overlay district which may provide a no-disturb buffer on private property bordering on scenic roads or adopt flexible zoning standards to protect certain views. Such bylaws could be written to apply to the numbered routes also such as Great Road (Rt. 117) and Gleasondale Road (Rt. 62), which would not be protected by a scenic roads bylaw.

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- Develop policies and implementation standards for road maintenance and reconstruction, including bridge reconstructions, which address the scenic and historic characteristics while also addressing safety. This is an important public process in which the community may have to accept responsibility for certain costs to implement standards that are not acceptable to projects funded by Mass Highway Department. Such standards should have a section addressing the way in which the local Highway Department maintains roads, for example requiring a public hearing if any new pavement width is to be added to a town road during reconstruction or repair. Policies can be adopted by local boards having jurisdiction over roads, or can be adopted at Town Meeting through a bylaw. In developing policies consider factors such as road width, clearing of shoulders, walking paths and posted speeds. A delicate balance is required.

Funding of Preservation Projects

Funding for preservation projects is an important aspect of implementing preservation strategies. Both the MHC and DCR have had funding programs to assist communities in preservation related issues including:

- **Survey and Planning Grants**, administered by the MHC, support survey, National Register and preservation planning work.
- The **Massachusetts Preservation Projects Fund (MPPF)**, administered by the MHC, funds restoration and rehabilitation projects.
- The **Historic Landscape Preservation Grant Program (HLPGP)**, administered by DCR, funds planning, rehabilitation, education and stewardship projects focused on historic landscapes, including cemeteries.

Funding for state programs varies from year to year. When planning Stow's heritage landscape inventory program, contact relevant agencies to determine whether funding is available.

Stow adopted the **Community Preservation Act** in 2001 with a 3% surcharge on each real estate tax bill. This has proved to be an excellent source of funding for many heritage landscape projects. Stow already is aware of the way in which the CPA fosters partnerships among historic preservationists, conservationists and affordable housing advocates. Many of the recommendations in this report could be funded with CPA money, including survey and National Register projects, preservation and conservation restrictions, and agricultural preservation restrictions. Additional information about the CPA can be found at www.communitypreservation.org.

CONCLUSION

The Stow Reconnaissance Report is a critical tool in starting to identify the rich and diverse heritage landscapes in Stow and in beginning to think about preservation strategies. Stow will have to determine the best way to implement the recommendations discussed above. One approach that might help Stow begin the process is to form a Heritage Landscape Committee, as described in *Reading the Land*.

Landscapes identified in this report, especially the priority landscapes, will typically need further documentation on MHC inventory forms. The documentation in turn can be used in publicity efforts to build consensus and gather public support for their preservation. Implementation of recommendations will require a concerted effort of and partnerships among municipal boards and agencies, local non-profit organizations, and state agencies and commissions.

Distribution of this Reconnaissance Report to the municipal land use boards and commissions will assist in making this one of the planning documents that guides Stow in preserving important features of the community's character. The tasks that are recommended will require cooperation and coordination among boards and commissions, particularly Stow's Historical Commission, Planning Board, Conservation Commission and the new Agricultural Commission. It also is advisable to present this information to the Board of Selectmen, the applicants to the Heritage Landscape Inventory program on behalf of the town. Finally distribution of the report to the Historical Society, neighborhood associations, and any other preservation-minded organizations will broaden the audience and assist in gathering interest and support for Stow's heritage landscapes.

APPENDIX: HERITAGE LANDSCAPES IDENTIFIED BY COMMUNITY

This list was generated by local participants at the Heritage Landscape Identification Meeting held in Stow on April 12, 2006 and the follow-up fieldwork on May 11, 2006. **There are undoubtedly other heritage landscapes that were not identified at the HLI meeting noted above.** The chart has two columns, the names and locations of resources are in the first; notes about resources are in the second. Landscapes are grouped by land use category. Abbreviations used are listed below.

