

OUR TOWN

A Digital Newsletter from the Town of Dover, MA

Welcome to the March Issue of OUR TOWN

Happy March, everyone! We're excited to bring you this packed issue of Our Town, filled with all the latest updates. Dive in to find out how our Planning Board is working on compliance with the MBTA Communities Act, get the scoop on the Community Center construction, and learn about the upcoming Warrant Committee open hearing. Plus, don't miss out on the wonderful program opportunities and helpful announcements from our town departments. We hope you enjoy this edition of Our Town!

If you are part of a Town Department/
board/committee/commission and would like to submit
content for the March issue, please contact
newsletter@doverma.gov

VOL. 4, NO.3, MARCH 2025

WHAT'S IN THIS MONTH'S ISSUE...

BOS Updates

Town Departments

- Community Center
- Planning Board
- Chickering Elementary
- Rail Trail

Boards and Committees

- Conservation
- Board of Health
- Recycling
- Volunteer

SIGN UP FOR THE NEWSLETTER



Community Center Construction Update

Since our last update, outdoor spaces continue to take shape with light poles installed and grading work for the outdoor basketball court is ongoing. We are awaiting better weather to place the last sections of walkways, the plantings, final asphalt layer, and striping/signage. The construction trailer has been removed, and weekly construction meetings are now taking place inside the new building!

Inside the building, we're down to the last leg, with millwork, including cabinetry, wall panels, and countertops, complete. Gym equipment, outlets, switches, whiteboards, and exit signs have also been installed. Ceilings and flooring are nearing completion. Next will be the installation of the speakers and projector screen, gym padding, acoustical panels in the pavilion, signage, final painting, and furniture delivery.

We're still targeting a late Spring move-in for the Town. Stay tuned as we finalize a more precise move-in date and announcement of the ribbon cutting ceremony!

Thank you for your continued support as we inch towards the finish line!



Hardscaping



Main Lobby



Main Entrance



Gym



Elevator



Lighting

Planning Board/MBTA Communities Act

The Town of Dover has been doing a great deal of research and work to seek the best ways to comply with the MBTA Communities Act while maintaining a focus on the needs of Dover. This law (passed by the State legislature and signed by former Governor Charlie Baker in 2021) requires that the 177 municipalities in the MBTA's service area (including Dover) have at least one zoning district of reasonable size in which multi-family housing (housing with at least 3 units on one piece of property) with no age restrictions and suitable for families with children is permitted as of right. The requirement is codified as Section 3A of MGL c. 40A.

What do we actually need to do?

1. Identify a district to be zoned for MBTA compliance
2. Write a zoning bylaw regulating this specific type of development in the proposed district
3. Vote at Town Meeting to approve this bylaw and Zoning map amendment before December 31, 2025

How can you learn more?

The Town has developed a page on its website with information on the MBTA Communities Act and what it means for Dover. Please click [HERE](#) to view the webpage.

We encourage all residents to review the information, which includes:

- General information on the law
- Dover's specific obligations under the law and a timeline for compliance
- A number of Frequently Asked Questions
- A DRAFT MBTA Communities section for the Town's zoning bylaws

It should be noted that the MBTA Communities Act:

- Does NOT require that multi-family housing, in fact, be built
- Does NOT compel Dover to pay for or approve new infrastructure like sewer or water
- Does NOT supersede or override Dover wetlands or Title V laws or any of Dover's general bylaws or regulations.

What's happening in March?

- The Planning Board will publish a survey asking all resident to share their thoughts about (3) locations that have been identified as potential locations for an MBTA compliant zoning district. Please keep your eyes out for the survey, which will be posted and available on the town website and promoted widely. We sincerely request your input and feedback.
- The Planning Board will host a Public Information Session on March 25 at 7:00 pm on the Zoom Platform. We will present information about Dover's efforts to comply with the MBTA Communities Act and provide residents with a forum for discussion. More information about the session can be found on the [MBTA webpage](#) and on the Town Calendar.

