



Town of Stowe Conservation Commission

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Mayo Farm: Shaping Tomorrow Together

Great questions! You asked us and we responded! Here's a quick look at what we heard and our responses...

1. Does Stowe Land Trust own Mayo Farm?

Response: Great question! Mayo Farm is a public property owned by the Town of Stowe. Stowe Land Trust holds the conservation easement on the property but does not retain ownership.

2. Does the current easement allow for some of the land to be used for affordable housing? Is there a small parcel of land that could be allocated to some dense housing units as a model pilot project for affordable housing - while maintaining the bulk of the conserved land for recreation. What are the possibilities for housing?

Response: Let's continue to explore this question together. As currently written, the conservation easement does not allow housing development on Mayo Farm. If Town wishes to pursue this concept and voters are supportive, an amendment or termination of the easement would be required.

3. Is it possible to have the easement extended to be "in perpetuity" instead of another deadline in 25 years? Can we alter the easement easily to be an easement in perpetuity?

Response: This idea will need to be further explored. It is possible that voters could be asked to modify the easement to extend it in perpetuity or terminate the existing easement and enter into a new permanent conservation easement. Great question - let's keep exploring it together.

4. I believe the easement expires but there are still restrictions on what can be done with the land. Are there further restrictions on the land that would prevent development? What are the deed restrictions on the land?

Response: The conservation easement is set to automatically renew in 2028 under its existing terms and conditions, unless a majority of Town voters take action to modify or terminate it. The property is also subject to deed restrictions, environmental constraints, and applicable local, state, and federal regulations that govern development. The underlying deed restrictions require the property be used primarily as open green space, agricultural, and conservation for public purposes.

5. What's the alternative? What alternative uses are possible with the easement?

Response: Generally speaking, the conservation easement sets forth permitted and restricted uses of the property. The easement establishes six different zones within the property (Homestead, Community Events, Agricultural, Cemetery Expansion, Dispersed Recreation, and

Recreation). Each zone contains specific allowed and restricted uses. If the conservation easement were to be terminated, the property would still be subject to its underlying deed restrictions, environmental constraints, and applicable local, state, and federal regulations. You can review the [conservation easement here](#). If the general opinion of the community desires potentially modifying the easement, we'll continue to explore and evaluate what alternative uses might be possible and supported by the community.

6. What happens if the easement does not continue? What are the different options?

Response: The conservation easement will automatically renew under the existing terms and conditions in 2028 for another 25 years unless majority of Town voters in 2028 decide to modify or terminate the easement. If majority of Town voters decide to terminate the conservation easement, the property remains subject to the underlying deed restrictions which require the property be used primarily as open green space, agricultural, and conservation for public purposes. Regardless of the conservation easement, the property also remains subject to applicable local, state, and federal regulations.

Voters have the following options:

1. Do nothing and allow the conservation easement to renew for another 25-year period as-is.
2. Terminate the easement and do not replace it.
3. Terminate the easement and adopt a replacement conservation easement on a more limited portion of the property. If so, it is the Commission's understanding that any new conservation easement would need to be a perpetual easement.
4. Amend the easement. However, any amendment is subject to Stowe Land Trust's approval. Stowe Land Trust has an obligation to its mission and therefore, would consider proposed amendments that meet the needs and desires of the community, integrate a significant community benefit, and maintain the stated conservation values of Mayo Farm.

7. It would be valuable to know 1) what's feasible given defined flood plain sections or wetlands of the Mayo Farm and 2) will you be contacting area farmers to determine their long-term interest in farmland leases?

Response: The West Branch of the Little River flows through parts of Mayo Farm, mainly between the special event fields off Weeks Hill Road and the Quiet Path on the opposite side of the river. This section includes a clearly defined floodplain (the Special Flood Hazard Area), which is regulated under the Town's adopted Zoning Regulations.

While a full wetland delineation has not yet been completed for the entire property, data from the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources provides guidance on potential wetland locations. A recent delineation of the "polo fields" area identified Class 2 wetlands throughout this portion of Mayo Farm, which falls within the Recreation Zone of the conservation easement.

