



Town of Abington

500 GLINIEWICZ WAY
ABINGTON, MA 02351

**Board of Selectmen Minutes
October 5, 2015
6:30 p.m.
Cotter Room**

Members present: Mike Franey, Maureen Jansen, Andy Burbine, Ken Coyle, Alex Bezanson

- Pledge of Allegiance
- Moment of Silence – Myrtle Bates (attached)
- Public Announcements:
 - Introduction of Sonia Hodge, Treasurer/Collector – Sonia addressed the Board and thanked them for this opportunity.
 - Selectman Bezanson announced that the craft fair will be held on October 31, 2015 at the Senior Center from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
 - Selectman Coyle announced that the Not so scary woods will be held on October 17, 2015 from 2pm to 6pm at Island Grove.
 - Selectman Burbine announced that the PTO is hosting an online activity on October 21, 2015 from 7-9pm at the Senior Center.
 - Selectman Jansen announced she would read the press release from the Police Chief at the next meeting with regard to Halloween, and that Geoff Diehl is running for an open vacant Brockton Senate seat, not Abington.
 - Chairman announced that the flu clinic will be held on October 27, 2015.
- Public Appointments:

6:35 p.m. – Application for a rooming house/boarding house, 693 Washington Street -- John Rodolph addressed the Board and stated that this is a transfer from him to his daughter, Jessica Berard. There will be no changes in operation. Taxes are up to date and there are no issues with inspectional departments.

M/Coyle to approve

S/Bezanson

Voted 5-0

6:40 p.m – Report of the Abington Summer Concerts Committee – Nancy Reid, Jan Prall. – Nancy and Jan provided an update of the very successful summer season. (attached)

- Action/Discussion items:

1. Approval of September 10, 2015 executive session minutes

M/Coyle to approve

S/Jansen

Burbine abstains as he was not present for the entire meeting

Voted 4-0-1

Approval of September 14, 2015 open session minutes

M/Jansen to approve

S/Bezanson

Voted 5-0

2. Appointment to Substance Abuse Coalition – Christopher Scartissi – Mr. Scartissi addressed the Board.

M/Burbine to appoint Mr. Scartissi

S/Jansen

Voted 5-0

3. Acceptance of Historical Commission resignation – Robyn Fernald (attached)
Selectman Coyle said it was an honor to work with Ms. Fernald. Chairman asks that a letter of thanks and appreciation be sent to Ms. Fernald for her 30 years of service.

4. Vote to formally accept the designation of surrounding community by Mass Gaming & Entertainment, LLC.

M/Jansen to designate Abington as a Surrounding Community in MG & E's RFA-2 application for a proposed Category 1 gaming establishment in Brockton, MA and to forward a letter indicating this by October 13, 2015.

S/Burbine

Voted 5-0

5. Discussion on Griffin's Dairy Reuse Master Plan as prepared by OCPC (attached) – This will be put on the next agenda for discussion after the Board has had a chance to review.

6. Update from Senator Keenan's office regarding the pending DPW Legislation – (attached)

7. Vote to create a gift account for repairs (to restore and maintain) to the Pavillion at Island Grove.

M/Burbine to create the gift account

S/Coyle

Voted 5-0

8. Town Manager Report (attached)

It was requested that forming of a Surplus Land Committee and an update from the SAGE Committee be on the next agenda.

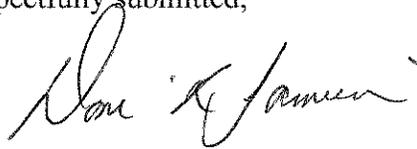
M/Burbine to adjourn

S/Jansen

Voted 5-0

Meeting adjourned: 8:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dori R. Jamieson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "D".

Dori R. Jamieson

Assistant Town Manager

Moment of Silence

Please rise for the Pledge of Allegiance and remain standing for a moment of silence for Myrtle Bates, age 95, who recently passed away. Myrtle was born, raised, and educated in Abington, daughter of the late Arthur and Annie May Ripley. Mrs. Bates worked for over 30 years at “Rips” Store. Mrs. Bates was a member of the Abington Council on Aging for many years, serving as its secretary. Mrs. Bates will be deeply missed by her family and many friends.



6:40 P.M.

RECEIVED

SEP 21 2015

BOARD OF SELECTMEN
TOWN OF ABINGTON

ABINGTON SUMMER CONCERTS COMMITTEE

500 Gliniewicz Way

Abington, MA 02351

September 21, 2015

Board of Selectmen
c/o Town Manager
Town of Abington
Massachusetts, MA 02351

Gentlemen:

The Abington Summer Concerts Committee is pleased to inform you that there were a record number of area residents who attended the concerts this summer. We just celebrated our 11th season with an average of 450 people in attendance. Some concerts even had as many as 800 to 900.

While it is gratifying to have a very favorable response to our concerts, it is also taxing on our members since often only two members are available to handle the needs of handicapped attendees and parking as well as the many other issues that arise. We therefore, are requesting permission to form a volunteer associate committee comprised of a few residents who would be interested in helping out at the concerts on Sundays.

Another aspect of the concerts that we would like to bring to your attention is the number of dogs that residents and non-residents bring each week. Up until this year there were only one or two, but now, more and more dogs come with their owners and it has become a growing concern. To date, there has been only one serious issue, but the safety of the concert goers, especially the children and handicapped, is our main concern.

We would also like to offer special thanks to Jack Caine and the Highway/Park Department for the installation of the new handicap ramp. It has provided a much safer access to the footbridge that leads from the Town Hall parking lot to the bandstand area. We would also like to thank Jason Linn of the schools' maintenance department for the additional outside electric receptacles that were added to the snack shack. The assistance from these and so many other Town departments has been very much appreciated over these past 11 years.

Committee members look forward to meeting with you on September 28th to give you a report on the 2015 season and to answer any questions you may have about this wonderful summer program in the Town of Abington.

Sincerely,

The Abington Summer Concerts Committee

Nancy Reid, Chairperson

Jan Prall

Dr. Peter McDonald, DMD

Kenneth Coyle, Selectman Liaison

#3

Robyn B Fernald
12 Pine Street
Abington, MA 02351
781.871.3693

Rick LaFond, Town Manager
Dori Jamieson, Assistant Town Manager
Board of Selectmen

Dear Madam and Sirs,

I am officially announcing that as of July 1st. 2015, I have retired from the Abington Historical Commission.

I have been a member since 1985 and have held various positions within the Commission. I feel that my most noteworthy achievement was holding the Chair position for nearly 20 years. As with many boards and commissions there is a cyclic effect with membership and the AHC was no different. Many years it was a struggle to maintain at least three members. Over the past thirty years, the AHC has done some remarkable work. The following are a few highlights of past AHC events that captured community awareness of our unique history.

1. The 100th Anniversary celebration of the Abington Riot of 1893
2. Summertime Mystery House contests
3. Bring back the Victory Garden contests
4. Guest speakers on various historic styles of homes, local artists and written words
5. Inclusion of Island Grove on the National Register of Historic Places on March 6, 2002. This was the most intensive undertaking of the AHC. It took 7 years to accomplish. It is now a footnote in American history by giving a true and factual nod to the Abolitionist movement and the Civil War on the land known as Island Grove

6. The Tricentennial's yearlong celebration of Abington's 1712 incorporation as a Town. The AHC played a major role in presenting a Living History Civil War encampment, Grand Militia March and Special Speakers, such as Mary Todd Lincoln, at the three day event.
7. The AHC presented a Demolition Delay By-law to the Town. Although unsuccessful in passing it is still a viable alternative to delay unnecessary demolition of our historic structures. The possibility for future AHC commissions to present this by-law is reasonable.