Annual Town Caucus

The Annual Town Caucus will be held on Monday, March 10, 2025 at 7:30 PM in the Great Hall of the Dover Town House. This is a meeting at which candidates for town boards and committees are nominated for the Annual Election, which will be held on May 19, 2025. A candidate does not need to be present to be nominated, but must sign the acceptance of nomination by Thursday, March 13, 2025 at the Clerk's Office. Candidates for town boards and committees who were not nominated at the Caucus but decide to run for town office can obtain nomination papers from the Town Clerk beginning on March 11, 2025. Nomination papers must be submitted to the Board of Registrars by 1:00 PM on March 28, 2025. A minimum of 35 registered voter signatures are required for nomination. It is always wise to get some extra signatures.

Warrant Committee Open Hearing

About Open Hearing

Dover will be holding an Open Hearing, which is a public meeting for its residents before the Annual Town Meeting. The Open Hearing is an informal and informational meeting that provides an opportunity for residents to learn about the purpose behind each warrant article. The proponents of each article are present to explain their reasoning behind the proposals and answer any questions from the audience.

**WARRANT COMMITTEE
OPEN HEARING**
Monday, March 17, 2025
at 7:30 PM
**Great Hall, Dover Town
House**

This meeting is an excellent opportunity for residents to learn more about their town government in an informal setting. As such, it offers an excellent chance to engage with the community and voice any concerns or questions about the proposed warrant articles.

Attending the Open Hearing is highly recommended for all Dover residents who want to stay informed and involved in their local government. It is a great way to learn about the issues that are important to the town and its residents and to make informed decisions during Town Meeting.

A complete draft List of warrant articles and information can be found at:
<https://bit.ly/49NFJFf>

**Visit the Town
Meeting Webpage to
stay up to date**

<https://bit.ly/49NFJFf>



Please find below a list of notable items that are up for consideration at the upcoming Annual Town Meeting:

- FY26 Operating and Capital Budgets
- Appropriate for Fire Department Operational Assessment
- Amend Zoning Bylaws - Floodplain Overlay District
- Amend Zoning Bylaws - Accessory Dwelling Units
- Amend Zoning Bylaws - Site Plan Review
- Accept MGL Chapter 203C (Prudent Investor Act)
- Accept MGL Chapter 59, Section 5, Clause 22 & 22J ("HERO" Act)
- Citizen's Petition to Amend Zoning Bylaw Site Plan requirements for residential accessory use
- Citizen's Petition to Accept Wilson's Way as a Public Way
- Citizen's Petition for Design of a Sidewalk on Cross Street

Fire Department

Carbon Monoxide Safety

Carbon monoxide (CO) is an odorless, colorless gas that often goes undetected, catching victims off guard or in their sleep.

Hundreds of people in the U.S. die from unintentional carbon monoxide poisoning every year, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. More than 20,000 visit the emergency room, and more than 4,000 others are hospitalized. This "invisible killer" is produced by burning fuel in cars or trucks, small engines, stoves, lanterns, grills, fireplaces, gas ranges, portable generators or furnaces. When the gas builds up in enclosed spaces, people or animals who breathe it can be poisoned. Ventilation does not guarantee safety.

Winter can be a prime time for carbon monoxide poisoning as people turn on their heating systems and mistakenly warm their cars in garages. As the weather turns colder, it is important to take extra precautions.

Safety Tips:

- Have your furnace, water heater and any other gas or oil-burning appliances serviced by a qualified technician every year
- Do not use portable flameless chemical heaters indoors
- Have your chimney checked and cleaned every year, and make sure your fireplace damper is open before lighting a fire and well after the fire is extinguished
- Never use a gas oven for heating your home
- Never use a generator inside your home, basement or garage, or less than 20 feet from any window, door or vent: fatal levels of carbon monoxide can be produced in just minutes, even if doors and windows are open
- Never run a car in a garage that is attached to a house, even with the garage door open: always open the door to a detached garage to let in fresh air when you run a car inside
- Replace old CO alarms every 5 to 7 years, according to the instructions.