APR = Agricultural Preservation Restriction
LHD = Local Historic District
PR = Preservation Restriction

CR = Conservation Restriction
NR = National Register
* = Priority Landscape
+ = Part of a Priority Landscape

Agriculture	
<i>Apple Barn</i> Great Rd.	Stone building at the Center School used for storing apples on the Peter Larsen property before land was acquired for the school.
<i>Applefield Farm</i> 727 Great Rd.	Vegetable and flowers. Farm stand selling local products.
<i>Carver Hill Orchard</i> Brookside Ave.	Lord family farm since the 1850s. Orchard and vegetable farm with cider mill, farm store, hiking trails.
<i>Derby Orchard</i> 438 Great Rd.	Orchard and farm stand with 23 varieties of apples, cider and peaches.
<i>Honey Pot Hill</i> 144 Sudbury Rd.	Apple orchard as well as pears and blueberries. Farm store selling products (apples, cider, etc.) and pick-your-own fruit. Sunflower display in summer is of note. Whitman House built in 1810.
<i>One Stack Farm</i> 441 Great Rd.	Apple orchard with 12 varieties of apples, some peaches, cider made on-site.
<i>Packard Farm</i> 90 Packard Rd.	The Packard House at 90 Packard Rd. sits on this 47-acre site. More than 100 years ago apple orchards lined Packard Rd. on both sides. Now houses line the road. This farm is under 61A.
<i>Orchard Hill Farm</i> Rockbottom Rd.	In Gleasondale. Was a mill farm that produced food for mill workers. Located on esker above Assabet River.
<i>Pilot Grove Farm</i> 76 Crescent St.	Northern edge of Lower Village. The Federal farmhouse was constructed in 1808 (barn demolished). Today it is a sheep farm today.
<i>Red Acre Farm</i> 253 Red Acre Rd.	Northern edge of Lower Village. The farmhouse was built after 1856 and became the summer house of Harriet Bird in 1902. Later she turned it into a haven for overworked and abused horses. More recently a medical research facility and hearing dog center were part of the operation.

<i>Shelburne Farm</i> 106 West Acton Rd.	Was known as the Old Elm Farm with house Federal/Greek Revival house built in ca. 1800. Apple orchards since the early 1900s. There is a conservation restriction on 48.3 acres of this orchard. Farm animals, hay rides, picnic areas, and The Apple Shop.
<i>Small Farm</i> 184 Gleasondale Rd.	On Route 62, farm stand and pick-your-own flowers, herbs and vegetables.
<i>Nurseries</i>	Two nurseries, Stow Branch Nursery and Village Nursery, serve the town.
Archaeological	
<i>Conant's Sawmill Site</i>	Archaeological site in Town Forest. The foundation of a sawmill that operated from the mid 1660s to 1830.
<i>Native American Sites</i> Various locations	26 ancient sites have been documented in Stow.
Burial Grounds and Cemeteries	
<i>Brookside Cemetery</i> Gleasondale Rd.	Established in 1864 at the intersection of Gleasondale and Box Mill Roads. 5.7 acres.
<i>Hillside Cemetery</i> Crescent St.	Established in 1812. Small burial ground of about 1.5 acres.
<i>Lower Village Cemetery +</i> Pompositticut Rd.	Oldest cemetery. Laid out in 1683. 3.5 acres.
<i>Small Pox Cemetery</i> Lakewood & Sudbury Rds.	Graves of those who died in the 1840's from small pox.
Civic	
<i>Gleasondale *</i>	Stow's industrial village with Gleason houses, workers houses, boarding house, mill farm (now a horse farm), mill and dam. First mill and dam built prior to 1750. In 1813 the Rock Bottom Cotton and Woolen Mill established at Randall's Mill, hence the industrial village first known as Rock Bottom. Name change in 1898 to honor mid 19 th century mill owners Benjamin Gleason and Samuel Dale.
<i>Lower Village *</i> Great Road	The original town center laid out in the 1680s on Great Road (now Route 117) at Red Acre, White Pond, Samuel Prescott and Pompositticut Roads. Now the commercial center. Historic houses such as Hosmer's Folly and the Minister's Manse. The first meeting house was established here.

