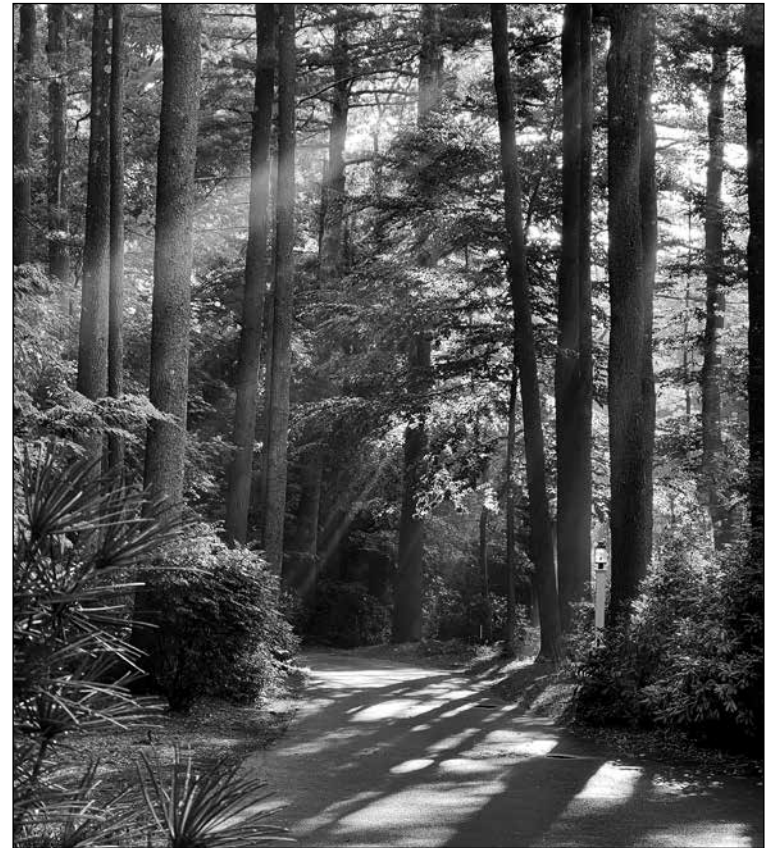


DOVER

Land Use Reports

2023



Report of the **Planning Board**

Carol Lisbon, Chair
Jody Shue, Vice Chair
Scott Freedman
Bill Motley
George Sidgwick
Val Lin, Associate Member

The Planning Board is composed of five elected full members and an elected associate member. Its duties are set forth in various state laws (e.g., Massachusetts General Laws [MGL], Chapters 40A and 41) and the Town of Dover Zoning Bylaws (e.g., Chapter 185, Zoning Bylaws). Town Planner Jasmin Farinacci and part-time Planning Assistant Susan Hall support the work of the Board.

A Planning Board member also serves on the Open Space Committee and members attend the meetings of other town boards and participate in ad-hoc committees relating to planning issues such as the Housing and Hale Task Forces.

Membership

In general, each full member of the Board serves a five-year term. The Associate Member serves a two-year term. Midterm vacancies on the Board are filled by appointment by the remaining Board members and the Selectmen until the next election, at which time the newly elected member serves for the remainder of the term.

There were a few changes to the Planning Board membership in 2023. The year began with Laura Harbottle, Interim Town Planner, spearheading projects within the community until June. Dover is greatly appreciative of Laura's time and experience and her aiding the community while we searched for a full-time Planner. In September, Dover welcomed full-time Town Planner Jasmin Farinacci. At the Annual Town Election held on May 15, 2023, Jody Shue was re-elected to a five-year term.

Board Review and Approvals

In 2023, the Board held 20 public meetings on a wide range of issues summarized as follows:

Subdivision Applications: Pursuant to state law, the Board governs the local subdivision process. A subdivision can be approved only after the Board conducts a public hearing and makes detailed findings. In 2023, there were no Definitive Subdivision or Preliminary Subdivision applications.

Site Plan Review: The Board also conducts site plan review of certain proposed as-of-right uses before the Town issues a building permit per Zoning Bylaw 185-36. The review process regulates permitted uses by imposing conditions, limitations, and safeguards taking into consideration factors such as public safety, and potential impacts on existing structures, open space and Town resources. In 2023, there were 10 Preliminary Site Plan Review applications (five pools, one shed, one water feature, one barn, one garage, and one car club).

Approval Not Required (ANR) Plans: Under the state process, the Board has the authority to endorse property owners' plans to create new lots on existing roads if the resulting lots comply with local zoning dimensional requirements and have adequate access. In 2023, the Board endorsed two ANR applications. Given the interest of nearby property owners in proposed ANRs, the Board continued its practice of giving formal notification to abutters of ANR applications.

Sign Permits: The Board reviews sign applications and issues permits for signs. The number and nature of signs are of particular importance in preserving the Town's rural character. In 2023, there were no sign applications submitted or issued.

Scenic Road Applications: The Board has jurisdiction over the Town's 27 designated Scenic Roads. Pursuant to state and local laws, a person must obtain permission from the Planning Board, after a public hearing, before altering any trees or stone walls within a Scenic Road right-of-way. In 2023, the Board received a few applications for determinations that a hearing was not required but did not receive any applications necessitating a hearing.

Special Permits: The Board is the Special Permit Granting Authority for personal wireless service facilities, off-street recreational parking in a residential district, and new or altered buildings or structures in the Business, Medical-Professional, and Manufacturing Districts of Dover. The Planning Board received no applications in 2023.

Other Business

Housing: Multifamily housing activity has increased significantly this year in Dover and the Board is very involved in addressing the short- and long-term impact of multifamily housing initiatives.

The Board and Town Planner are actively working with the Dover Housing Task Force, established by the Board of Selectmen this year, to develop a comprehensive approach to multifamily housing in Dover. This involves developing both a long-term housing plan and philosophy and a process to ensure that all projects are collaboratively and appropriately vetted and managed.

There were three active multifamily projects in 2023: The Board participated in a site visit and provided input to the Project Eligibility Letter sent to the Massachusetts Housing Finance Agency by the Town

Administrator on a proposed 40B 42-unit rental apartment development on Tisdale Drive. It provided input to the Zoning Board of Appeals on a four-unit scattered-lot 40B comprehensive permit application on Trout Book Road, Chickering Drive, and Edgewater Drive. And it brought together Town departments, boards, and committees to work with Pulte Homes on their proposal to develop multifamily housing on Junction Street.

In addition, the Board is working with a consultant to develop Dover's plan to address the requirements of the MBTA Communities Act. Dover is designated as an "Adjacent Small Town," and as such is required by law to adopt zoning by December 31, 2025, that identifies and establishes a zoning district where a multifamily housing unit is allowed by right at a minimum capacity of 102 units (5% of Dover's 2020 housing stock) with 15 units per acre. It should be noted that the Act does not require that multifamily housing in fact be built, it does not compel Dover to pay for new infrastructure, and it does not supersede Massachusetts wetlands or Title V laws. The Act does allow Dover to develop specific zoning regulations for the district, such as design criteria, setbacks, and dimensional requirements.

Strategic Planning: The Board engaged in several key strategic planning activities to better position the Town to manage growth, protect open space, mitigate climate change, and become more fiscally sustainable. The Planning Board was awarded a grant in the amount of \$12,000 to create a Natural Resource Protection Zoning Bylaw or Tree Preservation Bylaw.

Land Purchases: In 2023 there were no activities associated with land acquisitions.