Meet The Team

Public Health Nurse Joins the Board of Health

The Dover Board of Health is thrilled to welcome Public Health Nurse Gael Varsa to our team! Gael, a Dover resident, brings 40 years of extensive nursing experience in acute care, ambulatory care, urgent care, triage, school nursing, case management, VNA, and healthcare finance. She recently concluded a 25-year career at Atrius Health, where she focused on care management program design, quality measurement, outcomes for Medically Home programs, value-based post-acute care models, triage, vaccine clinics, and clinical documentation integrity. Her work was recognized with the Modern Healthcare 2017 Excellence in Nursing Award, the Nursing Team Achievement for Atrius Health's Total Joint Replacement Program, and as a 2017 finalist for the Massachusetts Hospital Association Accountable Care Compass Award in Physician Practice Innovations. Gael has worked with BWH, BIDMC, Stanford University Hospital, UCSF, and Moffitt Hospital to develop integrated case management and quality assurance programs. She holds a nursing diploma from Massachusetts General Hospital, a nursing degree from Columbia University, and a Health Law and Bioethics certificate from Boston University. We are thrilled to have Gael's expertise and dedication in our community!



Gael Varsa

Recycling Committee

April is Spring Clean-up Month for Dover's streets and parks.

It's a perfect time to get a head start on Dover's April Clean-Up of streets and parks - no bugs, no poison ivy and no snow or ice!

Last year 400 residents participated in this effort. 2025's goal is to again have 100% of the 159 streets and parks cleaned-up. All Dover residents are invited to help achieve this goal by signing up for a street that is important to you. All local clubs and organizations are encouraged to join in the clean-up. Help with a section of our main through-streets where roadside trash is greatest and consider adopting it for year-round monitoring. Large bags can be picked up at the Highway Department or use your own trash bag!

The condition of most bottles and cans makes them unacceptable at recycling centers so it will not be necessary to separate trash from recyclables.

Registration is easily accessible at: <https://tinyurl.com/mry3n4p8>



Recycling Committee

HOLIDAY STRING LIGHTS (TANGLERS)

While string lights can beautifully enhance the ambiance of your home, it is important to dispose of them responsibly. When thrown in the trash, these lights can become tangled in the machinery at recycling facilities, which leads to shutdowns in sorting operations and poses a contamination risk to the recycling stream. This not only disrupts the recycling process but also demands additional resources to address the issue. To ensure that your string lights are recycled properly, please look for the designated collection bin in the swap shop, or alternatively, you can drop them off in the metals bin at the Transfer Station. By doing so, you contribute to more efficient recycling efforts and help protect the environment.



Dover Historical Society

Recent Gift from the American Academy of Pediatrics to Dover Historical Society on View at Amelia Peabody Exhibition this Spring

William Edwards Ladd (1880-1967) was a pioneer in pediatric surgery. Ladd was the Surgeon-in-Chief at Boston Children's Hospital and was instrumental in codifying modern pediatric surgical procedures and practice. Ladd and his family lived for a time in Sherborn. The Ladd Medal was first given in 1953 and continues to be regarded as the highest honor bestowed upon a pediatric surgeon.

The Ladd Medal is just one example of the many commissions received and designed by Dover resident, Amelia Peabody (1890-1984) to honor titans in the medical field. Peabody was deeply committed to supporting the advancement of medical, scientific, agricultural, environmental, educational and artistic endeavors throughout Massachusetts. Many of these commissions, as well as examples of her sculpture shown at the 1939 NY World's Fair, Whitney Museum in NY, Boston Athenaeum and Museum of Fine Arts, Boston are included in the exhibition.

Who was Amelia Peabody? At one point, she owned 1/3 of Dover - which are the lands we enjoy as Noanet Woods and Powisset Farm today.