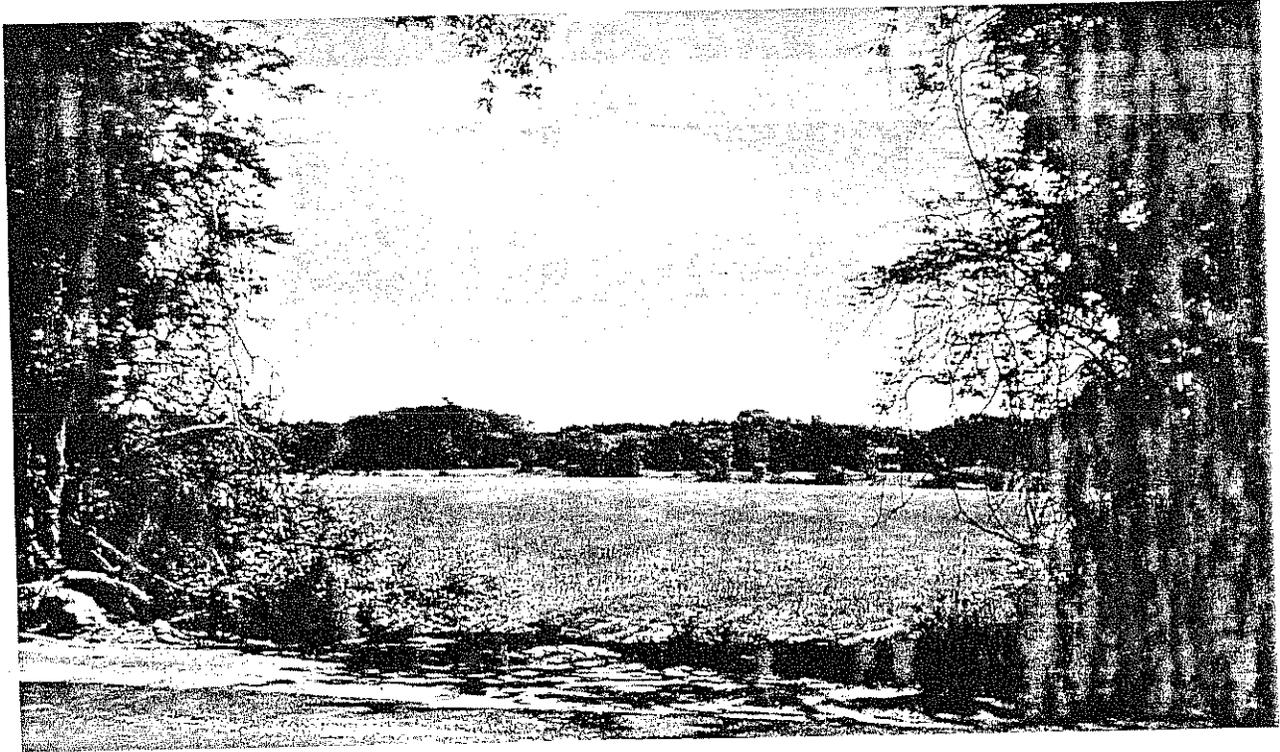
I have had two mentors Martha Campbell and Dr. Campbell, who are now deceased. With their knowledge, guidance and their love for Abington's history I embraced all that they taught me wholeheartedly and learned more over the course of time. I am grateful for them both for laying the foundation for preservation and protection of our history.

It has been an honor to serve on the AHC these many years and I thank-you for the Town's support to me and the AHC. It is Truly Appreciated!

Respectfully,

Robyn B Fernald

Griffin's Dairy Reuse Master Plan



September, 2015



Old Colony Planning Council
70 School Street
Brockton, Massachusetts 02301-4097
508-583-1833
www.ocdcrda.org

The Griffin's Dairy Reuse Master Plan was prepared by the following staff of the Old Colony Planning Council under the direction of Pasquale Ciaramella, Executive Director:

- James R. Watson, AICP, Comprehensive Planning Supervisor
- Jimmy Pereira, Transportation/Community Planner
- Andrew Vidal, GIS Manager, Communications and IT Specialist

The Old Colony Planning Council would also like to thank the following town departments and committees for their time and efforts during the development of this Plan:

- Abington Board of Selectmen
- Abington Town Manager
- Abington Conservation Commission
- Abington Highway Department
- Abington Parks & Recreation Department
- Abington Sewer Commission
- Abington School Department
- Save Abington with Green Energy (SAGE)

The study was supported by funding from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts' District Local Technical Assistance Program administered by the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development.

Cover: The northern end of the Griffin's Dairy property as viewed from Pattison Street

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Recommended uses of some or all of the farm's land include:

- One to three multi-use fields for organized recreation e.g., soccer, lacrosse, and football.
- Agriculture ranging from grazing cattle or growing hay, to expansion of the present community gardens.
- Renewable Energy generated by wind turbines (given sufficient wind) or by photovoltaic arrays, with either generating electricity to use and sell.
- Open space/passive recreation including hiking trails across the site, nature study and protection of significant areas as natural habitat.
- Environmental Education using the farm's varied habitats for the field aspects of a program like Springfield's Environmental Center for Our Schools (ECOS) with shelter under a tent when needed.

One likely re-use is for multi-purpose playing fields since construction of a new high school and middle school will cause a temporary loss of up to five fields from January to August of 2016, and of three fields through the spring of 2020 with the permanent loss of one field. The replacement fields could be as small as 120 yards by 60 yards by town standards. The plan suggests that two fields could fit in the northernmost and westernmost open areas with the driest soils while a third might be possible on intermediate soils west of Charles Street depending on wetlands impacts and mitigation requirements.

While the plan is concerned with the appropriate use of the Farm rather than with supplying needed fields, it is worth noting that there are other potential sites for replacement fields such as the 16.83 acres of School Department land off of Brockton Avenue, and the abutting former sewer bed land north of the farm, as well as the reported new soccer field in Southfield on the former South Weymouth Naval Air Station. The apparent site of the former sewer beds between a power line right of way and the French Stream, and south of the Hanover Branch Rail Trail appears to be wide enough for one field straddling the Abington-Rockland town line.

Beyond specific studies, public involvement featured a Selectmen's open public meeting on December 15, 2014 with comments reflecting a wide range of views. Participants expressed interest in recreation, particularly soccer fields, and in farming and community gardens, and some interest in renewable energy, along with concerns about wetlands and the impacts of potential uses on the surrounding neighborhoods.

There continues to be local interest in continued farming in some form. The community garden is a successful, expanding operation and one farmer from another town is interested in leasing land to grow needed hay and cow corn. This requires a close look at the soils, wetlands limitations, the type of grass growing naturally, and the effects of mowing on grassland-dependent species.

10. Refine the draft plan's proposed multi-purpose trails in cooperation with the Park and Recreation Commission and Conservation Commission.
11. Study the feasibility of photovoltaic electric generation; explore possible sites such as the 2.8 acres of open uplands immediately east of Bellow's Circle (shown on Image 6) and the southernmost 2.2 acres of hay fields; consider the trade-off between hay growing and electric generation, and reserve the needed land.
12. Explore the need for a base for environmental education programs and encourage SAGE to continue presenting such programs; doing so in a tent if needed during bad weather.
13. Consider putting recreation land and any remaining agricultural land under a conservation restriction (CR).
14. Add way-finding signage as needed to locate the farm.

These recommendations are largely compatible with one another except for the major question of how much land (if any) to commit to possible short-term fields versus long-term uses.

In the years since the town purchased the land, there have been a number of proposals of how to effectively reuse it. These proposals have ranged from unimproved open space, agricultural uses, sports fields, and possible locations for a Middle School and a Senior Center. Since the Senior Center has been established at a former church and the new Middle School will be built next to the new High School, the Board of Selectmen and the Town Manager have asked the Old Colony Planning Council to examine the farm's potential for other uses, primarily outdoor recreation, agriculture, and renewable energy.