Zoning Bylaws: The Planning Board is committed to reassessing the Town's Zoning Bylaws with the aim of fostering and regulating development, all the while safeguarding those aspects of Dover that we all appreciate, as well as essential natural resources and elements integral to Dover, as outlined in the Dover Master Plan.

Accessory Dwelling Units: At the May 1, 2023, Annual Town Meeting, the Town of Dover passed an updated Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) Bylaw to encourage healthy development and growth by right. The Planning Board thanks Dover's voters for approving this bylaw which provides increased flexibility for homeowners, allowing for multigenerational housing opportunities, a potential revenue stream to allow residents to age in place, and smaller housing units for current and new residents. ADUs with a maximum of 900 square feet will now be allowed by right in all homes and attached to the main residence with site plan approval by the Planning Board. ADUs proposed in a detached structure, such as a garage or barn, will continue to require a special permit from the Zoning Board of Appeals.

Floodplain: At the Annual Town Meeting a new Floodplain Bylaw was also passed, which incorporates new state and federal requirements. Updated maps will need to be approved at a future Town Meeting when made available by FEMA in 2025.

Village Center Development: The Planning Board is continuing its work on the Village Center Visioning process begun in 2021 to create consensus on future uses and desired architectural character to better position the Town to guide upcoming redevelopment in the village center area. A combination of regulations and zoning changes is being developed for presentation to the community in 2024.

Tree Preservation Committee: The Tree Preservation Committee has had a busy year since its creation on November 21, 2022. The Committee used a state grant to hire and collaborate with The Conway School for over four months to research historical tree preservation efforts in Dover, identify current tree preservation bylaws and bylaw gaps, engage and educate the Dover community about tree preservation aspects, and lastly to create an action list for strengthening the community's tree preservation efforts.

A summary presentation was provided to all land-use departments and committees to encourage future collaborative efforts toward tree preservation. The Committee next prioritized three initiatives: a stormwater management bylaw update, a Tree City USA application submission, and the development of an online tree resource. The Committee then began implementing the initiatives and educating the public. Public awareness efforts kicked off in early September with the Committee's first Dover Days booth.

The Committee's focus on collaboration has been demonstrated through various joint efforts with members of the Planning Board, the Conservation Commission, the Board of Health, the Department of Public Works, the Parks and Recreation Department, and the Board of Selectmen. For example, the Committee worked with the Selectmen to approve the first Dover Arbor Day Proclamation on November 9, 2023. Consequently, the Committee arranged for Dover's first official Arbor Day celebration on November 14, with a short ceremonial tree planting on the Town Green that included contributions by the Cemetery Commission, Parks and Recreation, and the Department of Public Works. These efforts support the application process for a Tree City USA designation, which the Committee completed at the end of 2023.

The Tree Preservation Committee is also working with the Department of Public Works and the Board of Health to update the Stormwater Management Bylaw to include tree preservation as a mechanism to reduce soil erosion and water runoff. The Committee will continue to build partnerships with other Town committees, boards, and departments to accomplish its various goals toward tree preservation education and efforts in Dover.

Other Zoning Initiatives: The Planning Board is working on a bylaw to address ground-based medium- and small-scale solar installations. During 2024, the Planning Board intends to conduct a comprehensive review of the Zoning and Subdivision Bylaws and the Planning Board Rules and Regulations to identify areas needing updates to reflect best practices

and address new land uses and pressures facing Dover. At the request of the Building Inspector and concerned residents, the Planning Board is developing a bylaw to address contractor construction hours and noise, which it will bring to the May 2024 Annual Town Meeting.

Dover Master Plan: The Board continues to pursue the implementation of the specific recommendations listed in Section IX of Dover's Master Plan, last adopted in 2012. Some prior recommendations have been implemented and certain areas are being addressed as described in this report. The Board is prioritizing those plans that are required by state and/or federal law, that are required for eligibility to participate in state funding programs, and/or are a required step to have legal authority to proactively manage growth. The Board hopes to update the Dover Master Plan in 2024–25 through a process involving all of Dover's residents. Prior Master Plans and related documentation can be found on the Planning Board's Web page on the Town of Dover website (www.doverma.gov).

The Board uses its Web pages to post detailed information on its initiatives and work product, as well as provide educational material on zoning and housing issues. We hope that Dover's citizens find this information useful and welcome your input.



*Folk band Backwards Hats performing at Powisset Farm.
Photo courtesy of the Dover Town Report Committee.*

Report of the Zoning Board of Appeals

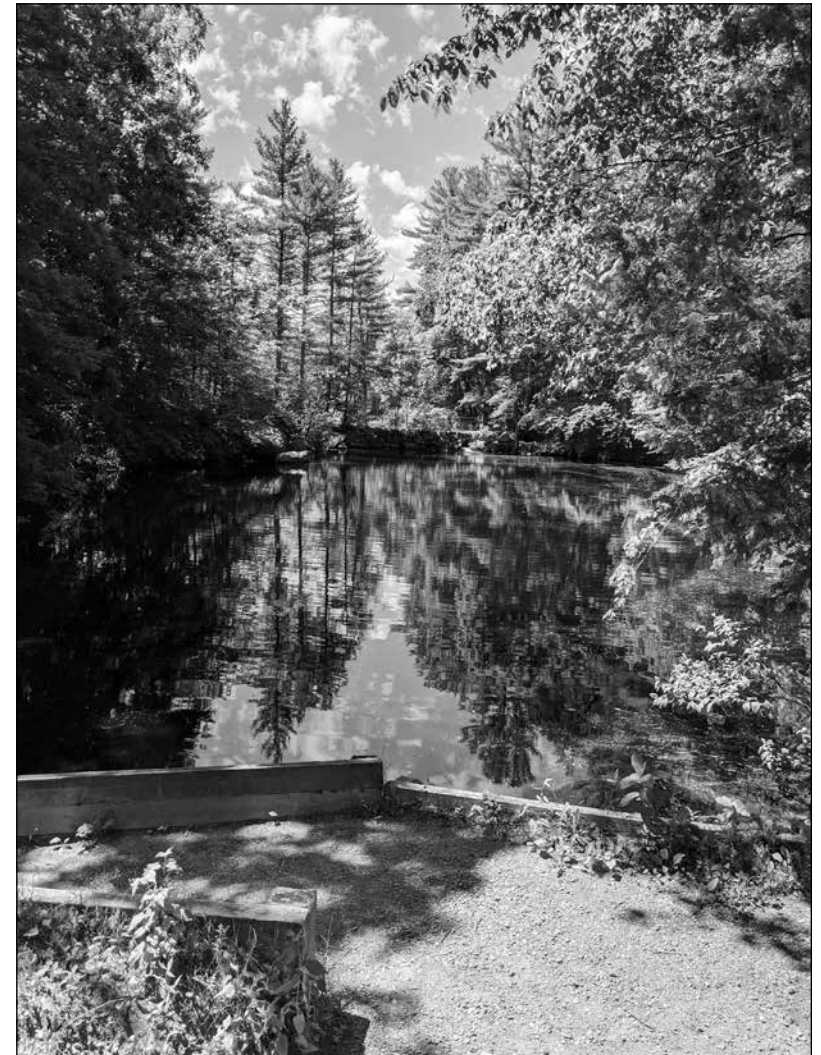
R. Alan Fryer, Chair
LaVerne A. Lovell, Member
Nadir Ahmed, Member
Michael Donovan, Associate Member
Nancy Greene, Associate Member

The Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) has jurisdiction over appeals from rulings of administrative officials of the Town made under the “Zoning Bylaw” or, if specifically required or allowed under the Bylaw, upon direct application under the Zoning Bylaw or Massachusetts General Laws (MGL), Chapter 40A. Depending upon the zoning district, certain uses of property also require prior approval of the ZBA. The ZBA has authority to grant a variance from the terms of the Zoning Bylaw under certain limited circumstances, and it also has jurisdiction to hear cases involving “Special Permit” requests and requests for Comprehensive Permits under MGL, Chapter 40B. Additionally, the Zoning Bylaw requires ZBA review of additional construction on land where existing structures or uses, due to changes in the Zoning Bylaw, have become nonconforming. While such structures or uses may remain in their current state, any alteration, addition, or expansion on the property requires ZBA approval. The ZBA is also responsible for reviewing and acting upon requests for approval of alteration or construction within 150 feet of specified water bodies in Dover, most notably the Charles River. Copies of the Zoning Bylaw and also of the ZBA’s governing rules are available from the Town Clerk.

