



## TOWN OF DENNIS

### MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Elizabeth Sullivan, Town Administrator  
**FROM:** Greg Rounseville, Assistant Town Administrator  
**DATE:** June 28, 2023  
**RE:** Nathaniel H. Wixon School Disposition – 901 Route 134, East Dennis

- 9-27-22 See minutes from Select Board meeting at Dennis Senior Center “listening session”
- 1-24-23 Select Board meeting removed Wixon Feasibility study from County ARPA to Town
- 2-17-23 Building Evaluation & Feasibility Study signed Jacunski Humes Architects
- 2-28-23 Select Board Executive Session discussed Wixon disposition
- 3-9-23 See status memo
- 4-3-23 Advertised Request for Expressions of Interest (RFEI) in Goods and Services Bulletin, Central Register, Cape Cod Times, Clerks Bulletin Board and on Town website
- 5-2-23 Annual Town Meeting voted affirmatively to support \$300,000 for costs associated with insurance and minimal maintenance for Wixon
- 6-2-23 RFEI due date received five (5) responses on due date and an additional two (2) after that date:
  - [DennisOwnersGroup@gmail.com](mailto:DennisOwnersGroup@gmail.com)
  - YMCA Cape Cod
  - Cape Cod Disabilities Network
  - Yarmouth-Dennis Soccer Club
  - Dennis Municipal Affordable Housing Trust
  - Friends of Dennis Pickleball
  - Mid-Cape Ice Arena (received 6-5-23 due to technical difficulties)
  - Dennis Youth Baseball – Scott Keough (presentation at Select Board meeting 6-6-23)
- Please note there were a number of companies that did request information regarding RFEI, but did not submit proposal
  - Civico Development – mixed income, mixed use development
  - Foran Realty, Inc. – Mergers and Acquisitions – Cape Cod Firm
  - Smolak & Vaughan, LLP – legal firm Land Use Development, Zoning and Permitting, etc.
  - The Coastal Companies – Design Build Firm

I met with one of the developers who indicated there may be interest in developing property for mixed use housing if the school building was removed from site. He believed the cost of any remodel of the existing building would be excessive and it would be difficult to receive a return on investment. As we discussed the pro's and con's of that possibility he believed the demolition of Wixon would be somewhere in the range of 3-4 million to demolish and dispose of. He also noted if the Town were to sell the property outright there may be some advantage to the developer to recoup some of the expense of demolition in recycling of onsite material (i.e. crushed asphalt, brick & concrete – ABC, copper, etc.).

Please note the Jacunski Humes Architects is gathering information regarding the building existing condition and possible use and will not be completed with analysis until the end of July.

Dennis Select Board  
Tuesday, September 27, 2022 at 5:00 PM  
Dennis Senior Center – Center for Active Living  
1045 Route 134, S. Dennis, MA  
Page 1 of 2

In attendance:

Select Board members: Chris Lambton, John Terrio, Chris Flanagan, Paul McCormick, James Plath

Town Staff: Town Administrator Liz Sullivan, Assistant Town Administrator Greg Rounseville, Executive Assistant Courtney Butler, Animal Control Officer Lori Miranda, Town Engineer Tom Andrade, Beach and Recreation Director Dustin Pineau

**CALL TO ORDER: 5:00 PM**

Chair Lambton called the meeting to order at 5:00 PM.

**CONSIDER SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC REGARDING POTENTIAL USES OF THE WIXON MIDDLE SCHOOL PROPERTY**

Chair Lambton thanked the audience for attending the listening session. He asked for people to come to the podium to make suggestions for the Wixon Middle School Property (“Property”):

- Ms. Miranda spoke to the use of the Property for a dog park in the far field.
- Hank Bowen, Recreation Commission, suggested the Property become the Town recreation and community center. He noted that the use of the building, year-round, will allow more enhanced programming for residents of all ages. This would include an art center, café, sports fields and classes, and many other areas for use.
- Dorria DiManno, South Dennis, spoke to keeping the auditorium and gymnasium. She also suggested maximizing the whole property, not just the building; and also learning from other towns who have recently developed old schools into community centers. Ms. DiManno spoke about mixed-use (commercial/residential) and mixed-housing (elder, and low-income). She further suggested a cultural center, swimming pool, daycare center and small business shops/eateries.
- Mr. Pineau discussed the expansion of current programming and, specifically, to the need for the 2 gyms at Wixon.
- Sheryl McMahon, Dennis, said that keeping the auditorium/cafeteria/gym area was a no-brainer. She discussed the need for affordable housing in Dennis Port at VIC Hall, and the issue of childcare; she suggested relocating the Child Care Center at VIC to the Property while the VIC Hall is built and used for affordable housing.
  - She suggested not keeping structures that exist at the Property now. She noted that the space was built for a school and was out of date. She agreed that a high level of mixed-use was important. Ms. McMahon also noted that sports fields can be moved as well as the structure.
- Walter Hulst, South Dennis, discussed the Solar Farm on the Property. He asked about the monies generated at the Farm as well, and the costs to repair/remove the Wixon building.
- Brad Bishop, Dennis, spoke in support of the Pickleball program and the idea of an indoor winter program. He also spoke to the current parking situation (on Old Chatham Road) and asked to find parking in closer proximity to the courts. He also suggested a Yoga program, in a room with a soft floor/carpet.
- Ms. McMahon asked if the Board was willing to do a survey outside of a listening session for ideas on how to best use the facility. She also noted it could be a possible marine sanctuary.

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She asked for a survey to be initiated town-wide and a multi-prong approach to gathering information.

- Karen Mazza, East Dennis, emphasized the need for childcare. She noted the Hyannis Youth Center as an example.
- Gary Nowitz suggested seasonal activities, like a farmer's market.