Come learn more about Amelia Peabody at the Dover Historical Society's exhibition: Amelia Peabody: Artist, Philanthropist & Visionary opening April 18th and running through the end of June at the Sawin Museum and Fisher Barn.

Amelia Peabody Public Lecture

THE DOVER HISTORICAL SOCIETY

invites you to a public lecture by Judy Schulz
Amelia Peabody: Artist, Philanthropist and Visionary

Wednesday, March 26th, 7 pm at the Dover Legion Post

Amelia Peabody in her garden in Dover

This is the prelude to the Society's Exhibition
which will explain Who was Amelia Peabody?
April 19th through June 2025, at the Sawin Museum
and the Fisher Barn/Caryl Farm

Refreshments offered Cash Bar



Join the Personnel Board

The Town of Dover is seeking a dedicated and community-minded individual to serve as a member of the Personnel Board. This is an exciting opportunity to contribute to the development and administration of personnel policies that support a fair, uniform, and efficient system of personnel management for the Town.

About the Personnel Board

The Personnel Board is responsible for establishing and maintaining a personnel administration system based on merit principles, ensuring the recruitment, selection, and development of a skilled and effective workforce. With the support of the Town Administrator, the Personnel Board works to:

- Adopt, maintain, and administer personnel rules and regulations
- Oversee recruitment and appointment policies
- Maintain a centralized personnel record-keeping system
- Develop and manage a classification and compensation plan and a performance appraisal system
- Implement wage and salary administration regulations
- Enforce personnel policies and regulations
- Provide final recommendations to the Board of Selectmen for employees not covered by a collective bargaining agreement
- Conduct other duties as necessary to ensure the fair and effective administration of personnel policies

Qualifications & Expectations

Ideal candidates will have experience or interest in human resources, labor relations, public administration, or a related field. Strong communication, analytical, and decision-making skills are essential. Members are expected to attend regular meetings and actively participate in discussions and decision-making processes.

How to Apply

Interested individuals should submit an interest form on the town's website at <https://doverma.gov/596/Volunteer-on-a-Board-or-Committee>. Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis until the position is filled.

Open Space Committee

Saturday (Fast) Stroll with the Norfolk Hunt Club's Hounds March 15th at 9:30 am

Guided Walk through Dover's Open Spaces

*** Free but please Register ***

<https://OSC-NHCHoundWalk.eventbrite.com>

Parking information will be e-mailed to registrants Friday 3/14



Please join us for this special guided walk with Norfolk Hunt Club's hounds and its professional Huntsman, Steve Farrin, organized by the Dover Open Space Committee (OSC). OSC member & NHC's Master of Foxhounds (MFH), Sarah Monaco, will give a brief overview of the Norfolk Hunt's over 125-year history as a 'drag hunt' in Dover and its kennels, the oldest in North America!

This walk will be at a fast pace to keep up with the energetic hounds. NHC's hounds are highly trained working dogs, not domestic pets. It will be over uneven, muddy, and wet trails so wear waterproof boots and bring walking sticks, cameras, hats & gloves, etc.

Kids who can keep up are welcome! We will stroll in misty rain to shine. Sorry, NO dogs this time. Please note the 9:30 am start time and look for the e-mail for parking instructions (NOT the Norfolk Hunt Club & Stables).

Sustainability Committee

New Sustainability Committee Aims to Help Save Money and Plan for the Future.

All of us privileged to live in Dover have a responsibility to be good stewards of the natural resources and beauty that make our town so special and are critical to our town's future success and attractiveness. As weather extremes intensify (storms, drought, heat waves), more Dover homeowners are interested in learning how they can make their properties more resilient to this new environment while saving money to heat and cool their homes. Town properties face similar challenges.

In this spirit, the Dover Board of Selectmen have launched a new Sustainability Committee to recommend ways that Dover can better prepare for the future by creating a plan for greater energy efficiencies, better water management, and more resilient natural landscapes.