The ZBA follows procedures designed to hear the concerns of all potentially interested parties and to consider whether the relief requested is appropriate under the Zoning Bylaw. Most applications to the ZBA are required to start at the Building Department, with a review of the proposed activity under the Zoning Bylaw and a written denial of the proposed activity from the Building Inspector, before the ZBA may consider an application. The ZBA acts on an application only after holding a public hearing, a notice of which must first be posted in the Town House, published in a local newspaper, and sent by mail to the applicants and other interested parties, as defined by law, including to the abutters of the property in question. Any interested party, whether or not entitled to receive notice of the hearing, may appear at the hearing and be heard. Evidence on the application continues to be received by the ZBA until the hearing is closed. Once the ZBA reaches a decision on an application, a decision is written and filed with the Town Clerk. Notice of the decision is given to the persons entitled to notice of the hearing, and the ZBA’s

decision becomes final after the legally prescribed appeal period, provided no appeal is taken.

During 2023, the Board received seven applications.



Miss Peabody’s Woods (Noanet Woodlands). Photo by Thomas D. Erb.

Report of the
Highway Department

Kevin McCabe, Director of Public Works
John Robert Tosi Jr., Operations Superintendent
James Gorman, Working Foreman

Maintenance

The Highway Department is responsible for the maintenance and repair of the Town’s roadway and sidewalk infrastructure, including pavement markings, granite and bituminous curbing, street and regulatory signage, stormwater utilities, and traffic islands. This year 12,834 feet of new berm and curbing was installed on Bretton Road, Centre Street, Donnelly Drive, Grand Hill Drive, Greystone Road, Hales Hollow, Normandie Road, Picardy Lane, Pine Street, Pond Street, and Riga Road to effectively control water runoff and erosion. The Department repaired and rebuilt approximately 90 catch basins and manholes town-wide and continues to try to remove silt, sand, and debris from the roadways and catch basins. In 2023, it cleaned out 1,200 catch basins, as required by Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) state and federal programs—such as the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Phase II Stormwater Program—and hauled the material to approved disposal sites. The Department also contracted to line paint more than 400,000 linear feet of street markings. Dover’s crew also installed 205 feet of 12-inch drainage at various Town locations. In addition, the Department of Public Works replaced 1,337 feet of failed guardrail along Springdale Avenue, Centre Street, and Claybrook Road with guardrail that complies with standards defined in the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices.

Tarvia

In summer 2023, the Department conducted a comprehensive road study and subsequently implemented a program that promotes a balanced approach to maintaining the Town’s road network by keeping good roads in good condition with less-expensive treatments. The Town performed 2.97 miles of cold planning and bituminous concrete overlay, as well as completed 9.37 miles of pavement preservation consisting of crack sealing, fog sealing, and micro-surfacing.

Preservation (Road Segment)	Treatment	Length (ft.)
Abbe Road (Normandie Road–Bretton Road)	crack seal	475
Bretton Road (Picardy Lane cul-de-sac)	crack seal	1,530
Normandie Road (Abbe Road–Bretton Road)	crack seal	1,200
Old Farm Road (Entire)	crack seal	3,900
Old Meadow Road (Entire)	crack seal	1,700
Centre Street (Walpole Street–#162)	crack seal	10,342
Pinewood Road (Entire)	crack seal	667
Woodridge Road (Entire)	crack seal	1,825
Taylor Lane (Entire)	crack seal	392
Draper Road (One lane, entire)	crack seal	2,566
Main Street (Entire)	micro-surface	9,000
Pleasant Street (Entire)	micro-surface	2,600
Centre Street (Walpole Street–Medfield Line)	fog seal	13,300
Total		49,497

Mill and Overlay (Road Segment)	Length (ft.)
Hales Hollow (Pond Street–Pine Street)	1,200
Pine Street (Centre Street–Medfield Town Line)	9,000
Pond Street (Riga Road–Hales Hollow)	2,200
Riga Road (Cedar Hill Road–Rocky Brook Road)	1,700
Bretton Road (Walpole Street–Picardy Lane)	550
Normandie Road (Walpole Street–Picardy Lane)	300
Picardy Lane (Bretton Road–Normandie Road)	750
Total	15,700

Solid Waste (Transfer Station)

In 2023, Dover residents threw away 1,127 tons of solid waste that was transported mainly by contracted personnel to Wheelabrator Millbury, Inc. Please refer to the report of the Recycling Committee (page 194) for the tonnage and types of recycled materials collected. We are especially indebted to Wade Hayes and John Gerlach for keeping the Transfer Station open and operating with efficiency throughout the year.

Solid Waste Tonnage to Millbury

2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
1,327	1,247	1,233	1,348	1,311	1,198	1,127

Per-Ton Tipping Fee (\$)

2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
66.00/ 67.17	67.17/ 68.18	68.18/ 68.97	68.97/ 69.82	69.82/ 71.08	71.08/ 75.52	75.52/ 77.78

Cost for Solid Waste Disposal at Wheelabrator (\$)

2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
88,331	84,409	85,881	93,825	92,358	86,742	85,811

Streetlights

The Town owns and maintains 67 overhead streetlights.

State Aid (MGL Chapter 90)

This year the Department leveraged \$1,075,372.66 of Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 90 funding for the town-wide paving program; engineering, construction, and administration services for Claybrook Road construction; final design and permitting of Willow Street and Dedham Street culverts; a 10-wheel roll-off dump truck; and a local grant match to support professional engineering services for the field investigation, data collection, and street culverts indexing (see also “Grants”).

Snow and Ice

Winter 2022–23 brought approximately 33 inches of snow. In addition to the plowable snow, there were approximately 15 occasions that our sanders went out to deal with ice, which was most often caused by water runoff due to melting days and freezing nights. The following log represents our responses to the season:

Date	Snow/Ice	Inches	Equipment Used
2022			
December 11	Snow	2	Plows/Sanders
December 12–23	Ice		Sanders
2023			
January 6–24	Snow/Ice	8	Plows/Sanders/Contractors
February 7–28	Snow/Ice	17	Plows/Sanders/Contractors
March 4–14	Snow/Ice	6	Plows/Sanders/Contractors

Garage Operation

The Town Garage was built in 1998 and continues to serve the Town well. It is occupied by the Highway Department, the Cemetery Department, and the Town Engineer. Space is also provided to the Parks and Recreation Department and the Water Department. I thank Karl Warnick, Superintendent of Building Maintenance, and his staff for keeping the building in excellent condition. In August, the building was flooded during several high-intensity rain events and is currently under renovation to repair the severe damage. All occupants are excited to move back into the Town Garage, which is scheduled for early 2024.