2 letters were sent to the Board prior to the meeting that were noted for the record: Carole Bell suggested the property be used for recreation. Deb Powell suggested the property be used for new town hall offices.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**Mr. Terrio moved at 5:25 pm to adjourn; Mr. Flanagan seconded. The Board voted 5-0-0.**

**GREG ROUNSEVILLE**

**RESPONSE TO RFEI WIXON SCHOOL**

**DISPOSITION**

**DENNIS OWNERS GROUP**

[DennisOwnersGroup@gmail.com](mailto:DennisOwnersGroup@gmail.com)

**05/17/2023**

**5 COPIES**

## **RESPONSE TO RFEI FOR WIXON SCHOOL DISPOSITION**

This response is submitted by the Dennis Owners Group, an organization formed in January of 2023, to support the work of the Dennis Animal Officer and her staff. As well as helping to maintain existing programs and facilities, our goal is to establish a Dog Park in Dennis at the level of today's standards and competitive with the facilities of neighboring towns.

Dennis is home to over 2000 dogs and their owners and families who benefit from their companionship. Numerous studies have shown that dog ownership increases peoples' health, sense of wellbeing and even life span.\* Regular exercise and socialization increase the health and wellbeing of the canine and the Dog Park would be designed with that in mind. It will also reduce the occasional problem of dogs loose in neighborhoods.

The field behind the Wixon School would be an ideal location for the following reasons.

1. It is contiguous to other town properties such as Pickle Ball Courts, Solar Panels, Track and Ball Fields.
2. The field is leveled and free of forested growth which greatly reduces startup costs.
3. The field is distant from major vehicle traffic which protects the dogs and their handlers.
4. The location is central to the town.
5. Parking is established, again saving in costs.
6. .Access can be from Old Chatham Rd. if future development cuts off access from the school.
7. A water line is available, reducing startup cost.

\*American Heart Association

Funding for the construction of the Park would come from Grants and fundraising with little or no cost to the town. The Dennis Owners Group has an EIN number and has applied for and expects to be granted a 501c status.

While we have not been actively fundraising, we currently have pledges of over \$30,000 in private funds. The Stanton Foundation, a foundation formed by Frank Stanton, the former, long term head of CBS, actively funds the construction of Dog Parks. In the last few years they have funded a number of projects in Southern Mass. and on Cape Cod, including Barnstable and Brewster. They will fund 90% of all construction costs up to \$250,000 and after the Park is opened they will provide 3 grants of 5% of the construction costs within a period of five years. Please see the attached Memoranda of Understanding from the Stanton Foundation. We also strongly suggest that you take the time to drive out to Brewster and see the Brewster Dog Park which is behind the Police Station on Rt 124.

The support of the Select Board is key to working with Stanton and first and foremost is the commitment of a site. While there are other possible sites in Dennis, we believe that the Wixon site would be the most feasible and because of the absence of land clearing could come in substantially lower than the \$250,000 spent in Brewster, again with little or no cost to the town. The Park will require approximately 3 acres which is available at Wixon,

While we feel that this project will benefit Animal Control, it is also a recreational use of the land and if we are as successful as Brewster has been, a large percentage of our population will use this as a recreational facility. The basic plan would be for a small dog pen, (dogs under 30 lbs) and a large dog pen (dogs over 30 lbs). Both pens would have areas of pea stone, mulch and sand. Both areas will have a walking track around the area inside the fence. The dogs in these pens will be with owners, but without leashes. There would be a third smaller pen for dogs on leash who need socialization. This area would be ideal for training and we would encourage area trainers to use it. The entire park would have a walking path around it ¼ mile in length for general recreation, See exhibit 1

Dennis is in a fortuitous position to add an asset to the town recreational facilities with little or no cost to the town. There is a strong volunteer base who will welcome the opportunity to make this possible and to insure that it operates in a manner which is a credit to the community. Our current Dog Park was developed to solve a problem with the location rather than with an eye of what would be best for the dogs and owners. We are committed to make the current park as good as it can be, but it is just too small to work well. Many Dennis dog owners are actually taking their dogs to neighboring towns. On one afternoon last week there was one dog in the Dennis Park and eighteen in the Brewster park.. That says it all.

Thank you for this opportunity. Please don't hesitate to ask any questions you might have and we will be happy to meet with you at your convenience.