This report provides the Town of Abington with a comprehensive analysis of the background and history of the Griffin's Dairy Property, previous planning and study efforts, currently expressed needs and preferences, public participation and input into the planning process, an extensive analysis of the existing environmental conditions of the land, and recommendations on the best possible multi-purpose uses for the land.

The Plan concludes with specific recommendations to implement multi-purpose utilization of the land for the Town. The recommendations include active and organized recreation (playing fields), agricultural use, renewable energy use, passive recreation use, and nature education/wildlife habitat use.

Old Colony Planning Council appreciates the support and cooperation of the Board of Selectmen and the Town Manager as well as the following town bodies: the Conservation Commission, Assessors' Office, Park and Recreation Commission, Planning Board, Park and Recreation Department, and School Department.

B. Goals and Objectives

Given the above concerns, this Plan's goals and objectives are as follows:

Goals

- To understand the needs of potential users of the site.
- To develop a balanced program reflecting and reconciling current interests in the site.

Objectives

- Determine the extent of wetlands and related constraints on proposed uses.
- Identify areas which are unsuitable for agriculture or recreation, but compatible with solar arrays and/or wind turbines.
- Identify the extent and approximate costs of drainage or other work required to accommodate active sports fields during active seasons.
- Determine space requirements to minimize hazardous conflicts between athletic activities (e.g. foul balls or misguided lacrosse balls endangering other games or spectators.)
- Creation of a site plan reflecting the above findings.

To meet the goals and objectives listed above, this plan proposes to review the reported needs and their space and terrain requirements, and to develop a program and site plan meeting the goals and objectives. The plan will consider issues regarding wetlands, traffic, ADA accessibility, parking, and relations to present uses, such as the Community Garden and the Farmers Market.

C. History and Background of the Site

The property was originally purchased by the Griffin family in 1925. The Griffin family ran a dairy farm on the property from that time until 1968-69. Since 1969, the farm reportedly was a vertical operation growing its own hay, grazing the cows on the site, (though buying its cow corn for feed), processing and bottling milk and delivering it to customers. The town bought it under Chapter 61A in 1998 for \$750,000, but the Griffin family continued mowing it primarily for construction hay until 2002. After the sale of the property to the Town of Abington, it was used as a distribution center for HP Hood's commercial dairy and by local milkmen with trucks parked in the barn. This ended when HP Hood vacated its portion of the site in August 2010 around the same time as the other businesses on site moved on.

When the Town purchased the 64 acre property at its May 4, 1998 Town Meeting, the Town voted to exercise its rights of first refusal under the Farmland Assessment Act (Chapter 61A). The town meeting warrant article stated that the property was being bought for "public purposes including open space and recreation." The purchase of the property was reportedly in response to a proposed sale to the McSharry Brothers construction company for a condominium project. The open-ended language used in the warrant article was to keep the land available for various purposes such as the then-proposed new Middle School or Senior Center. Subsequent studies, described below, recommended the site for a new Middle School or Senior Center, as well as for recreational and agricultural uses.

study area. Thus, it would be appropriate for the former beds to be included in any overall plan for the farm. In addition, the Bellows Circle subdivision protrudes into the southwestern portion of the farm from Plymouth Street. This development is incomplete because of the presence of wetlands and its location in a flood zone.

Though it is on the eastern edge of Abington, the site is relatively central to the more developed portion of the town, east of Bedford Street. It is also a short distance from the major school/recreation complex along Washington Street about 2,400 feet to the east. This features the Frolio Middle School, the Beaver Brook Elementary School (formerly the Early Childhood Learning Center) and related ballfields. There are three softball fields and a playground at the Beaver Brook School and two softball fields, two baseball fields, one football/soccer field with track and field facilities, three tennis courts, and one basketball court at the Frolio School.

The development potential of the site is constrained due to a large portion of the property being within wetlands. The most buildable land is along the western and northern edges of the site, with major wooded wetlands along the eastern edge. The deteriorated farm house, barn and cooler building have been recently demolished and the silos were removed some time ago.

Town sewer and water service are available along Plymouth Street as is electric service by National Grid (or alternative supplier chosen by the customer) and gas service, also by National Grid. The site is zoned R-30 for low density housing on 30,000 square-foot lots, except for a fringe of the R-20 "high density" multi-family district with 20,000 square foot lots just south of Pattison Street.

E. Community Demographics

From the period of 2000 to 2010, Abington was one the fastest growing communities in the Old Colony region, as its population increased 9.45% (from 14,605 in 2000 to 15,985 in 2010) during this time. The Old Colony Planning Council projects that Abington will grow another 10.91% from 2010 to 2020, and see its population climb to approximately 17,730.

Age group patterns have been changing as well. Town-wide, the population aged 65+ has decreased from 12.2% in 2000 to 11.9% in 2010. While it is a slight decrease, it is opposite of the trend in both the County and the Commonwealth, whose populations aged 65+ increased from 2000 to 2010, with the County's 65+ population increasing from 11.8% to 13.9% and the Commonwealth's 65+ population increasing from 13.5% to 13.8%. In the long run, the older population is expected to grow with the aging of the Baby Boomers, but facilities for all ages will continue to be needed and many open spaces and recreation facilities such as community gardens serve diverse age groups.

Income data reveals a moderate-income community, but with rising income levels, possibly reflecting new residents who commute via restored commuter rail service to commonly higher-paying jobs in the Boston area. Median family incomes have exceeded state and county levels. In 2000, Abington's median family income was \$57,100 versus \$55,615 for Plymouth County and \$50,502 for the state. According to the 2009-2013 American

that “If the Town determines that new middle school is needed and funds can be obtained to build it, the Griffin’s Dairy site is an acceptable location to build a new Middle School.” Though highly qualified, this was a definite recommendation of a new middle school re-use of site.

Despite these past recommendations, the School Committee and School Department subsequently decided against a freestanding middle school and chose to build a new middle school abutting a new high school at the present High School site. This may create a short-term need for replacement playing fields as the new school will be located over the present fields and only two new (turf) fields will be built before the two schools are completed.

As discussed in the 2014 Abington Open Space and Recreation Plan Update, the town’s open space and recreation inventory is substantial compared with the few available applicable standards formerly used by the Massachusetts’ “Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan” (SCORP) planning program. See Table 1 below.

Table 1: Abington Recreation Facility Needs by Past SCORP Standards

Facility Type	Supply	Standard	Calculated Need
Playfields	44 Acres	3 Acres per 1,000 Persons	4 Additional Acres
Playgrounds	7.5 Acres	1 Acre per 250 Persons Aged 5-11 Years	1.8 Surplus Acres
Tot Lots	3.5 Acres	.5 Acres per 1,000 Persons	4.5 Additional Acres
Tennis Courts	11 Courts	1 Court per 2,000 Persons	3 Surplus Courts

B. Citizen Involvement/Public Participation

Public involvement to date consists of participation in the previous planning processes, described above, involvement with the Griffin’s Dairy Committee established by the 1998 Town Meeting, described below, later participation in the Selectmen’s December 2014 Open Meeting described below, in subsequent volunteer efforts such as the “Save Griffin’s Farm” group, and other activities of interested citizens.

The Board of Selectmen decided that with several years of studies coming to similar conclusions – i.e., use for recreation and/or agriculture and related concerns - there was no need for more basic input. The town’s diverse concerns had been reflected in the lengthy December 15, 2014 Selectmen’s public meeting reviewed below. Instead the process would include a session to discuss and review these findings/recommendations and the probable next steps.