Grants

The Department put in several grant requests for various projects in 2023. The Town received a \$165,000 grant from MassDEP and the Massachusetts Clean Water Trust to develop a comprehensive overview of Dover’s stream crossings, such as bridges and culverts, and to create an inventory of existing drainage systems and outlets, a proactive maintenance program, and a Geographic Information System Map of the Town’s stormwater systems, all of which will result in a robust long-term capital planning document.

The Town also received \$120,000 in Local Economic Development Projects Earmarks funding for water supply system projects. Goals include: developing a hydraulic model to evaluate fire flows, a flushing plan, and identify the demands of future development; performing valve maintenance and a leak detection study; performing a feasibility study for the Caryl Park Pump House; and developing conceptual plans for system improvements for the coming Downtown Dover Revitalization Plan.

Appreciation

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Department members for a very productive year. I would also like to thank all the departments we work closely with—Parks and Recreation, Highland Cemetery, and Transfer Station employees—for the fantastic job they do of keeping Dover roadways and grounds safe and looking beautiful. Thank you to all the boards and committees for their partnership throughout the year. Lastly, a sincere thank-you goes to our Office Administrators Nancy Bates and Janine Kizik for continuing to make the Highway Department run effectively and efficiently.



Channing Pond. Photo by Hadley Reynolds.

Report of the Parks and Recreation Commission

Chris Boland, Chair
Eric Loeffler, Treasurer
Michael Gilio, Secretary
Jennifer Daman, Commissioner
Kathy Weld, Commissioner

Mark Ghiloni, Director, Parks and Recreation
Nicole DiCicco, Assistant Director, Parks and Recreation
Beth McGuire, Programming Assistant (*resigned October 2023*)
Tom Palmer, Groundskeeper/Heavy Equipment Operator
Mark Travers, Groundskeeper/Heavy Equipment Operator

The Parks and Recreation Department and its supervising Commission (collectively, P&R) provide Dover residents of all ages with positive recreational experiences through a variety of high-quality programs, activities, and services under the direction of a professional and hard-working staff that is responsive to the changing needs of the community. We are committed to preserving and protecting the natural resources and parkland while improving and enhancing all opportunities for future generations. Although we continue to retool some of our programs for a post-pandemic world, our recreational and athletic programs continue to benefit from public, private, and volunteer partnerships. Parental involvement and volunteerism are essential to sustaining our programs, as is collaboration with other Town departments. We thank everyone who assisted us throughout the past year.

Multi-Season Program Highlights

Art Club: This very popular program, taught by Assistant Director Nicole DiCicco, has a new home at the Chickering Elementary School art room. Sessions were held through the year with each attracting 8–10 students and often having waiting lists. Nicole continues to teach a weekly art class at the Center for the Development of Children (CDC) at its 30 Springdale Avenue location. This class for more than 15 preschoolers is modified for younger artists.

Baseball/Softball Club, T-Ball and Baseball Lessons: Similar to other Dover-Sherborn youth sports organizations, the Dover-Sherborn Youth Baseball and Softball Club (DSYBS) requested to be independent from Parks and Recreation. In winter 2023, the Commission voted to transfer

the coordination of the DSYBS program to the new Board of Directors. P&R will continue to be involved in allocating playing fields as with all the youth organizations.

Families introduced their younger children to the baseball field throughout the year. Last spring, Coach Pete Sylvester ran two T-Ball and Baseball classes for 11 preschoolers and 15 kindergarteners. The summer session hosted 17 students, and in the fall, Coach Pete taught three well-attended classes for children in PreK–grade 2, for a total of 27 participants.

Elite Tae Kwon Do: In January 2023, Master Jean Theodat informed the Department that he was retiring and could no longer offer the Tae Kwon Do program. We thank Master Jean for over a decade of quality programming and wish him all the best in his retirement!

Erin's School of Dance: Close to 20 dancers ages 3–8 took classes with Erin McCann and performed in an intimate gathering for their families at St. Dunstan's Church. Last fall, dancers returned for a revised program that allowed participants to experience jazz, ballet, and tap.

Go Go Allegro Music Classes: Due to space constraints arising from the construction of the new Caryl Community Center, we were excited to partner with Medfield Parks & Recreation and offer a few Pre-K music classes during fall and winter. More than 15 participants enjoyed the new classes.

Ice Skating Lessons: Our partnership with the Skating Club of Boston/Boston Skating Academy is ongoing, with September through June classes offered through P&R and held exclusively at the Norwood facility. The Micheli Center boasts three rinks, including an Olympic-sized arena. This great local program offers various levels and types of skating and helps participants learn and refine their skills. With more than 100 skaters participating in 2023, we are excited to see our attendance numbers continue to grow.

Maplegate Golf Clinics and Lessons: P&R is happy to be continuing its partnership with Maplegate Golf Course in Bellingham, where we had a handful of participants enrolled in various programs during Maplegate's spring and summer offerings.

Musical Theater: Each season, Aly Pereira directs young musical theater students ages 6–11 in an abbreviated version of a Disney musical. In 2023, 32 talented kids enjoyed learning how to sing, act, and dance in the fall musical *Encanto*. Each class culminates in a fun, fresh performance where every child spends a few moments in the spotlight.

Right Brain Curriculum: Throughout the year, we continued our partnership with Right Brain Curriculum to offer several classes, including LEGO Adventures, Public Speaking, and Expert Architects. More than 40 participants enjoyed the classes, which were held at St. Dunstan's Church.

PROformance Soccer: Miles Alden Dunn continued this popular soccer program at Chickering Fields for the spring and fall outdoor sessions. Thirty children participated in the spring session, 31 played in the fall, and 53 attended in the winter indoor session held at Tenacre Country Day School in Wellesley.

Tennis Lessons and Clinics: Instructed by Peter Cooper, Tennis ran from April through October, with lessons held at the Caryl Park courts. More than 100 children and adults participated in early spring lessons and 13 students during the summer months. In the fall, more than 90 participants took lessons and 26 students moved indoors for age-based clinics held at the Chickering Elementary School gym during the winter months. The Caryl Park courts remained busy throughout the summer as 186 children worked on their tennis skills with Peter during weeklong clinics that were divided into two age groups, six and under, as well as seven and older.

Winter Program and Event Highlights

D-S Middle School Ski Program at Nashoba Valley: The DSMS Ski Program provided students in grades 6–8 with the opportunity to spend their Friday afternoons and nights skiing at Nashoba Valley Ski Area in Westford, MA. For six consecutive Fridays in January and February, more than 50 skiers and snowboarders traveled to the slopes to enjoy a few hours of skiing and camaraderie.



Jammin' with You program. Photo courtesy of the Dover Parks and Recreation Department.

Intramural Basketball: The Intramural Basketball program offers players a great option to develop their skills while playing with friends. One hundred forty-three players in Kindergarten–grade 3 enjoyed the program, the success of which is attributable to the parents who volunteered as coaches. We thank them for their assistance.

Winter Ski and Board Program: This ski and snowboard lesson program for students ages seven to 15 returned to Blue Hills Ski Area in Canton, MA, for five consecutive Wednesdays. Close to a dozen participants took advantage of the opportunity.

Spring Programs and Event Highlights

April Break at Maplegate: A handful of participants improved their golf game at the Maplegate Golf Clinics during April 17–20, 2023.

Eliot Hodgkins Fishing Derby: This annual fishing derby at Channing Pond was held on May 7, 2023, and featured lots of prizes and fun for close to 50 participants. Our volunteers helped make the day a success.