Dennis Owners Group

DennisOwnerGroup@gmail.com

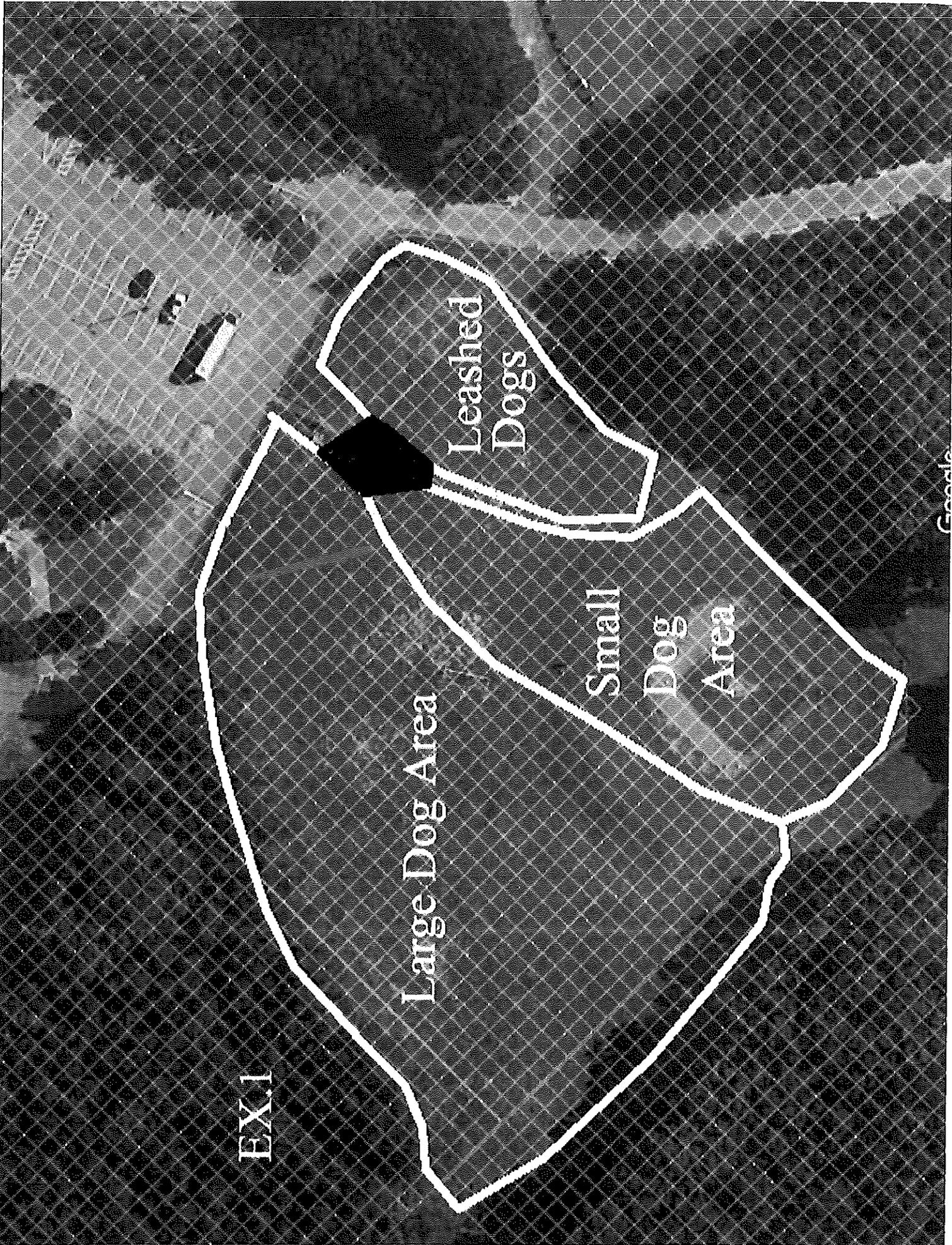
Chair: Greg Kline

Vice Chair: Kate Decker

Treasurer: Terry Reed

Board Members: Sue Gierej, John Beesaw

The group currently has some 150 members and is growing daily, a good indication how much support there is for a new Dog Park.



EX.1

Large Dog Area

Small Dog Area

Leashed Dogs

Google

MOU – City/Town of [XXXXXXXX]

The purpose of this Memorandum of Understanding is to set forth the mutual understandings and commitments between the Stanton Foundation (the "Foundation") and the CITY/TOWN of [XXXXXXXX] (the "CITY/TOWN"), acting through its [TOWN ADMINISTRATOR/MANAGER OR MAYOR], pursuant to which the Foundation will make a capital gift for the design and construction of a dog recreational space ("DRS") at [DRS LOCATION] in [XXXXXXXX], MA.

Terms:

1. The Foundation will make a one-time \$ [90% OF HARD CONSTRUCTION COSTS] capital grant for the construction of the DRS provided the MOU is signed, The CITY/TOWN has committed [\$XX,XXX] in capital funds and the Foundation has approved the DRS plans.
2. The Foundation will provide three capital grants of up to 5% of the hard construction costs each during the period beginning one year after the opening of the park and not later than five years after the opening of the park provided that: 1) annual narrative and financial reporting is up to date, and 2) The CITY/TOWN is supporting the operating budget of the DRS.
3. The CITY/TOWN has identified and designated CITY/TOWN owned land at [DRS LOCATION] for the DRS and has the right to use this land.
4. The CITY/TOWN approves the use of an area within [DRS LOCATION] for use as a DRS subject to full compliance with all applicable zoning Bylaws of the CITY/TOWN. The operations of the DRS will be fully compliant with all applicable zoning and CITY/TOWN Bylaws.
5. The [TOWN ADMINISTRATOR/MANAGER OR MAYOR] designates [TOWN EMPLOYEE NAME AND TITLE] as the point of contact (POC) with respect to all issues related to the construction, operation and reporting regarding the DRS. Design and construction documents will be submitted directly to the POC for input from appropriate departments and by the Foundation. Should the CITY/TOWN's designee leave, the CITY/TOWN will provide a new POC as soon as possible, but not later than 30 days.
6. All grants by the Foundation will be provided to the CITY/TOWN pursuant to the provisions of Section 53A of Chapter 44 of the Massachusetts General Laws.
7. Initial commitments: In the initial stages of this project, the Foundation will look to the CITY/TOWN to:
  - Manage public communications during construction and thereafter
  - Maintain a DRS account to receive the grant and provide quarterly reporting on the use of these funds.
  - Oversee the construction of the DRS including bidding and construction oversight.
  - Make progress payments to contractors and other vendors upon satisfactory completion of work.
  - Facilitate regular communication with designated representatives of the Foundation from execution of this MOU.
  - Provide a financial report following payment of all project expenses after the completion of construction.
8. The CITY/TOWN has identified or will identify an existing water line that will be made available for the DRS and that will provide water suitable for safe drinking for dogs. The CITY/TOWN

commits to complete the infrastructure work necessary for such water line to become operational prior to the completion of construction of the DRS. The CITY/TOWN agrees to maintain such water line on a continuous basis for so long as the DRS is operating.