<i>Upper Village</i>	Also known as Stow Center or Town Center. Became the town center with Upper Common when the meetinghouse was relocated here in order to be more centrally located within Stow's borders. Site of the fourth First Parish Church in 1827 which burned and was replaced with current First Parish Church (1848). Also site of Town Hall (1848).
Industrial	
<i>Blacksmith Shop*</i> Great Rd.	Located on the former Peter Larsen property, the building was moved from Maynard in 1914 and became a blacksmith shop here. Larsen kept it open into the 1950s thus it is the last blacksmith shop that was operated in Stow.
<i>Box Mill Dam & Pond</i>	At Carver Hill. Dam dates to 1850.
<i>Gleasondale Mill & Dam +</i>	In industrial village of Gleasondale. The Greek Revival mill was constructed in 1854 and the dam and canal in 1883.
<i>Lake Boon Dam +</i>	Built for the Assabet Mill in Maynard about 1850. Height increased in 1870's.
Institutional / Military	
<i>Center School</i> 403 Great Rd.	Built in 1954 on property of Peter Larsen whose stone apple barn and blacksmith shop remain on the property. The Colonial Revival style school houses Grades 3-6.
<i>Churches</i>	First Parish (1848), the former Gleasondale Methodist-Episcopal Church (1898, 4 Marlboro Road), St. Isidore's Catholic Church (1961, 429 Great Rd.), Union Church (1905, 317 Great Road).
<i>Fort Devens Annex</i> Sudbury, State & White Pond Rds.	The Annex was taken in 1942 from lands in Stow, Sudbury and Maynard. Of 2300 acres 2½ is in Stow It was in active military use from World War II until 1995. Now operated by U.S. Fish and Wildlife as the Assabet River National Wildlife Refuge. Many historic farms were on the property taken, some of which still stand. Also, archeological sites.
<i>Hale School</i> 55 Hartley Rd.	16.6 acres. Built in 1964. Expanded in late 1990's.
<i>John Kettell Monument</i>	Off Maple Street. One of two earliest recorded settlers.
<i>Matthew Boone Monument</i>	Off Barton Rd. Boon, one of the two earliest recorded settlers, who was killed by Indians in 1676 during King Philip's War.
<i>Pompositticut School</i> 511 Great Rd.	A modern school building housing Grades K-2. Built in 1968.

<i>Randall Library</i> 19 Crescent St.	Built in 1892 in the Richardsonian Romanesque style. It was a gift from the estate of John Witt Randall by his sister, Belinda Randall. Historical Room donated in 1926 by Whitney family. There is a 1975 addition.
<i>Stow Town Hall</i> Great Rd. & Crescent St.	At Stow Center near the Upper Common. Greek Revival building constructed in 1848 with addition in 1895. Now used for meeting space and several town offices. The new town building (1989) is across Great Road from this town hall.
<i>West School</i> Harvard Rd.	Built in 1825 on the foundation of a ca. 1739 school which was the first at this location. The brick one-room school house now is the Stow West School Museum, administered by the Stow Historical Commission.
Miscellaneous	
<i>Cairn</i> 74 West Acton Rd.	At Shelburne Farm. According to the Historical Commission this stone cairn dates to 1640.
<i>Stone Walls</i>	Along roads and in woods and fields.
Natural	
<i>Hérons' Nests</i>	Part of the Delaney Project.
Open Space /Parks	
<i>Assabet Wildlife Refuge</i>	See Ft. Devens Annex. (Known locally as the "ammunition dump.") Refuge established in 1999.
<i>Butternut Country Club</i> 115 Wheeler Rd.	Public golf course operated by three generations of the Page family. It was built on an old farm that grew butternut squash.
<i>Flagg Hill Conservation Area</i> West Acton Rd.	286 acres in Stow and Boxborough protected through purchase by the two towns in 1998. Has trails, vernal pools, critical habitat and wildlife.
<i>Lions Club Field</i>	Great Rd. at Hudson Rd.
<i>Lower Village Common +</i>	First town center when laid out in 1680s.
<i>Marble Hill Conservation Area</i> Taylor Rd.	Town owned property of 249 acres adjacent to the Pompositticut School with parking there or on Taylor Road (north end of property). Trails. Native American archeological sites have been identified.