Safety Courses: Juanita Allen Kingsley again offered both Home Alone Safety and Babysitting Safety lessons, which included Red Cross CPR certification, for more than a dozen participants. P&R also partnered with Dover-Sherborn Youth Soccer to offer CPR training to more than 20 coaches. We thank Juanita for helping the coaches receive this training.

Welcome Spring! Egg Hunt and Arts Event: Dover families filled the Town Green on April 8, 2023, for our annual hunt. This popular community event saw kids scramble in search of eggs, gathering them in a matter of minutes while parents snapped some great photos!

Satur-PLAY in May: Thanks to a grant from Dover's Cultural Council, the Department was able to offer a new family program in May featuring two free springtime children's performances held in a fun and relaxed environment. Performers included DJ Mike and Jammin with You!

Summer Program and Event Highlights

Summer Club: We returned to Boston College's Connors Center in Dover for our most popular summer program. Close to 500 elementary-school-aged children attended throughout the six-week program. In addition to the morning session, we saw strong attendance for our Extended Day program, which allowed participants to stay until 3 p.m. A big shout-out goes to the more than 25 staff members and volunteers who helped make it a memorable summer for so many attendees!

Summer Concerts with the Town Library and Knucklebones: On select Tuesday evenings in July and August, P&R partnered with the Town Library to hold free outdoor concerts on the Town Green, where bands entertained families as they enjoyed the summer weather. Kona Ice was in attendance for two of the dates to offer free flavored ice for attendees to cool down! Performers included the Rocky Woods Bluegrass Band, The Tear

Downs, and Eddy's Shoe Band. The Stacey Peasley Band helped families celebrate back-to-school with a well-attended concert on August 24th. Always a hit, Knucklebones offered fun family and kid's games during the concerts. Attendance ranged from 90 to 150 individuals per concert.

Fall Program and Event Highlights

Dover Days Fair (Dover Dash 5K and Fun Run): Dover Days 2023 was met with great anticipation by residents of all ages. It was a warm day with temperatures in the mid-80s and the threat of rain. Nevertheless, hundreds of townspeople came out to visit the 50 vendors that were set up along Dedham Street and the Town Library lawn. P&R programming covered the Town Green and included the return of a giant inflatable obstacle course and slide and free activities offered by Knucklebones. The eighth annual Dover Dash 5K had a great turnout for both the 5K race and the Fun Run.

Flag Football Turkey Bowl: Coach Pete Sylvester and P&R held the third annual Turkey Bowl, which normally takes place the day before Thanksgiving, but which was rescheduled to Monday, November 27 due to rain and poor field conditions. Twenty-five children in Kindergarten–grade 2 faced off on Chickering Field while the grades 3–5 division had 30 participants. Each player received a commemorative T-shirt and looked forward to continuing this new Thanksgiving tradition.

Hikes + Crafts Early Release Days: Nicole DiCicco led more than 15 kids on multiple early release day hikes to various Dover trails in the fall, each of which culminated in a seasonal nature-based craft.

Kids Test Kitchen: We were extremely grateful to partner with Medfield Parks & Recreation on this program and open a few spots for this new class. It was a great opportunity for Dover participants to learn basics about cooking and food preparation.

Pumpkin Decorating Event: It was a fun Saturday afternoon before Halloween when families arrived on the Town Green to decorate pumpkins at this fourth annual event. Thirty-three costumed participants enjoyed creating their masterpieces. DJ Jim played music and led games with the kids, and everyone left with P&R bags filled with treats and prizes. In addition to offering pumpkin decorating, we partnered with Beau Newmarker, a Dover-Sherborn High School student, to offer a Trunk or Treat event. Thanks to a Dover Cultural Council grant, Beau planned and executed a successful event that preceded the pumpkin decorating.

Virtual Halloween Costume Contest: P&R's fourth-annual Costume Contest was held virtually, with families and individuals submitting their photo entries via social media and email. Children and families competed in four age categories: PreK–1, grades 2–4, grades 5–8, and a family/group category.

Facilities and Parks

In addition to providing programming at more than 20 locations in and around Dover, P&R maintains park areas for the enjoyment of Dover residents and nonresidents alike. Caryl Park, Channing Pond, and the Riverside Drive boat landing are popular recreational destinations. Five smaller park parcels in Town are maintained by P&R, as are lands surrounding Chickering Elementary School, the Town Library, the Protective Agencies Building, and the Town House. The Department's vehicles and heavy equipment are located and maintained at the Town Garage.

Parks: We continue to see substantial park, playground, and trail usage throughout the year. Dover community members, especially families, took advantage of Dover's open spaces for exercise and recreation.

Channing Pond: P&R will continue to open the pond for winter skating as often as weather and temperatures allow. Safety and ice conditions are our top priority. Every season we hope that temperatures cooperate and that we have long stretches of skating.

Athletic Fields: P&R is committed to providing all youth athletic teams with safe, high-quality playing surfaces throughout their playing seasons. The Town's athletic fields are used for Department programs and by local youth sports clubs, which include Dover-Sherborn Soccer, Dover-Sherborn Youth Lacrosse, Dover-Sherborn Youth Field Hockey, and Dover-Sherborn Youth Baseball. We maintain three rectangular multipurpose sports fields—two at Chickering Fields and one at Caryl Park. There are also two baseball diamonds—one at Chickering Fields and one at Caryl Park. The Department completed a number of yearly maintenance tasks at the fields, including seeding, aeration, and verticutting. In addition, we completed larger projects to improve play on the Caryl Park diamond infield, and we replaced the fence.



Flag Football Turkey Bowl. Photo courtesy of the Dover Parks and Recreation Department.

P&R Revolving Fund

P&R's Revolving Fund report for Fiscal Year 2023 (ending June 30, 2023) was not available from the Town Accountant at the time of this report's publication. This financial information can be found on the Town of Dover's website (www.doverma.gov) when available.

Appreciation

We thank all members of the Parks and Recreation Department for their dedication in coordinating programs, events, and playing fields. Our sincere thanks go out to all the volunteers and staff members who help the Department. Our staff continues to maintain a high standard for outdoor spaces and quality programming, and our volunteers have been outstanding, as always, by providing children with the opportunity to learn and grow through our programs. The contributions of these individuals are greatly appreciated by the children and their families, and we add our own heartfelt thanks.



LEGO Civics Project. Photo courtesy of the Dover Parks and Recreation Department.

Report of the Conservation Commission

John Sullivan, Chair
Amey Moot, Secretary
Tim Holiner
Jim McLaughlin
Sarah Monaco
Anna Nagy

Janet Bowser, Consultant Agent
Lori Hagerty, Administrative Assistant

The Conservation Commission currently consists of six voting members, one open voting member position and two open associate member positions. The volunteer commissioners are supported by a contracted agent and part-time administrator. The Commission is responsible for safeguarding wetland resources under the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act, the Massachusetts Rivers Protection Act, the Dover Wetlands Protection Bylaw, and the Rules and Regulations for the Dover Wetlands Protection Bylaw. Wetlands are protected by a 100-foot buffer zone and within that, a 70-foot No Structure setback and a 50-foot No Disturb setback. Rivers and streams are protected by a 200-foot riverfront zone and vernal pools are protected by a 100-foot No Disturb setback. Wetlands and buffer zones offer flood control, prevention of storm damage, prevention of pollution, and preservation of groundwater, water supply, and wildlife habitat. Work performed in these and other areas requires a permit from the Conservation Commission and the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection.

Commission members and or/their consultant agent also serve on the Open Space Committee, Hale Partnership Task Force, Housing Task Force and Tree Preservation Committee. The Commission is a member of the Charles River Climate Compact (CRCC), made up of communities in the Charles River Watershed that work on regional natural resource protection, climate adaptation and mitigation strategies, and other projects.