9. The CITY/TOWN will provide waste containers that will be installed at the DRS. The CITY/TOWN agrees that the [DEPARTMENT], will monitor the waste containers at the DRS on a [DAILY/WEEKLY] basis and empty as needed.
10. The CITY/TOWN will install signage at the DRS in compliance with applicable sign code.
11. The CITY/TOWN will provide written reports to the Foundation outlining usage, finances and other issues related to the DRS as mutually agreed.
12. The CITY/TOWN will comply with operating guides as described in Attachment A.
13. If requested by the media or in its own releases, the CITY/TOWN may use the following language in describing the Foundation: *The Stanton Foundation is a private foundation, created by Frank Stanton, longtime President of CBS. It has as one of its missions, promoting the welfare of dogs and encouraging the dog-human bond.* If a media inquiry requires additional information about the Foundation, the CITY/TOWN will make reasonable efforts to provide the Foundation with 2 business days to review the material to be provided. The Foundation understands that it may not always be possible for the CITY/TOWN to provide such prior review.
14. The CITY/TOWN recognizes the significant financial contribution of the Foundation and agrees that such contribution would be given substantial weight if a future request to rename the DRS is submitted to the [TOWN ADMINISTRATOR/MANAGER OR MAYOR].
15. The CITY/TOWN's intent is to maintain the [DOG PARK NAME] DRS for a period of no less than ninety-nine years.
16. The CITY/TOWN will attempt to form or work with a "Friends" group to assist with cleanings, fundraising and programming.
17. The Foundation and the CITY/TOWN agree that the grant monies provided to the CITY/TOWN for the design and construction of the DRS are subject to the condition that the Foundation will have the right to approve any contractors selected by the CITY/TOWN for the design and construction of the DRS. The Foundation agrees that any payments made from such grant monies to a design contractor approved by the Foundation shall not be subject to recall or challenge regardless of whether the Foundation subsequently fails to approve a construction contractor.
18. As per documents provided by the CITY/TOWN, both parties are committed to the opening of the DRS no later than [TARGET OPENING DATE]. The CITY/TOWN will notify the Foundation's Project Advisor of the expected start date when the contract is let, the date on which construction begins and at the 50% progress point. Any delay in the expected completion date will be promptly reported to the Foundation.

Agreed to:  
The Stanton Foundation

Agreed to:  
CITY/TOWN of [XXXXXX]

By:

By:

Title:

Title:

Date:

Date:

□

## **Attachment A**

The general understandings concerning this project in addition to those described in the MOU are as follows:

### **Goals.**

The goals of this project are to improve animal welfare; foster Town community and camaraderie and generally improve the quality of life in [TOWN NAME] through the creation of a "Dog Recreational Space" (DRS) in [LOCATION] as described in the attached MOU.

### **Design.**

The DRS is to be built substantially to plan as provided in the Design grant application subject to the Town's planning and design review process.

### **Approvals.**

The Town of [TOWN NAME] will provide the Stanton Foundation the opportunity to review and approve the design and construction plans for the DRS prior to the construction bid process.

Such review and approval is expected to take approximately four weeks following submission of the completed design and construction documents. Pursuant to the Town Charter, final design and operating plans are subject to the approval of the Town Administrator or his designee.

The Town of [TOWN NAME] will create a Coordinating Committee that will meet as required, but at least quarterly during first three years of operation.

The Coordinating Committee will be responsible for:

- Recommending operating policies such as rules and regulations to the appropriate Town department
- Regulating use by out of town dog owners
- Developing the annual proposal to the Foundation for the use of follow-on capital grants from the Foundation,

The membership of the committee shall include two Town representatives and a member of the Friends of [NAME] Dog Park or similar Town canine association if such a group exists. Additional members may be added by unanimous consent of the initial members.

Changes in operating policies must be approved by the Town Administrator or designee.

### **Miscellaneous.**

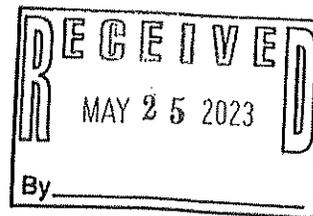
Other than as specifically provided herein, the Foundation will not provide ongoing support for

the operation of the DRS.

The participating organizations will not seek renaming of the DRS except in acknowledgment of an endowment gift from which the income is sufficient to cover 50% or more of the annual budget of the DRS.

The timetable for the project shall correspond approximately to the timetable included in the MOU. The parties agree that a [DATE] groundbreaking is desirable.

859035 v4



May 23, 2023

Select Board  
Town of Dennis  
685 Route 134  
South Dennis, MA 02660

Dear Select Board,

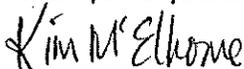
The Cape Cod Disability Network is pleased to submit a Request for Expressions of Interest (RFEI) Letter on behalf of our group to provide workforce housing for our staff at the site of the Wixon School. Our collaborative comprises four Cape Based Human Service Agencies (CapeAbilities, Community Connections, Latham Centers, Inc., and LIFE, Inc.). Together, we are committed to creating a supportive community for our residents and team members who work tirelessly to provide high-quality care to individuals with complex needs.

Affordable workforce housing is in high demand in the Cape Cod community, particularly for Direct Service Professionals in Human Services. Many of our staff members would like to remain here on the Cape, yet they face a significant challenge in finding affordable housing close to their workplace. Providing workforce housing is an important step in ensuring that our staff feels valued and supported, allowing them to focus on providing exceptional care to our residents.

Areas where we would like more information, include the feasibility of an accelerated plan for addressing the wastewater at Wixon, which we understand is in phase four. We recognize the potential impact on the project and believe it is essential to address concerns related to wastewater treatment in a participatory and collaborative manner. In addition, it would be necessary for us to understand the town's plans for recreational facilities in the building, if any.