“Save Griffin’s Dairy Committee.” Since the Middle School and Senior Center proposals are moot, organized citizen interest has taken the form of this volunteer committee. It is working to review and re-analyze the site’s wetlands delineation as it affects the feasibility of various reuse proposals compared to agricultural use. The committee arranged for a review of previous wetlands delineations by the firm of Sabatia Inc. in February of 2007. This review found that the wetland resource areas “as depicted on a (2005) Plan of Record (POR) under-represent the extent of wetlands, particularly the bordering vegetated wetland (31 CMR 10.55).” It noted that the May 1 and 3, 2001 PORs showed more wetland in those

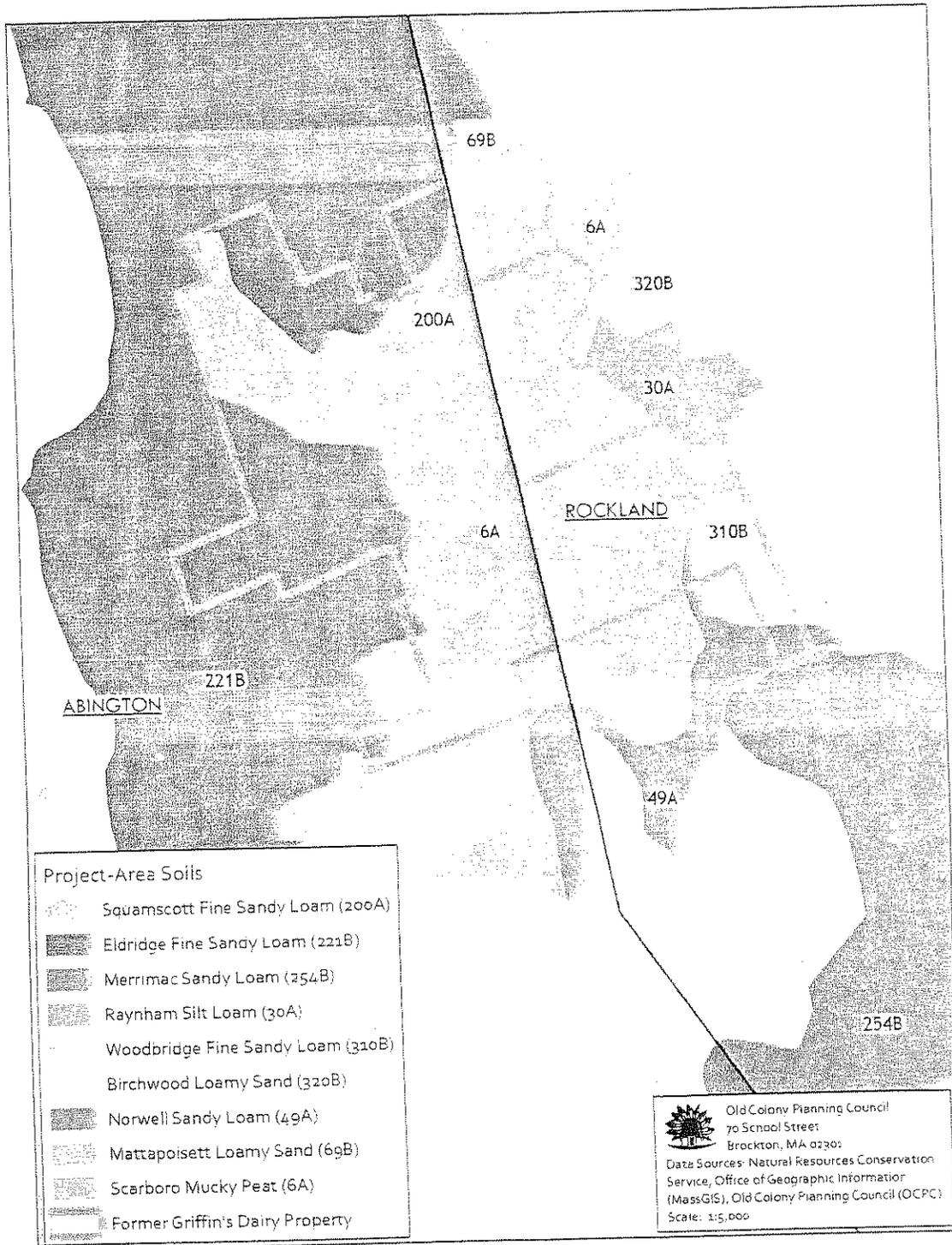
property and his conviction that any needed playing fields could be located elsewhere such as at the School Department land off Brockton Avenue, or the former sewer beds abutting the farm to the north, or could be partially replaced by a recently opened soccer field in Southfield at the former South Weymouth Naval Air Station.

It should be noted that the discussion of possible public uses is now moot since both the proposed Senior Center and the Middle School are sited elsewhere or being built elsewhere, and the only tentatively proposed uses have been grazing or growing corn or hay for a dairy based in Hingham. Thus, the relevant questions are the appropriate size and location of any agricultural uses such as hay growing, grazing or expanded community gardens; of recreational uses such as trails, soccer fields, or multi-purpose fields; or of passive open space for relaxation, habitat preservation, and nature study. See the following Site Analysis.

Figure 3: Floodplains Map



Figure 4: Soils Map



7. Wetlands

Consultants have disagreed slightly on the extent and configuration of the site's wetlands. The Abington Conservation Commission has commissioned its own Order of Resource Area Delineation, (ORAD) to replace that most recently done in 2012.

In February, 2007 the firm of Sabatia Inc. wrote to James Dombrowski of the Save Griffin's Farm Committee reporting that the wetlands shown on an November 11, 2005 Plan of Reference (POR) "under-represent the extent of wetlands, particularly the bordering vegetated wetlands", and noted that an earlier 2001 POR had shown more wetlands in three study areas. The consultant, Robert M. Gray, had observed many wetlands plants despite snow cover and recommended a second survey in the spring. As noted above, he also observed that the 1969 Plymouth County Soil Survey defined the central part of the farm as having Au Gres soil which is often times associated with wetlands conditions. In addition, he observed that any determination by the EPA or the Corps of Engineers for Section 404 permitting under the Clean Water Act would not be bound by the Commission's ORAD, though the ORAD would guide local enforcement under the Wetlands Protection Act. In all, most of the fields have the character of wet meadows despite the range in soil types.

Another consultant, Wetlands Strategies Inc., studied potential Middle School sites for the School Department including an extensive area between Plymouth Street and the town line. It found Griffin's Farm to be more suitable than the Pohorecky farm off Chestnut Street or the Hendrikson Dairy off Hancock Street. This was partly because the Griffin's land had suitable areas for any wetlands replication required by filling for the school or playing fields. The consultant, Lenore White, concluded that the wetlands in the Commission's Order were generally consistent with the DEP's wetlands website and with her site observations. She noted that an ORAD was good for three years from issuance. Thus the present one done in 2012 (as seen in Figure 7) may need updating.

The present ORAD includes swaths along the natural and man-made streams north of Bellow's Circle and all the land east and south of Bellow's Circle and east of Charles Street extended. Thus it includes the heavily ditched open land east of Bellow's Circle. In addition, it includes a small area west of the southern end of Charles Street and at the town property line just south of Pattison Street. It excludes most of the Eldridge fine sandy loam (221B) noted as having some development potential and some of the adjacent open Squamscott land (200A), except for that along the above noted natural and man-made streams west of Charles Street.