The Commission would like to thank Christy Violin and Amira Quraishi, who both resigned this year, for their volunteer service.

In 2023, the Commission reviewed and approved 18 Notices of Intent, one permit application amendment, eight minor permit modifications, 14 Requests for Determination of Applicability (to decide if a permit is needed), and it revoked one Order of Conditions permit. Additionally, the Commission entertained many informal discussions with homeowners regarding the disposition of their properties that lie in proximity to wetland resources. The Commission also issued 20 Certificates of Compliance (to

close out permitted work), seven Enforcement Orders and five Notices of Violation (work related to clearing and filling in violation of regulations).

In addition to safeguarding wetlands, streams, and rivers, the Commission is responsible for the stewardship of Dover-owned conservation lands totaling more than 574 acres. These include Wylde Woods (200 acres), Snow Hill (almost 100 acres), Valley Farm (66 acres), Spring Meadows (24 acres), and Powisset Farm Woods (33 acres).

The Commission's Land Management Work Group continues to work on land management for its conservation properties, including perimeter field mowing and invasive plant removal to encourage walking paths. It is currently working with the Planning Board to update trail and easement documentation, as well as organizing volunteers to replace wooden stream crossings in Wylde Woods. The Commission would like to thank the Norfolk Hunt Club and the many Dover volunteers who assist in keeping the trails clear and maintained for all to enjoy.

Through its consultant agent, the Commission continues to monitor the South Natick Charles River Dam Advisory Committee's work to evaluate options for dam repair or removal. The agent also evaluated and reported on potential impacts to natural resources and floodplain areas within Dover.

The Commission cordially invites you to attend its meetings, which are open to the public and held twice monthly on Wednesday evenings. Check the Town website at www.doverma.gov for meeting dates, times, and agendas. For questions about wetlands or projects on your property, please contact the Commission's office at 508-785-0032, ext. 233, or email Lhagerty@doverma.gov.



Photo courtesy of the Dover Council on Aging.

Report of the **Tree Warden**

Kevin McCabe

Removals/Pruning

Fifty-seven dead or hazardous trees were removed under contract during 2023. The Public Works Department, contractors, and the Tree Warden responded to storm damage throughout the year.

Eversource continued its energy vegetation management plan to remove hazardous trees and limbs from rights-of-way and private property to improve electric service reliability and ensure the safety of its customers and employees.

Inspection and Disease Problems

In 2023 the Tree Warden conducted more than 67 inspections for the health or safety of Town-owned trees. Dover has reported early signs of beech leaf disease, which is starting to spread in our area. Early detection is important, as heavily infested trees will not survive. Contact a tree specialist if an infestation is suspected or check the Massachusetts Department of Conservation & Recreation (DCR) website for identifying diseases tips.

Plantings

In 2023, a total of 18 replacement trees were planted town-wide. Contact the Tree Warden to request planting locations for 2024.



Photo by John Haggerty.

Report of the Recycling Committee

Jennifer Luethy, Chair
Janit Greenwood
Matthew Hadge
Carol Lisbon
Wendy Muellers
Leesa Mullin
Catherine Piemonte

The Dover Recycling Committee (DRC) serves as the Town of Dover's focal point for all trash and recycling activities. Its mission is to preserve and protect the environment, reduce the Town's total solid waste, and promote the recycling, reuse, and reduction (the "3Rs") of all household refuse. The Committee does this by researching and recommending environmentally sound and cost-effective markets for all recyclable and reusable materials; reducing the generation of Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) and recommending cost-effective collection and environmentally sound disposal methods; and informing citizens of recycling issues, best practices, and legislation.

During 2023, the DRC focused on continuing progress made on the following recycling and reuse efforts:

Waste Disposal and Recycling

Waste disposal and recycling trends remain encouraging. Over the past 16 years, Dover has seen the solid waste trash generated per household decline dramatically, and recyclables as a percentage of total waste has remained in the low 30% range. This steady decline in absolute tonnage of refuse/bulky items, trash, and recyclables can be attributed to several behaviors: more efficient buying and consumption habits, increased use of alternative reuse disposal opportunities, and more households using private haulers. It is also worth noting that donations to the New Life Furniture Bank helped reduce solid waste by an additional 7 tons. Consistent with past years, the total revenue generated for the Town from recyclables has offset the total cost that it must pay to recycle items.

Changes in the recycling industry's business model continue and have impacted Dover's operations as well. In 2024, the DRC and the Highway Department will explore the development of new relationships with other haulers for recyclables to address our volumes, costs, and revenues while focusing on proper end-stream recycling.

The DRC would like to thank the Board of Health for developing Hauler Regulations, which became effective January 1, 2024. By requiring haulers to provide customer usage data, the DRC will gather better data

over time on household use of the Transfer Station for trash and recyclables, which could then be used to tailor recycling programs and initiatives.

For more detailed breakdowns on solid waste and recycled items, as well as comparisons across years, please see the Solid Waste and Recycling Data spreadsheet on page 198.

Transfer Station

Physical improvements made to the Transfer Station in 2023 included upgrades made to the Deposit Shed, and refreshed and expanded traffic markings. Updated signage was also placed around the Transfer Station and clarifying signage was added to three of the textile recycling bins. An AED (automatic external defibrillator) was placed in the office. The mattress and box spring recycling fee was increased to \$45, reflecting the increased recycling cost from our vendor. As part of the continuing assessment of the layout of the Transfer Station, with an eye toward improving ease of use and providing space for additional collection items, a mapping project was completed and a map added to the Transfer Station website.

Eyeglass recycling: In 2023, more than 250 eyeglasses were recycled, thanks to an eyeglass recycling program implemented in partnership with the Sherborn Lions Club. Recycling boxes are available at the Transfer Station's Swap Shop, the Town Library, the Council on Aging, the Town Clerk's office in the Town House, and the Police Station.

Fire extinguishers/hazardous waste: The DRC researched the proper disposal of fire extinguishers. Empty extinguishers should be placed in the Large Metals Bin. Extinguishers that are full or partially full are considered hazardous waste and cannot be disposed of at the Transfer Station. Dover is part of a nine-town hazardous waste consortium that allows its residents to participate in the towns' waste disposal events. A calendar of events and procedural instructions is available at <https://www.doverma.gov/192/Household-Hazardous-Waste>.

Deposit Shed: The Deposit Shed continues to be a success, with an estimated 15 tons (approximately 220,000 beverage containers) recycled and \$9,965 returned to Dover's General Fund.

Bins: Recycling bins, composters, and rain barrels are available for sale at the Transfer Station. A rain barrel was connected to the Swap Shop gutter system to provide water at the Transfer Station and to illustrate how the barrels can be used to collect rainwater.

New Life Furniture Bank: Our formal partnership with New Life Furniture Bank (NLFB) of Walpole, a nonprofit organization that provides gently used furniture and household goods to individuals and families transitioning out of homelessness, is now in its third year. In 2023, it served more than 750 families, and it thanks Dover residents for their generosity. Using grant funds, the 20-foot trailer was replaced with a 40-foot trailer

located on the lower level of the Transfer Station, where items can be dropped off on designated days.