The nine-member committee is chaired by Anna Nagy, who also serves on the Conservation Committee. Patricia Hudson is Vice Chair and Paul Venton is Secretary. Other members represent key town committees: Barry Goldman (Capital Budget), Mark Healey (School Committee), Jeanne Lukenda (Planning Board), and Matt Hodge (Recycling Committee). In addition, there will be two voting student members from Dover. The committee meets virtually every third Monday of the month, and the public is invited to listen in to the proceedings (agendas, minutes, and dial-in information are on the town website under the Sustainability committee tab).

Stay tuned for future updates on the Committee's work and how you can get involved.



Dover Council on Aging invites you to our upcoming programs. You can check out the March/April Newsletter with our full slate of programs. Some March highlights are below. Sign up for programs by emailing coa@doverma.gov or by using our [Online COA Program Sign-Up Form](#).

MA APPEALS COURT

with Justice Joseph M. Ditkoff

Wednesday, March 5 at 11:00am

Dover Town Library, Community Room

March is Judicial Outreach Month, where judges engage with communities across Massachusetts. Join us to meet Justice Joseph Ditkoff, a judge on the MA Appeals Court for nearly eight years and before that has served as a criminal prosecutor in Boston and General Counsel of the MA District Courts. Justice Ditkoff will speak on the Massachusetts state court system generally and the Appeals Court specifically. Bring your questions about the courts, the legal system or the law.

DOVER THROUGH THE EYES OF AMELIA PEABODY

Monday, March 10 at 11:00am

Dover Town Library, Community Room

Speaker: Judy Schulz

Amelia Peabody (1890-1984) grew up in Marblehead and Boston, but was drawn to the open spaces of Dover when riding with the Norfolk Hunt Club. She purchased a home in 1925 and it soon became her favorite place. She gradually enlarged her holdings-at one point, she owned one third of Dover. Her diaries, scrapbooks and photo albums, (held at the Massachusetts Historical Society) reveal fascinating stories about Dover's history, as well as glimpses into the life of this extraordinary woman.

COA LUNCHEON

Tuesday, March 11 at 12:15pm

The Dover Church, Kraft Hall

17 Springdale Ave; Cost: \$5.00

Celebrate St. Patrick's Day with a traditional Irish meal and music from local Irish Tenor Nevin Shanabrook. Sign up by March 4.

TALK WITH THE TOWN

POLICE CHIEF & HOMELAND SECURITY

Wednesday, March 12 at 11:00am

Dover Town Library, Community Room

Police Chief Joe Vinci and Agent Sean Garvey of Homeland Security Investigations will review scams targeting older individuals and what to do if you become a victim.

COA Cont.

MEMORABLE RED SOX OPENING DAYS

Tuesday, March 25 at 1:00pm

Dover Town Library, Community Room

The 125th Opening Day for the Red Sox is on April 4! Come hear Boston baseball historian Herb Crehan, who will begin with the first Red Sox opener in May 1901 at the Huntington Grounds and take us up to 2025. Mr. Crehan speaks and writes extensively on Boston baseball history and is a committee member for The Red Sox Hall of Fame. Let's Go Sox!

TRAVEL TALK: GREENLAND – A JOURNEY INTO THE LAND OF ICE

Wednesday, March 26 at 11:00am

Dover Town Library, Community Room

with Barry Pell, Photojournalist

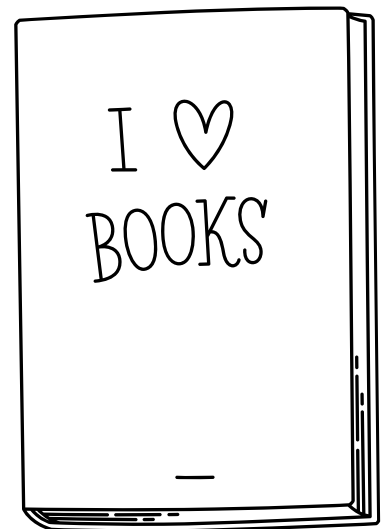
Greenland is the world's largest island and least densely populated place on earth. With over three-quarters of the land covered by ice, the population is limited to a few places along the coast. Traveling by boat, plane and helicopter (there are no roads) in this Danish colony, the lecturer photographed the stunning beauty of the ice floes, glaciers and icebergs. We will discuss the island's history and culture, as well as how global warming is changing the landscape and impacting its people.