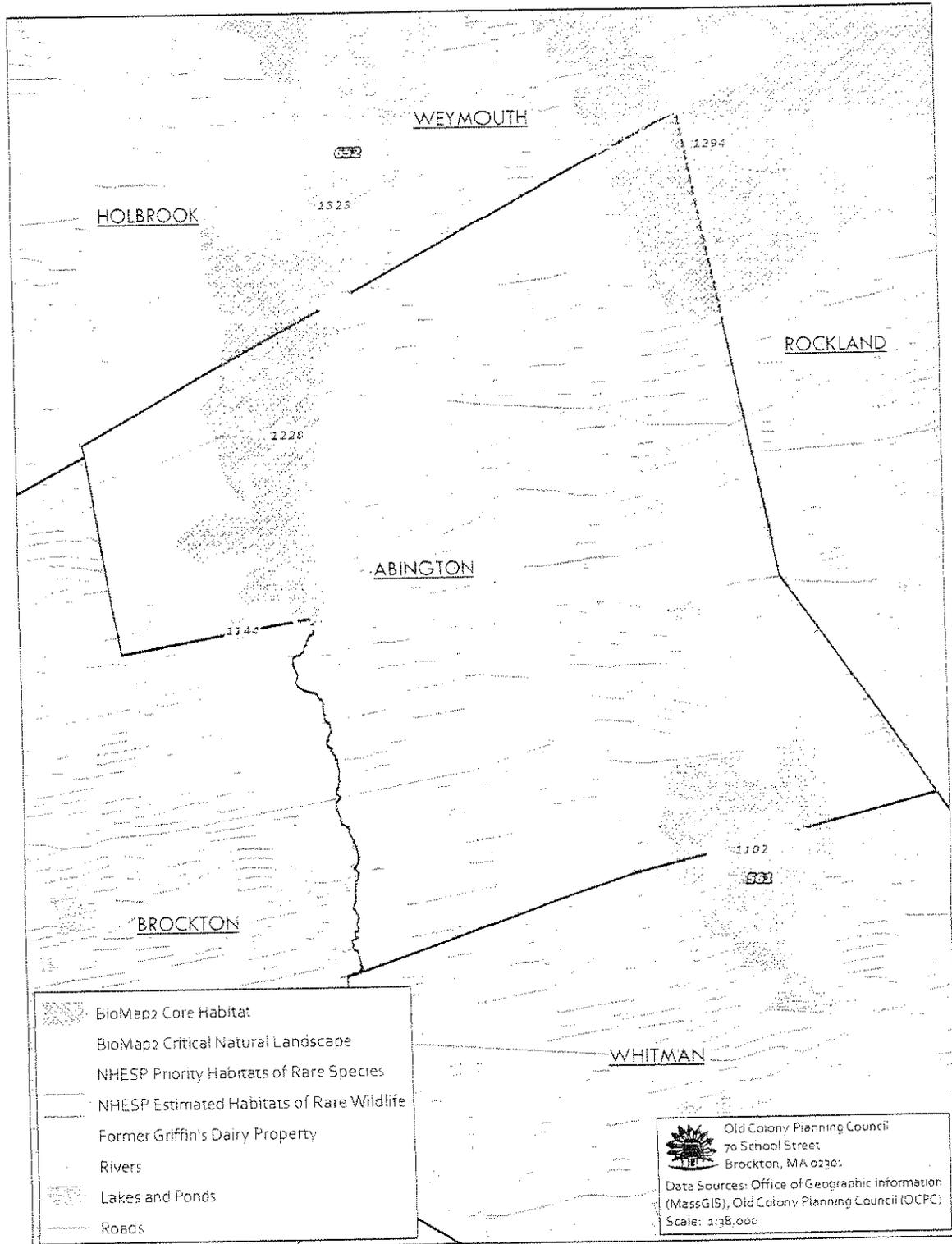
The wetlands layer provided by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (as seen in Figure 8) shows slightly less extensive wetlands, e.g., omitting streams in the open northwest portion of the farm, but shows the relationship of the farm's wetlands to those on surrounding properties.

It should also be noted that there is one reported potential vernal pool that has not been evaluated, and ongoing town mowing may have removed any characteristic species. It is located to the rear of the former barn and house and on the town line just north of an island of woodland. Reduced mowing may allow continued function of the vernal pool.

Figure 8: MassDEP Wetlands



Figure 9: Habitat & Rare Wildlife Map



Location	Playgrounds	Tot Lots	Basketball Courts	Misc. Ball Fields	Track Facilities	Tennis Courts	Multi- Purpose Fields	Swimming Facilities
S. Valley Golf								
Police Station			2					
Reilly Field					1		1	
Green Street	1	1	2	1				
Arnold Park/Wales Street	1	1	1	1				
Island Grove Park	1	1						1
Laidler Field	1	1					1	
Plymouth Street Recreation Area							2+	
Total	8	7	8+	9+	2	3	11+	1

3. Cultural Resources - Structures

As noted above under Visual Characteristics-Viewshed, the iconic view of the barn, farmhouse and outbuildings from Plymouth Street is gone with the town's recent demolition of those buildings. The house and barn were part of the agricultural landscape as were the earlier silos.

More broadly, the fading presence of agriculture in the town with the residential development of the western "country" part of Abington, the inactivity at the former Pohorecky Farm and Hendrikson's Dairy, and the small scale of the Sun Rae Lea farm have diminished the town's farming culture and economy. The expanded community gardens and farmers' market (now being relocated to the Senior Center) will give more people the chance to experience growing food and the opportunity to sell surplus and to buy from other producers.

4. Zoning

As noted earlier, the site is zoned R-30 for low density housing with 30,000 square-foot lots, except for a fringe of the R-20 "high density" multi-family district with 20,000 square foot lots just south of Pattison Street. The R-30 zoning allows single-family detached houses on 30,000 square foot lots and excludes two-family or attached dwellings along with apartments and multi-unit condominium. It can allow various health, social service, and recreation facilities by special permit, assuming suitable site conditions.

The R-20 District allows single family-detached houses on 20,000 square foot lots as-of-right and by special permit it can allow two-family houses, single-family attached houses (townhouses) in groups of four units, apartments, and multi-unit condominium, but only on 40,000 square foot lots. Though called "high density," the District's highest allowable

School, limited low and moderate density residential development like that north of Pattison Street, or preservation as Open Space for passive recreation or wildlife habitat.

Threats-The threats to such opportunities are largely constraints imposed by wetlands and other site conditions.

D. Potential Reuse Opportunities

Possible reuse opportunities for the site are discussed below. They include Active Organized Recreation, Agriculture, Renewable Energy, Open Space/Passive Recreation/Wildlife Habitat, and Education.

1. Active Organized Recreation

The forthcoming temporary loss of four to five playing fields due to the construction of the new High School and Middle School and the present reported shortage of playing fields and practice fields has led to interest in developing several playing fields or practice fields on suitable parts of the farm. The following explores these needs and possible responses.

Recreation Uses and Needs

There was a golf education program reportedly operated at the farm for some time, but is now gone leaving other possibilities. Recreation activities in coordination with the golf course on the adjacent land in Rockland have been suggested, but the extensive intervening wooded wetlands apparently preclude joint development efforts. However, by some standards, there are calculable gaps in local recreation facilities as discussed below and four to five multi-use fields will be needed to at least temporarily replace those that will be lost during construction of the new high school and middle school.

This suggests that given the lack of a market interest in farming over the whole site (beyond the prospective Hornstra lease of most of the open land for hay production) a partial re-use should be one to three multi-purpose playing fields or practice fields.

Present needs for recreation facilities within Abington

As stated previously, the 2014 Abington Open Space and Recreation Plan analyzed the town's overall recreation facility needs by past Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) standards which led to the following four major goals:

- Increasing the availability of all types of trails for recreation.
- Increasing the availability of water based recreation.
- Investing in recreation and conservation areas that are close to home for short visits.
- Investing in racially, economically and age diverse neighborhoods given the projected increase in participation in outdoor recreation.

Facilities created at the Farm could advance all of these goals, though water based recreation would be limited to activities along the site's natural and man-made streams and the bordering French Stream.