In 2023, the DRC organized 12 special drop-off days, staffed by DRC members and other volunteers, during which Dover residents donated more than 11 truckloads of furniture and household goods, translating to approximately 7 tons or more than 1,100 items that will be put to good use by the many people served by this initiative. We thank the residents who volunteered and everyone who donated desperately needed goods. Drop-off days are now scheduled for the third Saturday of every month. Residents who cannot bring items to the Transfer Station can contact NLFB directly to arrange for pick-up from their residence. The NLFB program, combined with the Swap Shop, has reduced the volume of items discarded in trash and refuse, thus lowering disposal fees paid by the Town.

Swap Shop: The DRC and Transfer Station employees urge Swap Shop users to respect its intent by leaving only truly useable items on its shelves, removing extraneous boxes and bags, and adhering to the policies and procedures posted.

Grants

In October, Dover received a \$7,200 Recycling Dividends Program grant from the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection in recognition of the Town's programs and policies intended to maximize waste reduction, reuse, and recycling. This was the highest grant available to Dover and adds to the remaining grant funds from previous years. The DRC will be working with the Department of Public Works to apply these funds in furtherance of our recycling efforts.

Community Activities

Dover's Special Recycling Weekends held in May and October continue to be very popular, with more than 2 tons of confidential documents shredded, 50 bikes donated to The Bike Connector in Lowell, and 175 tires recycled. The DRC would like to thank the Norfolk County District Attorney's Office and Dover Country Properties for the shredding trucks and the Dover Mobil Station for subsidizing our tire recycling program. Continuing its practice of using these recycling weekends for targeted support of local charities, the DRC collected personal hygiene products for Circle of Hope in Needham in May, and reusable paper, plastic, and cloth bags for A Place To Turn in Natick in October.

Another popular event organized by the DRC is the annual Spring Clean-Up, which was held throughout the month of April and engaged several hundred residents who picked up trash along all of Dover's roads. Once again, 100% of the streets were cleaned up. The DRC thanks all the residents and groups who participated this past year and urges everyone to help keep our streets free of trash year-round by picking up trash around their property and on streets.

The DRC provides Town residents with community education information and announcements through local newspapers, Facebook, Nextdoor.com, the Town of Dover's website, email alerts, the Our Town online monthly newsletter, and with strategically placed electronic signage. In September the DRC participated in Dover Days, during which it promoted the Town Library's program of Library of Things to borrow, provided information and brochures, and sold rain barrels and food scrap bins.

Appreciation

We thank dedicated Town employees Wade Hayes and John Gerlach, who work tirelessly to maintain the Transfer Station and its various recycling areas. We also thank Desmond Brown for his years of service to the DRC and welcome Matthew Hadge and Catherine Piemonte as our newest Committee members.

Finally, the DRC thanks Dover residents for their ongoing efforts to reuse items, reduce trash, and increase recyclables. You can find more information about the Transfer Station's trash and recycling services and programs via the "Trash and Recycling" quick link on the Town of Dover website (www.doverma.gov/184/Transfer-Station).



*Craig S. Hughes Solid Waste Transfer and Recycling Facility.
Photo courtesy of the Dover Town Report Committee.*

Solid Waste and Recycling Data

For the Calendar Year 2023

						Comparison (% Change)		
	2023	2022	2021	2016	2006	1-Year	5-Year	15-Year
Solid Waste (tons)¹								
Refuse/Bulky Items	191	182	231	279	n/a	(21)	(35)	n/a
Trash	936	1,016	1,080	1,642	n/a	(6)	(38)	n/a
Total Solid Waste*	1,127	1,198	1,311	1,921	2,452	(9)	(38)	(51)
Recyclables (tons)								
Mixed Paper (all types) ¹	79	81	106	183	371	(24)	(56)	(78)
Cardboard	164	178	184	135	82	(3)	31	117
Glass	75	71	92	92	88	(23)	(23)	(19)
Single Stream ²	0	0	0	128	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Metal (cans and scrap)	93	105	120	73	129	(12)	44	(19)
Plastic (non-deposit #1-#7)	50	53	65	41	16	(19)	29	231
Electronics	11	11	10	26	32	1	(60)	(67)
Textiles ³	20	15	13	18	9	12	(17)	67
Books	21	21	27	12	n/a	(20)	78	n/a
Comingled Containers ²	0	0	0	0	15	n/a	n/a	n/a
Mattresses and Box Springs	14	21	21	n/a	n/a	0	n/a	n/a
Special Events ⁴	11	11	10	18	n/a	9	(41)	n/a
Food Scraps ⁵	43	31	43	57	n/a	(28)	(46)	n/a
Deposit Trailer Containers ⁶	15	17	19	20	15	(11)	(16)	13
Other	0	0	0	0	3	n/a	n/a	n/a
Total Recyclables*	595	615	710	804	760	(13)	(24)	(19)
Total Solid Waste and Recyclables¹	1,722	1,813	2,022	2,725	3,212	(10)	(33)	(44)
Percentage (%) Recyclables to Total ¹	34.6	33.9	35.1	29.5	23.7	(3)	15	43
Households in Town (HHs) ⁷	2,149	2,142	2,142	2,008	1,958	0	7	9
Solid Waste (lb.) per HH	1,049	1,119	1,224	1,913	2,505	(9)	(42)	(55)
Deposit Shed Containers (~ units) ⁸	199,492	221,620	248,816	265,162	201,540	(11)	(16)	10
Recycle Bins Sold (Town Garage/TS)	36	23	18	32	n/a	28	(28)	n/a
Motor Oil (gal.)	1,100	850	1,475	650	1,150	(42)	31	(26)
Misc. Fluorescent Bulbs (linear ft.)	6,160	9,100	8,010	5,580	855	14	63	964
Small Batteries (non-auto, lb.)	114	198	185	211	138	7	(0)	43
Propane Tanks (each)	0	74						

¹ 2003-16 Includes Dover Trucking (mixed paper only includes DT for 2003-12)

² 2013-16 Dover Trucking (started single stream in 2013, eliminating contributions to mixed paper and comingles)

³ Textile bins TS (Red Cross and Bay State), excluding DS High School and Middle School (Bay State Textiles)

⁴ Two recycling events, including private document shredding (5,000 lb.), tire recycling (30 lb./tire), and bicycle reuse (30 lb./bike)

⁵ Based on actual pounds from annual invoicing

⁶ Based on actual pounds from annual invoicing

⁷ Population/HHs per Town Report/census data

⁸ Estimated quantity based on proceeds

*Solid waste and recycling numbers have been rounded to the nearest ton.

Report of the
Inspector of Buildings

Walter Avallone, Inspector of Buildings/Commissioner
Zoning Enforcement Officer
Floating Dock Inspector
Joseph Doyle, Local Building Inspector
Susan Young, Administrative Assistant

The Building Department is responsible for reviewing applications and plans to construct, alter, or demolish any building or structure in Dover for compliance with applicable Dover Zoning Bylaws; Massachusetts State Gas, Plumbing, Electrical, and Building Codes; and Chapter 40A of the Massachusetts General Laws (MGL) relating to construction and zoning.

Inspectors make field inspections of buildings at various stages of construction, as well as inspect all public buildings, churches, and public and private schools on a yearly basis. The Department also responds to inquiries from attorneys, land surveyors, banks, and the general public regarding zoning and building-code issues. It reviews and issues permits for floating docks as required by MGL Chapter 91 (Waterways Permitting).

More than 2,000 inspections were performed in 2023 by Department personnel for work performed in conjunction with building, wiring, plumbing, and gas permits. All seven of the new house permits issued were for the demolition of existing houses, which were replaced by new construction, leaving no additional new residences in Dover. Inspectors completed 30 Annual Life and Fire Safety inspections for public buildings, schools, nurseries, churches, and private organizations, and conducted a total of four Common Victualler License inspections for food preparation businesses.

