



**Shaun A. Suhoski**, *Town Manager*  
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### MEMORANDUM

TO: Athol Board of Selectmen  
FR: Shaun A. Suhoski, Town Manager  
RE: Town Manager Update  
DT: September 1, 2015

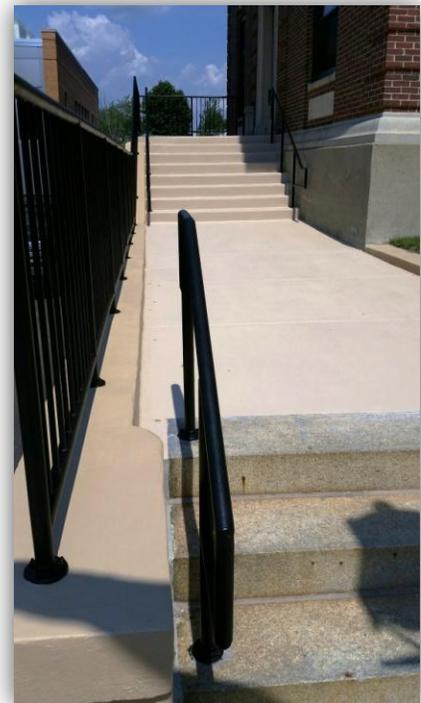
Dear Board: Please see the following update.

**Town Hall Repair Projects Update:** While the two projects took a bit longer than anticipated in order to find the preferred final coating product, both the exterior stairway and base of the cupola have been thoroughly restored.

According to the architect, Build-Max did an excellent job and both projects came in under the original projected budget.

With final payment authorized, I can advise that the stairway project was completed at a cost of \$34,400 which would allow \$5,600 of funding allocated from the Stabilization Fund to revert back to that fund.

The cupola repairs – including a change order to repair a longstanding leak above the Town Accountant’s office as well as some brick re-pointing – were completed at a cost of \$38,950 which is \$3,050 under the original budget.