Size Requirements

If variable field sizes are acceptable for soccer and lacrosse, the following standards indicate that official football fields are large enough to encompass soccer and lacrosse fields when needed. According to the Athletic Director Peter Serino, the sizes used in Abington are as follows:

Table 4: Abington Public Schools Dimensional Requirements for Sports Fields

Sport	Length	Width	Comments
Football	120 Yards (Includes 10 yards at each end)	160 Feet (55.3 Yards) plus 10-15 feet of runoff space at each side=180-190 feet or 60-63 yards.	Leave 10 Feet between fields.
Soccer	100-120 Yards (For H.S.)	55-80 Yards (Slightly exceeds football width, but they prefer 60-65 yards for H.S.)	They prefer smaller sizes for H.S. with 10 feet between fields.
Boys Lacrosse	110 Yards	50-80 Yards	They prefer a 60-65 yard width for H.S., so it can fit within a football field.
Girls Lacrosse	110 Yards	50-80 Yards	

In all, the multi-use fields are recommended to be 120 yards long by 60 yards wide. These could fit on either side of the stream draining the northernmost part of the farm by using a combination of the hydric Squamscott soils and the non-hydric Eldridge soils. Making maximum use of the Eldridge soils along Pattison Street might require altering or moving the stream. Among potential future sports, field hockey could require bigger fields but there are no present plans for such a program.

Parking

The Assistant Superintendent of Schools notes that some off-street parking will be needed even for practice fields to avoid conflicts with neighbors. The number required by section 175-52 of the Abington Zoning By-Law is one space for each three seats in stadiums and other places of public assembly. However, the Schools' Athletic Director, Mr. Peter Serino, reports that none of the fields to be lost to the new school construction have bleachers and no fields built at Griffin's Dairy would need any. (This is in contrast to the Memorial Field at the Frolio School and the Reilly Field which have bleachers.) Parents would mostly drop off and pick kids at the edge the field for practice, but rarely stay to watch. Hence, we propose minimal parking.

If required, parking could be north of the western field with access via a special project crossing the adjacent stream, or south of that field where the house and barn were.

If the major games continue to be played at the Frolio School field, games at the other fields might draw one hundred or so spectators. Assuming that there are no formal bleachers with seats that can be counted, a possible 100 spectators would require 34 spaces. At 200 square feet (10' by 20') this would take 6,800 square feet plus a comparable amount for aisles, or

Use of the woodlands behind the Charles Street houses for a field would be impractical as it would clear woods and destroy that neighborhood's setting.

The open, sandy northern portion containing the apparent covered sewer beds could accommodate a 60 yard by 120 yard field bracketing the town line with the greater part in Rockland. A closer look by a landscape architect or civil engineer is needed to determine the feasibility of any of these sites.

Since this report is concerned with identifying and recommending possible uses of the Farm, not with meeting play field needs as such, detailed exploration of alternative field sites is the responsibility of the respective athletic organizations.

Conclusion: The Farm offers opportunities to meet a combination of athletic, agricultural, open space/recreation, renewable energy and habitat protection needs in one mixed-use development.

Site Design

The Site Design/Proposed Land Uses to be shown to the public will consist of fitting one or two fields of the maximum 120 yard by 60 yard dimensions to accommodate the intended sports, particularly in the least constrained areas south of Pattison Street and just east of Plymouth Street along with any needed parking. The plan shows the location of the field, but not the future parcel lines separating the playing fields from the adjacent hay fields. These would be established during the design phase.

The layout would also accommodate an expanded community garden contiguous to the present one, along with open space/habitat use of the remaining wetlands with connecting walking/riding trails and a possible photovoltaic array on upland east and north east of Bellow's Circle, and the potential lease of any remaining open upland for growing hay.

2. Agriculture

There is expressed citizen interest in continued farming and continuation of the present partially open, partially wooded savanna landscape, particularly by neighbors. However, no one apparently sought to buy and continue the farm when it was sold. At the most, HP Hood and independent local milkmen temporarily rented space in the barn and cooler for milk distribution. The town reportedly mows the fields annually in hope of improving the quality of the hay by cutting back various intrusive plants, but with little effect.

One potential opportunity is use of much of the upland for growing hay by a local dairy farmer such as John Hornstra of Hingham's Hornstra Farms. While Mr. Hornstra needs both hay and cow corn, he and other informed observers note that most of the farm is only good for growing hay with cow corn possible only on a small area near the community gardens. Mr. Hornstra would be willing to negotiate with the town for renting some land by the acre as he is now doing with the Hingham Conservation Commission.

One suggestion has been to develop temporary playing fields until the new high school/middle school project is done and the new fields are finished. However, informed

possibly the power line right of way, and give access to surrounding features - Pattison Street, the Rockland Golf Course, Plymouth Street, the Community Gardens, and possibly Central Street to the south.

A more ambitious approach would be to preserve the entire farm as open space and habitat except for portions needed for specific public purposes like the previously proposed Senior Center and Middle School. This would preserve wooded wetlands as well as a large area of increasingly rare grasslands habitat which is very important for some bird species and other small creatures.

Such a use is not required by the Town Meeting article providing for the acquisition, but it is possible. In such a case, the town would do well to put the affected property under a Conservation Restriction (CR) or to turn the property or portions of it over to the Conservation Commission or possibly to the Park and Recreation Commission to manage any developed facilities such as camp sites and the trails.

5. Education - An Environmental Center for Our Schools (ECOS)

Another past proposal was an environmental education center like the Environmental Center for Our School (ECOS) program at the Springfield schools. This would take advantage of the range of vegetation and wildlife communities in fields, woods and ponds on or near the site. While there is no pond on the farm, there are others nearby such as that north of Hamlin Lane on Mount Vernon Cemetery land between the Frolio School and the Cemetery.

This program would have been housed in either the barn or the house. Because these structures have been removed, it would require new space or housing at a nearby school such as the Beaver Brook Elementary School. It could require preserving the site's diversity thereby possibly constraining uses or possible use of the fields or ditched area for photovoltaic arrays. However, the program could also use comparable ecological communities elsewhere in town or at Ames Nowell State Park.

With a less formal approach, Save Abington's Green Environment (SAGE) would presumably continue their present series of agricultural and environmental programs at the Community Garden with a large tent for weather protection.

A. Potential Uses

Active Organized Recreation

It is assumed that the desired improvements are one to two multi-purpose practice or playing fields in addition to those at the new high school. Only one to two fields are proposed unless the alternative sites (off Brockton Avenue, the former sewer beds, or others) prove to be unworkable or there is a major delay in providing the planned two artificial turf fields by 2016. The new playing fields would be located where the soils are most suitable (the least hydric) and where no nearby wetlands can be affected. They would have to meet Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards for access to the site, seats, and any sanitary facilities. The recommended sites are just south of Pattison Street and on the western most edge of the farm next to woods and houses fronting on Plymouth Street. A potential third site just west of Charles Street is not recommended because of probable impacts on the abutting neighborhood. At 60 yards by 120 yards the playfields take about 1.49 acres plus buffer space around the edges for an estimated 2 acres/field.

Agriculture

Agriculture would use approximately 14 acres of the remaining uplands for hay growing under a lease with a farmer after resolving conflicts between the ORAD and DEP Wetlands maps. This is without the reportedly less suitable ditched open wetlands mapped east of Bellow's Circle.

Beyond this, the highest priority would be expansion of the present 19,968 square-foot (.46 acre) community garden by the present sponsor, S.A.G.E. Expanding the 192' side by 50' would add 9,600 square feet while expanding the 104' side by 50' would add another 5,200 square feet for a possible total addition of 14,800 square feet. Larger scale agriculture will require closer examination of the soils, but reports that the Griffin family grew hay, but not corn, suggests that much of the remaining open land could remain as managed hay fields.