Department hours for the public are Monday through Thursday 9 a.m.–4 p.m. Appointments are also available with the Inspector 1 p.m.–2:30 p.m., Monday through Thursday. To schedule an appointment, call the office at 508-785-0032, ext. 225.

Statistics for 2023

	Applications	Fees	Value
New Houses	7	\$62,266	\$6,226,650
Schools	0	0	0
Additions, Remodels, Other	464	382,970	49,501,730
Totals	471	\$445,236	\$55,728,380

Report of the
Inspector of Wiring

Kevin Malloy, Wiring Inspector
James Murphy, Alternate Inspector
Paul Angus, Second Alternate Inspector

During 2023 there were 331 wiring permits issued, many of which required multiple inspections.

In some situations, violations were noted and corrections made. Any open permits from 2023 will be inspected and closed out in 2024.

The Wiring Inspector may be contacted at 508-785-0032, ext. 245, for any concerns related to wiring permits, including to register a complaint or check on an electrician’s license.



Photo by Hadley Reynolds.

Report of the **Plumbing and Gas Inspector**

James Vaughan, Plumbing / Gas Inspector
Robert Piersiak, Alternate Inspector
Jeffrey Harris, Second Alternate Inspector

During 2023, a total of 167 plumbing and 144 gas permits were issued, many of which required multiple inspections. In some situations, violations were noted and corrections made. Any open permits from 2023 will be inspected and closed out in 2024.

The Plumbing and Gas Inspector may be contacted at 508-785-0032, ext. 357, for any concerns related to plumbing and/or gas permits, including to register a complaint or check on a plumber's license.



“Cocker Spaniel” by Amelia Peabody. Gift to the Dover Town Library from the estate of Beatrice Adams. Photo by Judith Schulz.

Report of the **Open Space Committee**

Amey Moot, Chair
Mark Adamczyk
Henry Faulkner
Boynton Glidden
John Jeffries, Board of Selectmen Liaison
Greg Kahoun
Justine Kent-Uritam
Carol Lisbon, Planning Board
Rick Nagy
Sarah Monaco, Conservation Commission
Tara Nolan
Connie Sullivan

The Open Space Committee (OSC) became a permanent Town government committee in 2001. Its primary purpose is to update the Town's Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP) in accordance with Massachusetts laws and regulations. A revision is currently under way on this 2011 plan, which is available on the OSC's page of the Town website (www.doverma.gov). The OSC can assist other Town boards in managing the recreation and conservation lands under their jurisdiction. It also strives to provide information on Dover's many open spaces and to encourage Dover residents to enjoy them.

Since there are many governmental and nonprofit entities with lands under their control, the OSC purposefully chooses its membership to better represent these interests. For example, both the Conservation Commission and the Planning Board appoint members to the OSC. The Board of Selectmen (BOS) appoints a liaison. The BOS appoints the remaining OSC members. OSC members are often members of ad-hoc committees and subcommittees formed to assess projects or problems in Dover like the Hale Partnership Taskforce and the Planning Board's Tree Preservation Committee. OSC members are also active with local conservation groups, including The Trustees of Reservations (The Trustees), the Upper Charles Conservation Land Trust (UCCLT), the Dover Land Conservation Trust (DLCT), Hale Education (Hale), Massachusetts Audubon Society (MAS), and the Norfolk Hunt Club (NHC).

Given this broad representation, discussions during OSC meetings cover many topics, from the desirability of preserving or acquiring particular properties to efforts that encourage the use of open space by Dover citizens. The OSC welcomes public attendance at its meetings, which are typically held on the first Tuesday of the month, September to June, at

7:30 p.m., on Zoom. Please see the Town calendar at www.doverma.gov for meeting agendas and login or meeting room information.

Guided Walks on Conservation Lands

OSC members lead guided walks through Dover conservation lands on the second Saturday morning of each month from April to December. These walks are free and open to all but require pre-registration for parking information. In 2023, the walks focused on Hale and its many interconnections with The Trustees, DLCT, and Dover town-owned properties. OSC walks are publicized in the *Our Town* digital newsletter available on the Town of Dover's website, various social media (Dover, MA Facebook group, NextDoor.com, Eventbrite, Boston.com, WickedLocal.com, Patch.com), and through emails sent to interested citizens. The OSC will continue offering these guided monthly walks in 2024, and we hope you will join us!

Open Space and Recreation Plan

The OSC is in the process of updating the 2011 OSRP to reflect recently conserved lands, as well as the townspeople's opinions, use, and concerns regarding open space and recreation opportunities. A public forum presenting the updated plan will be scheduled in early 2024.

Hale Partnership Task Force

In 2023, the OSC supported The Trustees' education and outreach efforts in anticipation of an eventual Special Town Meeting on the proposed Hale Conservation Restriction (CR). Dover's Hale CR would be jointly held by The Trustees and the Town of Dover, with the monitoring and enforcement responsibilities primarily falling to the Trustees due to their extensive experience and in-house expertise with CRs. The Hale CR would eliminate subdivision or residential development, keep programs to areas Hale already uses, and guarantee public access to most trails year-round.

Chair Amey Moot represented the OSC on the BOS's ad-hoc committee the Hale Partnership Task Force, which assessed the initial proposal by Hale to put a CR on their property. The task force began its work in November 2019. In September 2021, Dover received an appraisal of the Hale land in the Town, and provided input to the Town, The Trustees, and Hale regarding the terms of the CR. Throughout 2023, The Trustees, the Town of Dover, Town of Westwood, and Hale have been negotiating the terms of the legal documents with the aim that the Hale CR in Dover and the Hale CR in Westwood would be substantially similar.

Hale offers nearly 1,200 contiguous acres of open space across the Towns of Dover (680 acres) and Westwood (520 acres). In Dover, 485 acres are located north of Powissett Street and include the beautiful Noanet and Powissett Ponds as well as trail connections to The Trustees' Noanet Woodlands, the Town's Larrabee Estate, and DLCT's new Blake Reservation. The remaining 200 acres, located south of Powissett Street,

abut Powissett Farm, include the solar array, and surround the Town Transfer Station. Hale makes up a large and integral part of Dover's trail system and open space resources, which improve our resilience to climate change and recharge groundwater.

Conservation Support

The OSC provides ongoing support for and communication about various projects involving local conservation groups. For example, in 2023 the OSC:

- assisted the Conservation Commission in forming a Land Management working group to help coordinate trail maintenance and improve stewardship of the Conservation Commission-owned properties; and
- organized an OSC booth at Dover Days that included extensive Hale CR information and provided information and maps showing the open spaces and trails throughout Dover.

The OSC will continue working with the Conservation Commission, The Trustees, the DLCT, Hale, and other groups to improve access and walking experiences at properties throughout Dover.

Appreciation

The OSC would like to thank past Committee member Christy Violin, of the Conservation Commission, for her valuable service, including enlisting her daughter's help at our Dover Days booth. In her place, we welcomed Sarah Monaco, Conservation Commissioner and Master of Foxhounds (MFH) for the Norfolk Hunt. The OSC would also like to thank Val Lin for all her many and varied contributions—from her role as an unofficial liaison to Parks and Recreation and the Planning Board's Tree Preservation Committee to keeping us up to date on the Dover Greenway group. We hope that when her family and other Town commitments allow, she will return to OSC. We are grateful that Val has been enthusiastically replaced by walk leader, trail maintainer, and nearly lifelong Dover resident, Rick Nagy. We thank all our members for continuing their generous service. We look forward to working with you in 2024!