The Cape Cod Disability Network has a wealth of experience in providing housing for the individuals in our programs, and we feel confident in our ability to create and manage housing for our staff. We welcome collaborating with stakeholders to discuss our qualifications and experience further. We recognize the importance of retaining our current staff members and attracting recruits to join our committed workforce.

Thank you for your time and consideration of our interest.

  
Kim McElholm, President  
CapeAbilities

  
David Botting, President  
Community Connections, Inc.

  
Diane Enochs, Executive Director  
LIFE, Inc.

  
Anne McManus, President  
Latham Centers, Inc.



**Yarmouth-Dennis Soccer Club, Inc.**  
PO Box 422  
South Yarmouth, MA 02664-0422

DENNIS TOWN CLERK  
RCVD 2023MAY2PM1:53

May 2, 2023

Elizabeth Sullivan  
Town Administrator  
Dennis Town Hall  
685 Route 134  
Dennis, MA 02660

**RE: Response to RFEI for Wixon School Disposition**

Dear Administrator Sullivan:

On behalf of the Yarmouth-Dennis Soccer Club (YDSC), I would like to express our interest in the continued use of the athletic fields at the Wixon School, specifically the soccer field.

YDSC is a non-profit, US Soccer-sanctioned, youth soccer organization based right here in the towns of Dennis and Yarmouth. Each year, we provide over 750 local children between the ages of 3 ½ - 18 a safe place to be physically active, make connections with their peers and develop personally to reach their fullest athletic potential.

Since we do not own any field space, we rely heavily on the support of the Town Recreation Department and Dennis-Yarmouth Regional School District for the use of their fields. Every Spring and Fall, our players use Wixon almost everyday of the week. Our organization has been using the fields at Wixon for at least a decade.

The fact is that field space is lacking in Dennis. There are currently only two places in Dennis to play soccer: Johnny Kelley and Wixon. We heavily use both fields. If we were to lose access to Wixon, we would have to make cuts to our program because there are simply no other locations to use. With the Town of Dennis approaching build-out, we don't foresee the construction of new fields either.

In closing, we support the transfer of all the Wixon athletic fields to the Town Recreation Department. This would ensure that local youth sports groups such as ours will continue to have field access in the future.

If needed, I can be reached at [president@ydsoccer.org](mailto:president@ydsoccer.org) or 617-480-1881 (cell/text).

Thank you for your consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Peter F. Kudarauskas". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

PETER KUDARAUSKAS  
President, Yarmouth-Dennis Soccer Club

cc: Dustin Pineau, Beach and Recreation Director, Town of Dennis  
YDSC Board of Directors

DENNIS TOWN CLERK  
RCVD 2028 JUN 24 AM 10:55

# WIXON SCHOOL DISPOSITION

ATTN: Elizabeth Sullivan, Town Administrator  
Dennis Town Hall, 685 Route 134, Dennis, MA 02660.

Abstract

This Expression of Interest from the Dennis Municipal Affordable Housing Trust requests the Wixon School property be considered for the General Purpose of AFFORDABLE/WORKFORCE/SENIOR/VETERANS HOUSING

Dave Winther, DMAHT Trustee  
on behalf of the  
Dennis Municipal Affordable Housing Trust  
dave.winther@gmail.com

**ATTN: Elizabeth Sullivan**

**Town Administrator**

**Dennis Town Hall**

**685 Route 134, Dennis, MA 02660.**

**RESPONSE TO RFEI FOR WIXON SCHOOL DISPOSITION**

**SUBMITTED BY: DENNIS AFFORDABLE HOUSING TRUST (hereinafter the Trust or DAHT)**

**PREPARED BY: David Winther, DAHT Trustee**

**DATE SUBMITTED: June 2, 2023**

**GENERAL PURPOSE: AFFORDABLE/WORKFORCE/SENIOR/VETERANS HOUSING**

**BACKGROUND**

The Town of Dennis has a critical shortage of housing including housing for employees, low to moderate income individuals, seniors and veterans. This Response to the Request for Expressions of Interest of the Disposition of the Wixon School Property is to encourage development of housing for the above uses on a portion of the property. As the Request from the Town notes the existing solar ground mounted array and pickle ball court will remain owned by the Town. The Town also would like to have continued access to the 3 baseball fields, the track, and the 2 playgrounds for use by Town residents. This Response would allow all those items to remain. This Response also would allow continued availability of the auditorium used for Town Meetings and the gymnasiums used by the Town. Other possible uses for the existing property have included moving the existing childcare facility now located at the Town owned VIC Hall property (187 Depot Street in Dennis Port) to the Wixon School Property in 2 years when the lease expires at the VIC Hall location and use of an area in Wixon School for a Big Brothers/Big Sisters facility. Both of these requests, as well as others that may surface, could be accommodated by this Response. The Response envisions an outside third-party developer be hired by bid contract to develop the remaining portion of the property, outside the areas noted above, for remodeling of the existing structure into housing units. This could be accomplished either by sale of a portion of the property or long-term lease of the land.

The Dennis Affordable Housing Trust (the Trust or DAHT) was established in 2006 with, as noted in the Bylaw, "the purpose of creating and preserving affordable housing in Dennis for the benefit of low-and-moderate income households." Since then, the Trust has been involved in various efforts to add to the existing affordable housing in Dennis. This has included purchase and renovation of 2 houses (3 units) for rent, provided financial assistance for FORWARD at the Rock housing for autistic adults, financial support to a rental assistance program among many other initiatives. Last year a Housing Coordinator was hired to guide and assist with these initiatives. Even after these efforts, Dennis only has 5.6% of its housing (426 units) available as affordable units per the State Subsidized Housing Inventory List as of the end of 2022. This is well below the State suggested 10% threshold. Other indicators of housing shortages include up to 1,000 households leaving the Cape per year according to Housing Assistance Corp. (HAC) due to the lack of available and affordable housing. HAC also found half of all Cape workers live off Cape due to the lack of sufficient housing. Clearly, there has been and will be for the foreseeable future a need to increase housing of all types. Refer to the Dennis Housing Production Plan effective 1/22/22 for more information on housing issues and solutions.