The present site plan leaving the 2.8 acres of open upland just east of Bellow's Circle for potential solar photovoltaics when five acres are needed for the array and then developing playing fields on sites one and two, requires 2.2 more acres. These could come from either of adjacent open wetlands to the east or from potential hay fields to the north. If the wetlands are not usable, taking the 2.2 acres from the potential hay fields would leave approximately 11.8 acres for hay growing. This assumes that the ditched open wetlands east of Bellow's Circle are not potentially productive hay fields.

In this regard the objectives of the current Abington Open Space and Recreation Plan include completing "reuse planning for the Griffin's Dairy land in conjunction with the 6.3-acre former sewer beds (to) the north, transferring any portion planned for permanent open space, recreation or agricultural use to the Conservation and/or Recreation Commission" and "leasing portions of new and existing farmland holdings like Griffin's Dairy to new or prospective farmers." The Open Space plan does not contemplate providing five acres for photovoltaics so meeting those needs without using wetlands will reduce the area of potential hay fields as discussed above.

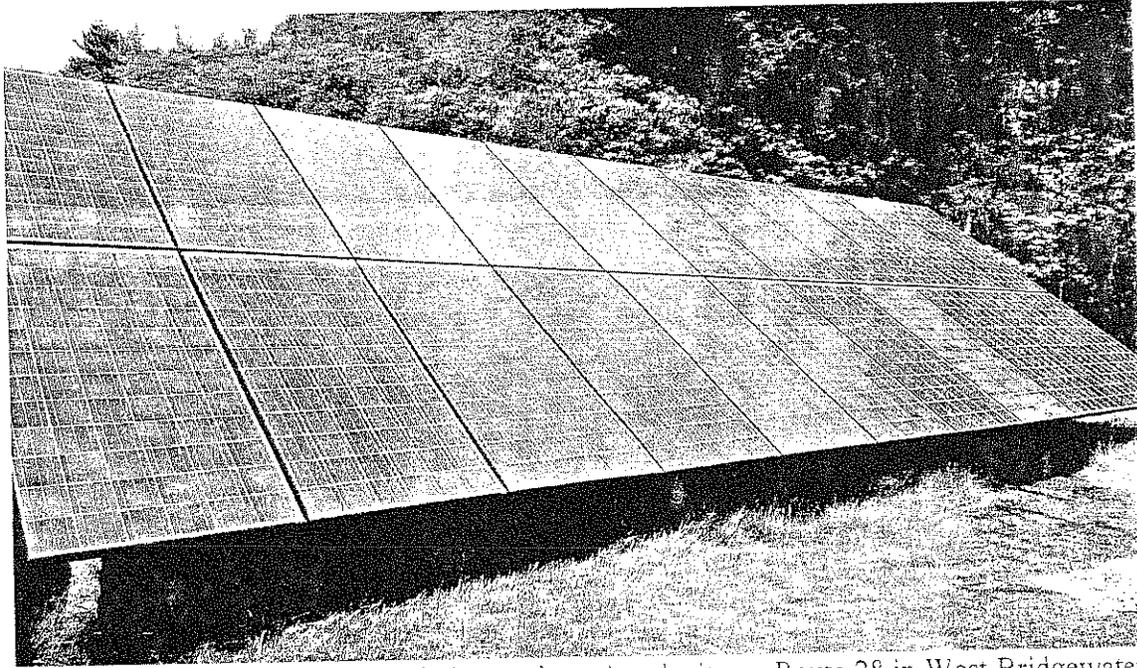


Figure 10: Front view of photovoltaic panels at Asack site on Route 28 in West Bridgewater
(Note the minimal impact/disturbance to the ground)

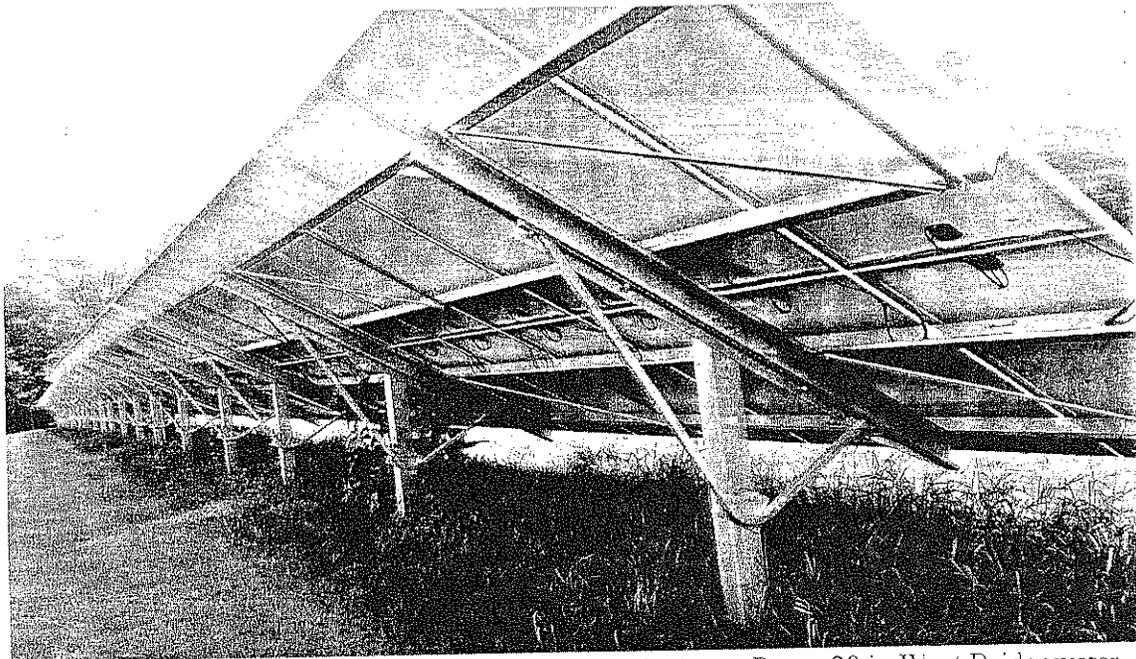


Figure 11: Rear view of photovoltaic panels at Asack site on Route 28 in West Bridgewater
(Note once again the minimal disturbance to the ground surface)

- Any revenue from renting fields to other users.

C. Potential Operating Costs

- Minimal practice field maintenance. The mowed and lined natural practice fields should require no special maintenance beyond mowing, removal of any stones which work their way to the surface from frost action, perhaps filing in any major divots or other damage to the surface plus fertilizing and irrigation.
- Playing field maintenance could require more expensive, complex turf management with mowing, reseeding, watering, weeding and related tasks. As a rough guide, the Park and Recreation Department suggests allowing \$6,000 per year per field. It is not clear if this is for both practice fields and playing fields.

D. Potential Revenues

- Rentals to other schools and private teams.
- The Park and recreation Commission now charges \$25/participant/year fee for rental or fields, hence \$550 for two 11-person football teams. Rates are higher for the relatively few out-of-town teams.
- According to the Abington Schools' Athletic Director, Mr. Peter Serino, this could add up to \$15,000/year, with more possible if more fields were available. Still, the Town's Park and Recreation Director does not see rentals as a major revenue source.
- Other potential revenues from the farm would be from solar arrays. As an example, 8.6 acres in West Bridgewater are rented to a solar power company for \$30,000 a year. Revenue for directly producing and selling power and possibly tax credits would presumably be considerably higher.