<i>Pine Bluffs Recreation Area +</i> Sudbury Road	Town-owned 35 acres on eastern shore of Lake Boon with town beach and recreation area established in 1971 from the Parker farm and cottage rental properties. Trails
<i>Pilot Grove Hill</i>	Public and private ownership of land on hill. Landmark reputed to have been used historically for sighting by ships coming into Boston Harbor.
<i>Stowaway Golf Course</i> White Pond Rd.	9-hole public golf course since 1960's. Formerly Assabet Country Club in the 1920's.
<i>Stow Acres Country Club</i> 58 Randall Rd.	Golf course (with two 18-hole courses) and historic Randall House built by John Randall, prominent Boston physician made his home in Boston and maintained the Stow property with ca. 1800 Georgian style country retreat. It passed through generations of Randalls to Belinda Randall, sister of John Witt Randall who died intestate. Belinda gave money to many local causes in her family's name. Circa 1920, the Randall property was purchased by Charles M. Cox, a wealthy grain merchant from Boston, who established a golf course here open to African Americans, who were unable to play elsewhere due to segregation practices. First known as Mapledale, this course hosted the first national black men's championship in 1926. Expanded to 36-holes in 1954 by Page brothers of Waltham. The clubhouse (the old Randall house) has been extensively renovated.
<i>Town Forest</i> Bradley Ln.	Also known as Gardner Hill Land (324acres) purchased by the town in 1968. Near Lower Village. Was part of the C.D. Fletcher estate. Elizabeth Brook forms the northern edge. The foundation of Conant's Mill, a sawmill, is within the Town Forest as is Little Bog Trail.
<i>Wedgewood Pines Country Club</i> 215 Harvard Rd.	Private country club with golf course, swimming pool, large clubhouse. 154 acres. Opened in 1996.
Residential	
<i>Boaz Brown House</i> 172 Harvard Rd.	NR First Period Thematic Nomination. One of the oldest houses in Stow, built before 1699. Brown farmed this property and ran a tavern for some time. By the mid 18 th century it was part of a 143-acre farm. In 1764 the farm was sold to Stephen Stow.
<i>Cottage Neighborhood +</i>	Cottage neighborhoods around Lake Boon built from 1880's to 1930's are now being stressed by development and mansionization. See Lake Boon Priority Landscape.
<i>Hapgood House</i> 76 Treaty Elm Ln.	NR First Period Thematic nomination. The house was constructed of ca. 1726 for Hezekiah Hapgood.
<i>Hosmer's Folly +</i> 4 Red Acre Rd.	The Rufus Hosmer House was built in Lower Village in ca. 1789 in the Federal style. See Lower Village Priority Landscape