Farmers are key stakeholders in this process; their participation and input will be actively sought in these discussions.

- 8. The town desperately needs a field house. Is there any place on Mayo Farm that would accommodate a field house structure (I'm not asking about the money to build it, I'm asking whether there is a place that it could be built if the money was available)?**

Response: The conservation easement designates a 36-acre Recreation Zone in the “polo fields” on the east side of West Hill Road. Under the current easement, the Town is permitted to “*construct, maintain, repair, and use existing and new municipal buildings within the Recreation Zone.*” Additional review would be needed to determine whether a field house qualifies as a “municipal building” under the easement and whether the Recreation Zone lands are suitable for such a structure. A recent wetland delineation of the “polo fields” area identified Class 2 wetlands throughout the Recreation Zone which restrict development potential.

- 9. What can we as residents do to ensure that the easement and farm remain?**

Response: The Conservation Commission will be facilitating a community conversation throughout 2026 and will share their findings with the Selectboard toward the end of the year. The conservation easement is set to automatically renew in 2028 under its current terms and conditions, unless a majority of Town voters take action to modify or terminate it. Any voter action would occur on Town Meeting Day in March 2028. You can stay informed by attending upcoming Conservation Commission and Selectboard meetings in the lead-up to 2028.

- 10. I would love to understand what the Mayo conservation easement has been used for in the past 25 years and how much the community benefits from this - in addition how would it be used/leveraged in the future?**

Response: The Conservation Commission is planning a spring kick-off event that will offer a brief overview of Mayo Farm’s history, the Town’s acquisition, and the details of the conservation easement. We welcome all to attend. More information will be shared soon, stay tuned!

- 11. Does this affect the fields that we all know as the quiet path?**

Response: The Quiet Path runs through Fields G, D, and E on the Mayo Farm property, all of which are protected under the conservation easement.

- 12. I know that there is a group working on a pedestrian/bike connection from the LVRT in Morrisville to downtown Stowe/ the Rec Path. The ability to use the Mayo and Polo Fields would be instrumental in helping to make this happen. I admittedly do not know much about what uses are currently permitted on the Mayo Farm property, but I would love to see the door left open for a future multi-use recreation trail to pass through there.**

Response: Thank you for sharing this information. We’ll be sure to keep it in mind as our conversations continue.

- 13. Can the easement be split - a portion of the land fully conserved for another 25 years and a portion designated for another important socially/community beneficial purpose?**

Response: Great question. It is likely that this might be possible. Let's continue to explore this idea together.

14. Could this land be used for town offices, or other uses than just farming?

Response: Yes, the conservation easement currently allows the construction of new municipal buildings in certain areas of the property, so an amendment to the easement is not required to allow this use. Other existing uses on the property include recreation, special events, farming, and more.

15. Is there flexibility in the agricultural uses (i.e.) if someone wanted to use a small portion for veggie farming or someone wanted to graze sheep, is there the ability to add infrastructure like water, fencing or greenhouses? Are there uses for the Parker barn beyond storage of soccer equipment?

Response: The Town currently leases about 125 acres for agricultural use. The existing lease expires on December 31, 2027, and historically, leases have been offered in five-year terms. The leasing process is publicly advertised and coordinated with the Conservation Commission, with final decisions made by the Selectboard. To date, the Conservation Commission has not received any proposed use of the Parker Barn, other than storage of equipment.

16. Is there a place to find more information on the easement?

Response: Check out [Mayo Farm: Shaping Tomorrow Together | Town of Stowe](#) which contains a link to the conservation easement.

17. I knew that there was talk about 25-year term coming up but did not know about the automatic renewal. Is this a town meeting, conservation commission or select board discussion; special vote or Austrian ballot?

Response: The Conservation Commission is launching the community conservation conversation now and will continue engaging the community throughout this year and into 2027. If the overall community consensus supports amending or terminating the easement, the Town will follow a planning and public input process that could result in a formal amendment to the easement. The Selectboard, either on its own initiative or through a petition signed by 5% of voters, can submit any proposed amendment to the voters. Any amendment would be adopted if approved by a majority of voters and accepted by the Stowe Land Trust.