## SUITABILITY

Like other recent conversions of former schools in Massachusetts, the Wixon School Property can readily be converted to housing. A local example (most of the following information is from a Cape Cod Times article dated 12/8/2014) is the 94-year-old former John Simpkins Elementary School in Yarmouth across from the Yarmouth Town Hall which was renovated in 2014 with 65 apartments for 55 and older residents consisting of studio, one-and-two-bedroom units. Fifty-eight of the units are rented at affordable rates and the 7 remaining at market rates. Preference for units was given to Barnstable County residents and a lottery was used for non-Cape residents. The town sold the building in 2010 to Stratford Capital Group, a Peabody based company with a large portfolio of affordable housing projects, who hired Callahan Construction of Bridgewater to finish construction after falling-out with another construction company that left the project. WinnResidential manages the property and has an onsite representative in charge of renting apartments. In addition to helping to meet community affordable housing needs, the project is a "successful repurposing of a town building in terms of creating public benefit – attractive, high-quality affordable housing – that will also provide revenue [to the town]. The town received \$563,100 as well as parking and field improvements at the adjacent Sears Field," according to Yarmouth Community Development Director Karen Greene, who also said the project is an asset to the town.

Other examples of successful conversions of former school buildings to housing include WinnDevelopment's 2014 conversion costing \$20 million using public and private funds of Worcester Boys' Trade School to Voke Lofts of Worcester, MA consisting of 84 apartments with half affordable and Home City Development Inc.'s 2021 conversion of the former Elias Brookings Elementary School in Springfield, MA to 42 units of affordable housing using public and private funds. Both of these projects involved buildings built in the early 1900s that stood empty for years before being repurposed as needed affordable housing and adding revenue to the local communities. While the Wixon School Property has different characteristics than the above projects, they do indicate that successful conversions of former school building to affordable housing is possible.

## OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

There are many other considerations that must be addressed as part of the Wixon School Property project. These include, but aren't limited to:

- Informing and Communicating with town residents and stakeholders;
- Environmental Assessments (i.e. septic, traffic, parking, etc.)
- Preserving Town Character through design, landscaping and other characteristics;
- Project Financing by establishing a budget that could include public funds and/or private sources;
- Project Management; and
- Various Other Considerations.

## CONCLUSION

The Town of Dennis has a housing crisis and conversion of the Wixon School Property to, in part, be used for accessible and affordable housing is one solution that the Select Board must give consideration. We look forward to having more discussions on this project as a vital voice in deciding the future direction of the Wixon School Property.

Contacts: Maggie Spade-Aguilar, Housing Coordinator, 774-352-1271, Ext. 271  
Bob Samoluk, DMAHT Co-Chair, [bobsam266@gmail.com](mailto:bobsam266@gmail.com) , 617-510-5599

Kayla Hilts, DMAHT Co-Chair, [khilts@todayrealestate.com](mailto:khilts@todayrealestate.com) , 508-680-4821

## RESPONSE TO RFEI FOR WIXON SCHOOL DISPOSITION

I am writing to urge the consideration of pickleball at the Wixon School property as decisions are made about how to best utilize this valuable land now that the school has moved out.

Friends of Dennis Pickleball (FODP) is an organization of people who have registered with the Town of Dennis to play pickleball at the Wixon Courts at 145 Old Chatham Road, adjacent to Wixon School. As of May 30, 2023, there are 865 members, 69% of whom are Dennis residents. Residents pay \$50 per season; non-residents pay \$70.

During the official pickleball season (in 2023, May 15 through October 15), people must be registered players to participate in the organized play (9 am - 12 noon in May, June, September and October; 8 - 11 am in July and August; 5 - 7 pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays). Dennis residents are accepted into the program regardless of when they register or how many people are already in the program. There is currently a waiting list of 93 non-residents.

The Wixon pickleball courts are used year-round. In mid-winter, multiple courts will be in use if the courts are dry and the temperature is above 35 F. Some winter mornings, all 14 courts are full. In the summer, demand is immense and the courts are bursting at the seams. Particularly in July and August, there are usually eight to ten groups of four waiting to get on the 14 courts.

As many people are aware, pickleball is the fastest growing sport in the country. It appeals to all ages, is easy to learn, and inexpensive to play. It is very popular with seniors, who find it both a physical activity, and a way to socialize and meet new people. In Dennis for 2023, more than 250 of the 865 registered players are new to pickleball (or at least new to Wixon) this year. We expect this demand from new players to continue to grow. FODP makes special efforts to welcome beginners to the courts, to provide instruction, set-aside courts, and encourage intermediates to play games with the beginners. We hope those beginners improve their game and continue to play pickleball.

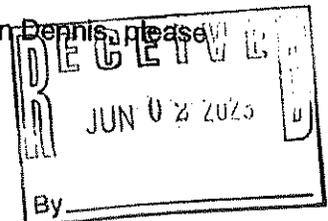
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In addition to outdoor pickleball, FODP players eagerly anticipate being able to use the Wixon school gym for indoor pickleball in the winter months. For the past several years (excluding the Covid years), the town of Dennis has offered indoor pickleball at Ezra Baker Elementary in the evening hours, after school use. This space has helped to serve the need for indoor space on inclement days, but the gym is small and the space is challenging. FODP hopes to use the Wixon gym in the winter in future years, where Dennis could offer morning pickleball in a much larger, more functional gym, and use the gym for other youth and adult programs in the afternoons and evenings. The Wixon gyms are essential for a variety of Dennis sports programs in the winter; these programs will be severely impacted if those gyms are lost to community use.