Chickering Elementary

Chickering students and staff celebrated the 100th day of school on February 5th with hundreds of fun, themed activities!

The following week, our PTO hosted Books from the Heart, a cherished Chickering tradition. Families purchase books from a curated selection to help replenish the school library. Each book includes a special bookplate honoring both the giver and the recipient. Over the years, students have enjoyed reading these books and take pride in seeing the Books from the Heart tradition continue.

On Friday, February 14th, Chickering celebrated Read Your Heart Out day, another beloved event on our school calendar. Students wore their comfiest clothes and spent much of the day immersed in reading—whether individually, with a friend, through Readers Theater, or with their buddy classes.



Kindergarten registration is open, please visit our website, doversherborn.org for more information.

Conservation Commission

Join Us to Learn How a Cleaner Charles River Will Create Safer and More Resilient Communities

March 11, 2025, 7:00 PM



The Charles River is Dover's largest body of water, making up half the border of the Town. In addition to providing us with viewing, canoeing and kayaking enjoyment, the river delivers a number of critical benefits including flood control, the recharging of groundwater for our well water supply, and wildlife habitat. The river is teeming with life and its banks and shallow areas provide essential habitats for many animals and plants. Many of the plants found in and around the river remove pollutants, such as nitrogen or phosphorus, from the water that improves the health of the river and quality of its water. Protecting and improving the waters of the Charles greatly increases our quality of life and our resiliency to climate change.

While the river is significantly improved from its "Dirty Water" days, the work to protect and improve this critical natural resource is not done. Due to the ever-intensifying effects of climate change, the river is becoming more and more susceptible to extreme weather events including flooding during heavy rains, warming waters in heat waves and low flow from droughts. The work to improve its water quality and resiliency will ensure that it continues to be a recreational and healthy resource into the future.

Please join us on March 11, 2025 at 7:00 PM for this FREE webinar presented by MetroWest Climate Solutions and the Charles River Watershed Association to learn what further action is needed to protect and restore the Charles River and how modernizing our water management practices will make our community better able to withstand the weather extremes of climate change. Since 1965, Charles River Watershed Association (CRWA) has been the leading voice for a cleaner, healthier Charles River.

[Register for this free event](#)

The Conservation Commission is responsible for preserving and protecting the Town's wetlands, open space and natural resources. If you're planning a construction project or tree removal and you think there may be wetlands on or near your property, please contact the Commission Office before starting any work by calling 508-785-0032 extension 7 or emailing us at: lhagerty@doverma.gov.

Volunteer on a Board or Committee

Participating in community service has numerous benefits, such as enjoying government service and engagement, understanding the process of municipal government, building personal relationships, meeting interesting people of all ages, and achieving accomplishments for citizens.

Dover's boards, commissions, and committees are made up of citizens who volunteer their time to help the town. They work together to address complex issues and recommend policies that shape our community. Dover's By-laws (Town Code) establish these groups. We offer various opportunities for interested individuals to participate. Terms vary from one to five years. Some committees require specific expertise. Some committees have associate members. Vacancies on full committees are typically filled from the pool of associates. If you would like to serve on a board or committee, please visit the following link:



<https://www.doverma.gov/596/Volunteer-on-a-Board-or-Committee>

Quick Links

➡ Interested in serving on a volunteer board/committee/commission? Click to learn about the process and vacant positions.

LEARN MORE



➡ Register for the Community Center Club

LEARN MORE



Click below to stay updated on Town news