E. Design Guidelines

- The dimensional standards are those used by the Abington Public Schools and summarized on Table 4. This study proposes a standard of 120 yards by 60 yards for multi-use fields which can accommodate the three major sports: soccer, lacrosse and football.
- ADA requirements relevant to an open field are simpler than for stadiums or other complex facilities, but the concerns with equal unobstructed access and provisions for wheelchairs and companion seating remain. Key needs from the 2014 requirements are:
 - Accessible seating for both spectators and players and accessible route requirement to court sports.
 - Six wheelchair spaces plus one per .75% of the seats in excess of 5,000.
 - Wheelchair space and companion seating on all levels of a facility on an accessible route (an unlikely need here). Each wheelchair space must have at least one adjacent companion seat.
 - At least one wheelchair space for each team or player seating area – if provided –
 - Accessible routes will be allowed to slope up to 1:48 (2.1%).
 - An accessible route to the boundary of each area of sports activity.

7. Determine if proposed resumed haying is an alteration of wetlands and prepare any needed Notice of Intent.
8. Lease available, suitable land to an interested farmer. Work with SAGE to expand the community gardens including a shelter for tools, supplies and gardeners during bad weather, and sanitary facilities.
9. Incorporate the woods and open land at the former sewer bed land along Charles Street in
10. Long-term plans for the farm, e.g., as a playing field and as a trail to the adjacent bike path.
11. Refine draft plan's proposed multi-purpose trails in cooperation with the Park and Recreation Commission and Conservation Commission.
12. Study the feasibility of photovoltaic electric generation; explore possible sites such as the 2.8 acres of open uplands immediately east of Bellow's Circle, or the southernmost 2.2 acres of hay fields; consider the trade-off between hay growing and electric generation, and reserve the needed land.
13. Explore the need for a base for environmental education programs and encourage SAGE to continue presenting such programs; doing so in a tent if needed during bad weather.
14. Consider putting recreation land and any remaining agricultural land under a conservation restriction (CR).
15. Install way-finding signage as needed to locate the farm.
16. Determine the compatibility of the prospective photovoltaic collectors' support systems with the 100-year flood plain east of Bellow's Circle.

- James Dombrowski: All streams and bordering vegetated wetlands have land subject to flooding.
- James Dombrowski: John Hornstra was interested in bringing young cows but will not due to the labor costs of watching them and the lack of weather shelter with the barn's demolition.
- Town Manager Rick LaFond: Leasing it to John Hornstra would require a procurement process.
- Selectman Michael Franey: Board of Selectmen wants to know of any Hornstra interest. He supports agricultural use while sports fields would take much investment for drainage, bathrooms, parking.
- Ed Gorman: Youth Soccer rep. questions leasing to a farmer when local soccer kids could benefit.
- Sports teams are willing to take on wetlands work (How much work on drainage?).
- Wetlands alterations for sports might require replication, some farming might not.
- Robert Taylor: There are under-utilized fields elsewhere and one in Southfield. He prefers farming at the farm.
- James Dombrowski: There is also school land at Brockton Ave. and High Street with school and recreation potential.
- Robert Taylor- There is traffic and flooding at Pattison Street. The sewer beds could hold a field despite traffic and parking.
- S. Djusberg: Soccer people want six fields.
- L. Reyerson: SAGE, COA, Griffin Dairy Committee - For Expanding organic community gardening, opposes commercially fertilized recreation fields, but not against recreation fields as such.
- C. Walsh: Prefers Pattison Street for its distance from Community gardens.
- Ann Reilly: Wants OCPC to plan fields, rec. and community gardens.
- Sue Brennan: What discussions with Rockland?
- Town Manager Rick LaFond: No discussions with Rockland.
- James Dombrowski: It's all wooded wetlands.
- S. Weaver: Do a loop trail with a bridge over main stream.
- Soccer Supporters: Can BOS overturn a previous BOS vote and block recreation?
- A. Burbine: Any use requires a TM vote, but other public uses are also possible.
- A. Burbine: The land was bought for entire town's use not just for agriculture.
- Bob Manning: Boy Scouts would help and would use land for sleepovers.
- Kate Casey AAD: Students would benefit from added practice fields.
- Jean Griffin: Wants expanding wetlands reversed to 1998 levels.
- Joe Murry: Prefers mixed uses, town should have kept the barn.
- K. Coyle: Purchase was not restricted to agriculture.
- Selectman Michael Franey: Present all findings to OCPC; for mixed uses, agriculture, active and passive recreation, and a plausible renewable energy component.

#6



Town of Abington

500 GLINIEWICZ WAY
ABINGTON, MA 02351

To: Board of Selectmen
From: Town Manager
Date: October 2, 2015
Subj: DPW Legislation

Below is the text from an email from Kristin Grazioso in Senator Keenan's Office that I received this past Monday (September 28). I have asked her for any further updates that may be available prior to the Board of Selectmen's meeting on October 5. As you can see the process is moving forward in the Senate.

"I just spoke with Senate Counsel and they were informed by the State Archivist on Friday that they received the charter. Senate Counsel is now in the process of conducting their third reading review of the bill, so as soon as we get the okay from them we will work to get it on the Senate calendar for engrossment. Ideally we hope to have that all happen this week, but I won't know that for sure until Senate Counsel completes their review. I will keep you updated as I hear back though."



Town of Abington

500 GLINIEWICZ WAY
ABINGTON, MA 02351

TO: BOARD OF SELECTMEN
FROM: TOWN MANAGER
DATE: SEPTEMBER 25, 2015
SUBJ: GENERAL UPDATE

The following is meant to be a general update of activities of the Town Manager and staff. Should any member desire more information regarding any particular matter please contact me personally.

1. Island Grove – a.) In addition to replacing several lights throughout the park be aware that we have finally received confirmation that NGRID will be relocating the light pole that is next to the Memorial Arch as well as changing the light to a floodlight from a streetlight for aesthetic purposes; b.) Dori has been working with Doug Ulwick to purchase and install a brass flagpole near the current Abolitionist Stone as well as securing a light installation through NGRID to allow the flag to be lit 24/7; c.) Dori is also working with Doug to get cost estimates on refurbishing the pavilion. Doug has suggested that we establish a gift account for this purpose. Similar to the Arch and the Stone it may be a project for which we may be able to secure an historical grant. Any thoughts on the idea of a gift account (which could also be helpful in a “local match” if required by a grant) would be welcome; d.) For this flag pole we have obtained through Rep. Stephen Lynch’s efforts the flag that flew over the United States Capital on Abington’s 303rd birthday on June 10, 2015 which will be flown on special occasions.
2. Street Lights – We are in the process of evaluating the viability of purchasing our street lights from NGRID and converting to LED lighting. This is the type of program that pays for itself through amortized savings over a period of time. It is a project that I have been through before and it is my understanding that over half the municipalities in the state have already done this.
3. Animal Control – As of last week (Friday) two part-time Animal Control Officers were hired to service the towns of Abington, Whitman, and Hanson pursuant to our inter-municipal agreement. One is the ACO and the other an assistant ACO. The ACO is Lisa McKay and the Assistant is Joshua Kimball. I expect that both will be officially on-duty this weekend. To date Bob Hammond has continued to respond as necessary for us but he is anxious to retire “for real”.

4. Pohorecky Property – You may recall that at the 2015 Annual Town Meeting the town voted allow the Collector (as tax title custodian) to take in lieu of foreclosure the 60+ acres known as the Pohorecky property on Chestnut Street that was many years in tax arrears. An official with the Department of Conservation and Recreation has contacted me to discuss the possible acquisition of this property by the state. He informed me that his department had been negotiating for many years with the owners to acquire the property but to no avail. I will keep you updated should there seem to be an opportunity to sell this to the state as part of the state park system.

5. Reminder – In late August all of you would have received Metro South Chamber of Commerce Invitation for “Legislative Reception” on October 7 at Stonehill College. I have attached my copy in the event that anyone may have missed the mail and still wishes to register.