**As the Town of Dennis moves forward with considering alternate uses for the Wixon property, FODP urges decision-makers to consider pickleball needs, both indoors and outdoors, and to provide space for expansion at some point in the future.**

Thank you for your consideration. If you have any questions about pickleball in Dennis, please feel free to contact me at [fodppres@gmail.com](mailto:fodppres@gmail.com) or 703-999-8921.

Marta Cahill, President, Friends of Dennis Pickleball  
21 Seagrass Circle, South Dennis, MA 02660



## RESPONSE TO RFEI FOR WIXON SCHOOL DISPOSITION

I am writing to urge the consideration of pickleball at the Wixon School property as decisions are made about how to best utilize this valuable land now that the school has moved out.

Friends of Dennis Pickleball (FODP) is an organization of people who have registered with the Town of Dennis to play pickleball at the Wixon Courts at 145 Old Chatham Road, adjacent to Wixon School. As of May 30, 2023, there are 865 members, 69% of whom are Dennis residents. Residents pay \$50 per season; non-residents pay \$70.

During the official pickleball season (in 2023, May 15 through October 15), people must be registered players to participate in the organized play (9 am - 12 noon in May, June, September and October; 8 - 11 am in July and August; 5 - 7 pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays). Dennis residents are accepted into the program regardless of when they register or how many people are already in the program. There is currently a waiting list of 93 non-residents.

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21 Seagrass Circle, South Dennis, MA 02660

June 2, 2023

Ms. Elizabeth Sullivan  
Town Administrator, Town of Dennis  
Dennis Town Hall  
685 Route 134  
Dennis, MA 02660

Re: Response to RFEI for Wixon School

Dear Town Administrator Sullivan:

Please find, Mid Cape Ice Arena, also know as Tony Kent Arena, formal response to the RFEI for the Wixon School Disposition. Approximately three weeks ago we responded to a posting on the Town of Dennis website regarding the RFEI. The posting stated to fill out the information and the town would respond with more information. To date we did not receive a response.

Mid Cape Ice Arena is a non-profit organization that benefits the youth of Dennis and Yarmouth in the areas of ice skating. We also benefit many over towns and cross sections of there populations. We would consider a portion of the Wixon property to build a new facility to replace Tony Kent Arena and possibly expand our mission with the building of field house to benefit more of the youth on Cape Cod.

We would like to be considered in whatever comes next as the Town of Dennis continues varies uses for the Wixon property.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the rink at 508-760-2400. Thank you for your consideration regarding this important matter.

Sincerely,

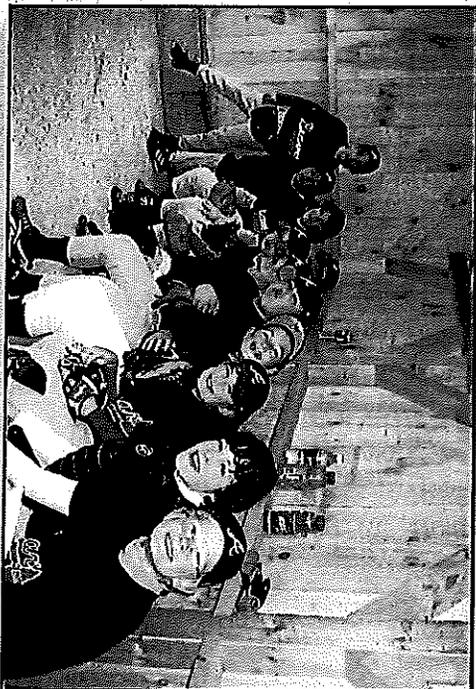
*Lewis E. Alberti III*

6/5/2023

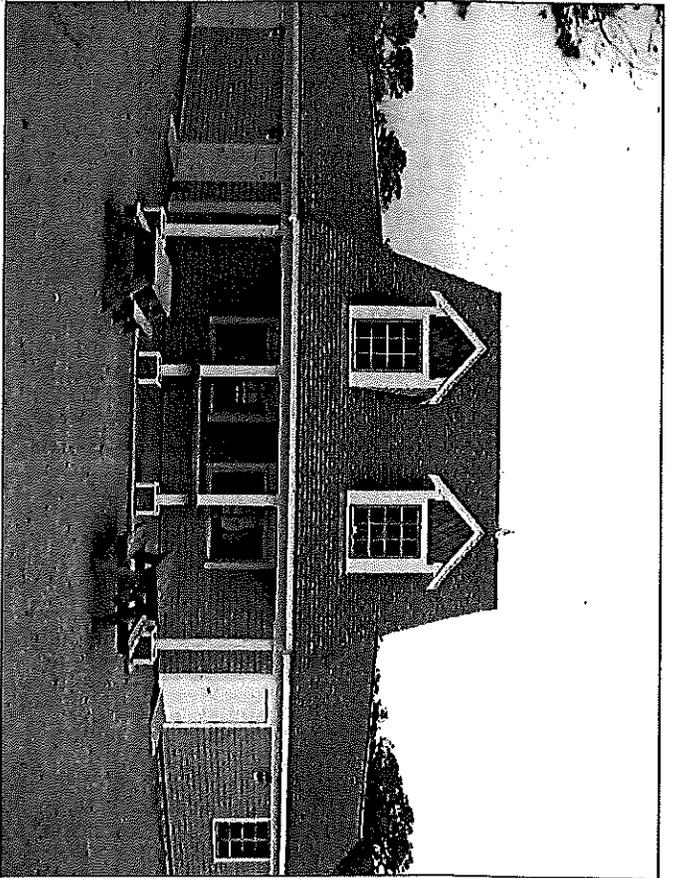
Lewis Alberti  
President, Mid Cape Ice Arena



The purpose of the Dennis Youth Baseball organization is to promote the growth and interest of baseball for the youth in the Town of Dennis. It is our fervent hope that the children will enjoy the game of baseball to the fullest extent and to continue to use this sport as a lifetime activity. To this extent, the Dennis Youth Baseball organization will work closely with the children and their parent/guardians to ensure sportsmanship, camaraderie, pride and love of the game of baseball. Only with the cooperation between the organization, parents, friends and athletes can we accomplish these goals and make the Dennis Youth Baseball program continue to grow.