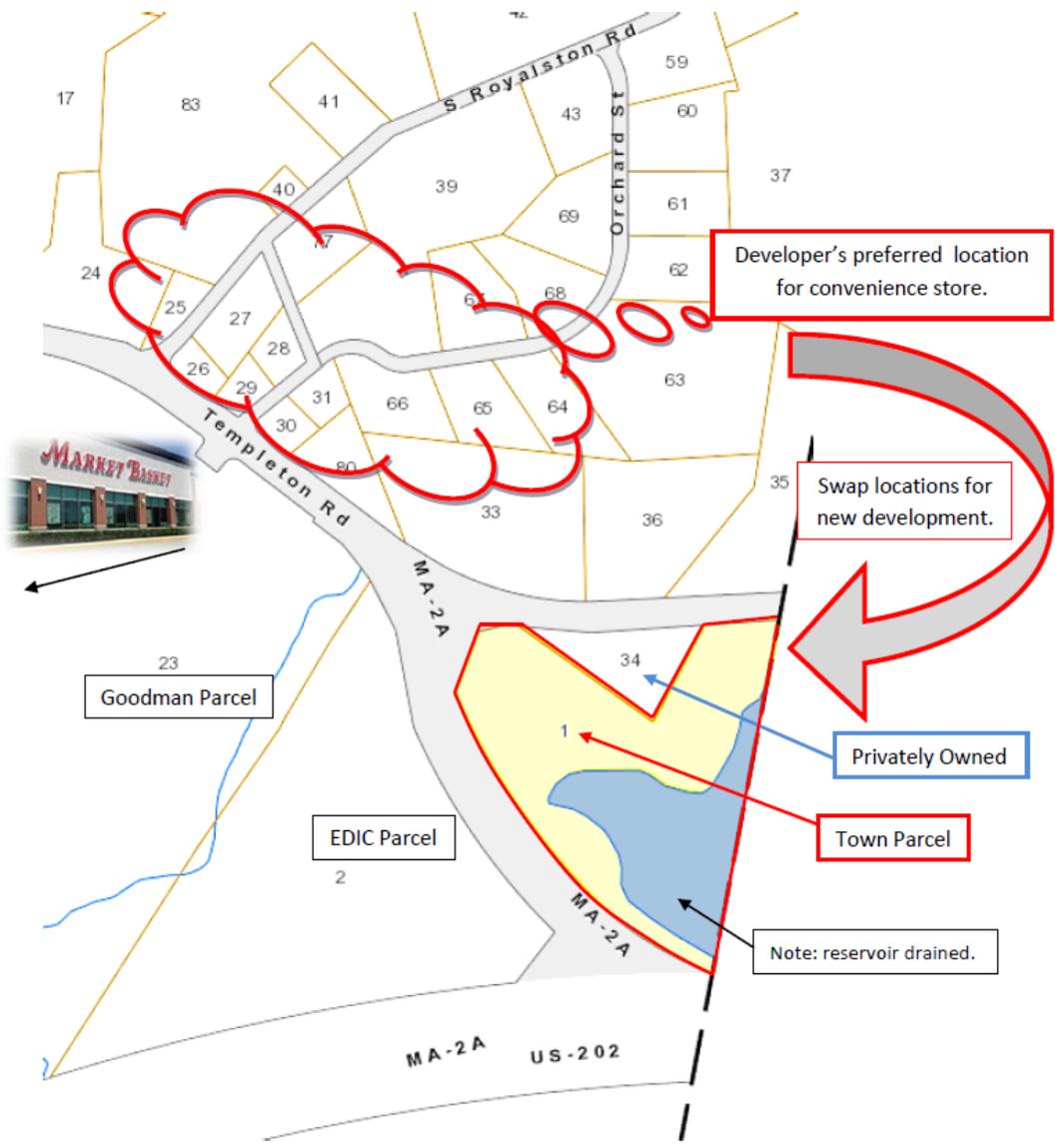


**Templeton Road (Map 44, Parcel 1) @ Exit #18 – Potential Conveyance to EDIC:** Although I was out of the office, I have read reports in the Athol Daily News concerning the last EDIC meeting (and I have discussed same with the chairman). It sounds like there was a healthy discussion (which is a good thing) about the perceived value of the parcel which I had suggested be transferred subject to the terms listed on the attached email.

But, value is in the eye of the beholder.

This parcel of land – by itself – is not developable. It will require: (1) agreement with a private property owner that bi-sects the Town parcel, (2) water and sewer infrastructure prior to development, (3) higher than average site development costs due to the slope and wetlands.

My purpose in suggesting the transfer to EDIC, as discussed with the Board of Selectmen in open session, was NOT to simply divest of the property for cash, but, to facilitate a plan that alleviates the neighborhood concerns over development at lower Orchard Street while simultaneously allowing the continued development at North Quabbin Commons.



The value to the Town of further development through growth in the tax base, additional employment opportunities, and ancillary revenues from meal or hotel excises far surpasses the difference in a purchase price and is without doubt the better long-term outcome for Athol.

Because I plan to meet with the EDIC this month on this and other matters I am requesting that the Board hold on this item to a future meeting to ensure the Town's policy goals are aligned with EDIC.

**Police Chief Search Committee Update:** The committee is nearly formed. I am awaiting confirmation from the fifth member, but, here are the appointees to date:

- Selectboard designees (2): **Alan Dodge** and **Tony Brighenti**
- FWAC designee (1): **Paul Nelson**
- TM law enforcement designees (2): **Christopher Donelan** (Franklin County Sheriff) and **Edward Cronin** (retired Fitchburg and Gardner police chief).

Chief Anderson is assisting in an advisory capacity to the Committee and Town Manager. I am hopeful of getting the committee organized in September. Attached for your information please find a copy of the updated job description for the Chief of Police.



**Solar Projects Update (standing update):** Some good news to report on both projects!

The Town solar field in Hardwick is generating power to the grid and a ribbon cutting ceremony including the Eagle Hill School was held on August 27. We expect that the invoices received in September will include “net metering credits” prorated in relation to the average kWh of our 40-plus accounts. Once received, I will share with the Board and the general public information on how to monitor the performance of the solar field via Internet.

The Wiring Inspector confirmed today that he has signed-off on the Library’s additional electrical work for the rooftop solar. With the wiring complete we should hope to have some training and have the system go live in the immediate future. The additional work came at a cost of roughly \$13,000 over the original project, but, the total cost of \$98,000 was still within the \$100,000 maximum pledge of NextEra.

**Miscellaneous Items:** Other items include:

- Held discussions with US EPA over close-out of the former Rod & Gun Club site cleanup costs (federal costs total \$3.4 million).
- Site visit and meeting with program representative from the state Dept. of Housing & Community Development to review Grove/Highland CDBG project and potential future investments.
- Made guest appearance on the “Lee Chauvette Hour of Power” radio show on **105.9 FM** (the new low-power station launched by AOTV).
- Held coordination meeting with DPW Supt. and foremen of Highway and Cemetery/Parks to balance expectations and work priorities with reduced staffing.
- Met with COA Director, Selectman Grosky, MART and town of Orange officials and others to discuss establishment of fixed-route bus service between Athol and Orange in lieu of major state funding cuts for transportation.