Lake Boon Neighborhood *	Located in southeast corner of Stow, Lake Boon was originally a small pond. Amory Maynard of the Assabet Mill in what was to become Maynard purchased rights in mid century to make a larger pond, which was done by building a dam at Bailey's Brook. This was later raised and the mill pond expanded. After the use of waterpower was discontinued, by 1900, the lake became a summer resort area. Transportation was provided by two train lines, a trolley and a steam boat from Maynard.
Minister's Manse + 9 Red Acre Rd.	A house was constructed for the first minister in 1686. This house, usually identified as the Minister's Manse is possibly somewhat later. See Lower Village Priority Landscape.
Randall-Hale House + 6 Sudbury Rd.	NR. This ca. 1710 house was built by Abraham Randall in Gleasondale. It displays First Period construction with Georgian detail. A large New England barn is on the opposite side of Sudbury Road at the intersection with Gleasondale Road.
Whitney Homestead 485 Great Rd.	Built in ca. 1843 in the Greek Revival style it shows signs of Victorian updating. It has served as a nursing home as well as a single family residence.
Whitney House 27 Whitney Rd.	Part of Whitney Homestead land. Built ca. 1760.
Walcott-Whitney House 137 Tuttle Lane.	NR First Period Thematic nomination. First Period construction with Georgian details built in ca. 1725.
Transportation	
Assabet River Rail Trail	Planned trail along the Marlborough Branch Railroad line that was in operation from 1850 to 1980.
Maple Street	In the western part of town from Bolton northeast to Old Bolton Road. Scenic qualities.
Minuteman Air Field 302 Boxboro Rd.	Airport established in 1963 with its first building housing the locally known restaurant constructed in 1968. Airport was opened to the public in 1969.
Red Acre Road +	Extends from Great Road at Lower Village north to Acton. Scenic qualities. Built in 1802.
Track Road	A road on private property that is part of the old railroad bed of the Marlborough Branch Railroad. Recreational easement negotiated and signed with Town of Stow and property owner of Track Road and Crowe Island for planned Assabet River Rail Trail.
Trolley Waiting Station Great Rd.	Stone structure built in 1916 on the Concord, Maynard and Hudson Electric Railway route.
Tuttle Lane	Picturesque country road branching northwest off of Red Acre Road.
Walcott Street	In the southwest corner of Stow running from Hudson north to Hudson Road.

<i>Whitman Street</i>	Rural north-south road between Gleasondale Road on the north and Boon/Sudbury Road on the south.
Waterbodies	
<i>Assabet River *</i>	Flows through the southeastern part of Stow from Hudson to Maynard. View of Assabet from Sudbury Road Bridge. The Assabet River originates in Westborough and flows north and then northeast for 32 miles to its confluence with the Concord River. Crowe Island is a land form that juts into the Assabet, most is privately owned. It is reached by Track Rd. Assabet River once was known as Elizabeth River, the English version of the Nipmuc name for the river. The name, Assabet, also a version of this name became the name in ca. 1850 and means in Algonquin “the place where materials for making fishnets grow.” The current flow is largely processed sewage.
<i>Delaney Project</i>	Includes the herons’ nests. The Delaney Multiple Purpose Complex of the SuAsCo Watershed Project was established in 1968 by the U.S. Soil Conservation Service to control flooding from Elizabeth Brook, through the purchase of rights to store 4,000 acre-feet of water along the brook above Delaney Pond in northwest Stow, Bolton and Harvard. The 22-foot Campbell dam was constructed as a flood control project to hold back the waters feeding the Elizabeth brook which are reported to be able to make a 12 inch difference in the Assabet River water level in Maynard during a 100-year storm.
<i>Elizabeth Brook</i>	Tributary of the Assabet River entering the river from the north. At one time this brook was known as Assabet Brook. At the same time the Assabet River was known as the Elizabeth River which is the English version of the Nipmuc name for the river.
<i>Fletcher’s Pond</i>	Fed by Elizabeth Brook. A former mill pond.
<i>Heath Hen Meadow Brook</i>	Heath Hen Meadow Brook runs from Boxborough to Ft. Pond Brook in Acton. The brook flows through Shelburne Woodland, purchased by the town in 1997.
<i>Lake Boon +</i>	A Great Pond that straddles Hudson-Stow line. Once a millpond for the mills in Maynard, it is also referred to as Boon’s Pond. Primary land use around perimeter is now residential with many former summer cottages. Lake has three sections connected by the Narrows and connected to the Assabet River by Bailey’s Brook. Named after Matthew Boon who explored area in 1660s and was killed in King Philip’s War in 1676.
<i>Minister’s Pond</i>	North of Great Road at Stow Center. Flows south to Elizabeth Brook by manmade drainage stream built by an enterprising minister. The change created additional pasture land.
<i>Sandy Brook</i>	Tributary of the Assabet River.

STOW OPENSOURCE & HISTORIC RESOURCES