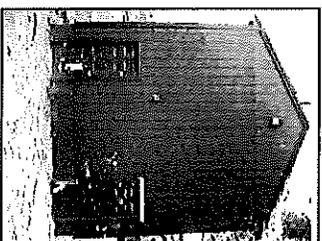
*for the kids...*



Dennis Youth Baseball's Board of Directors held discussions with design and construction professionals starting in 2004. It was determined that the buildings at the Wixon Field were in dire need of replacement. To make cosmetic repairs was not enough at that point. It was agreed that both buildings, the dugouts and some fencing must be removed and built again from the ground up.

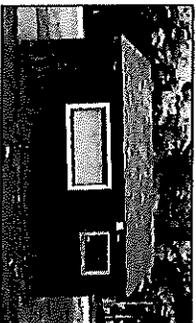
→ The Field House

The Field House, which housed the rest rooms, equipment storage and announcer's booth, was in need of serious care. The lower level flooded in heavy rains, the walls absorbed the water and mildew set in. The resident squirrels made their presence known in a variety of unpleasant ways. The siding was pulling away from the structure and vandalism had taken its toll over many years.



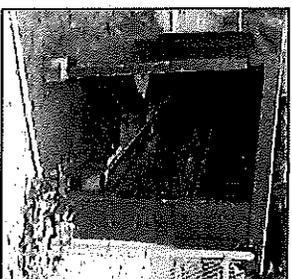
→ The Snack Bar

The Snack Bar was too small, the building's sills were rotted and it had numerous rodent residents.



→ The Dugouts

The first base dugout had a permanent coating of slime on its floor due to being under water most of the time and its wooden frame had decayed so much that it had become dangerous.



Dennis Youth Baseball launched a fund-raising effort to raise the estimated \$125,000 to complete the building project, with volunteer help used as much as offered and practical.

This community project was an amazing success thanks to the hundreds of people who donated money and/or their time to the effort. On the following pages are a listing of these remarkable people and businesses. A few of the hundreds of photographs taken are included.



**THIS FACILITY HAS BEEN MADE POSSIBLE BY  
THE GENEROUS CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE FOLLOWING  
INDIVIDUALS, ORGANIZATIONS AND BUSINESSES**

**General Contractor:** Eric Oman, Oman Construction

**Electrical:** Dave Raunela, David Raunela Electric  
**Foundation & Dugouts:** Chris McCrath, Pine Harbor Wood Products

**Architect Design & Plans:** William B. Daniels

**Artwork & Initial Plans:** Malcolm Wells  
**Field Engineering Plans:** Robin Wilcox, Sweetser Engineering

**Alarm System:** Cape Cod Alarm

**Framing:** Mark Grant, Quality Construction & Dave Hodsdon Construction

**Infield:** Paul Campbell & Hart Farm

**Plumbing:** Ron Hague Plumbing & Heating

**Roofing:** Mild Cape Roofing

**Siding:** B.L. Mosher Construction

**Building Materials**

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Mid-Cape Home Centers • Snow and Jones • Stonewood Products

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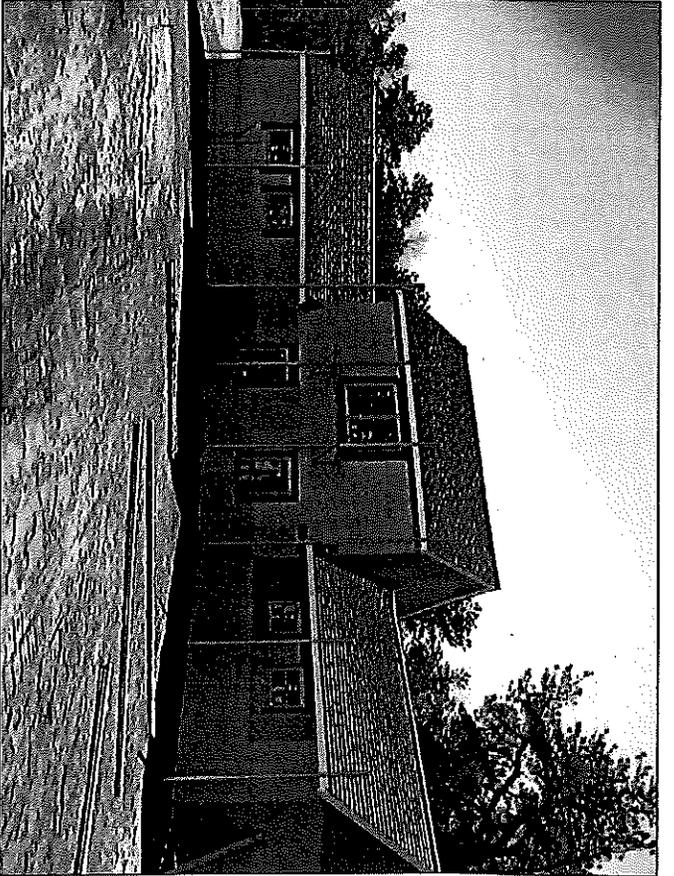
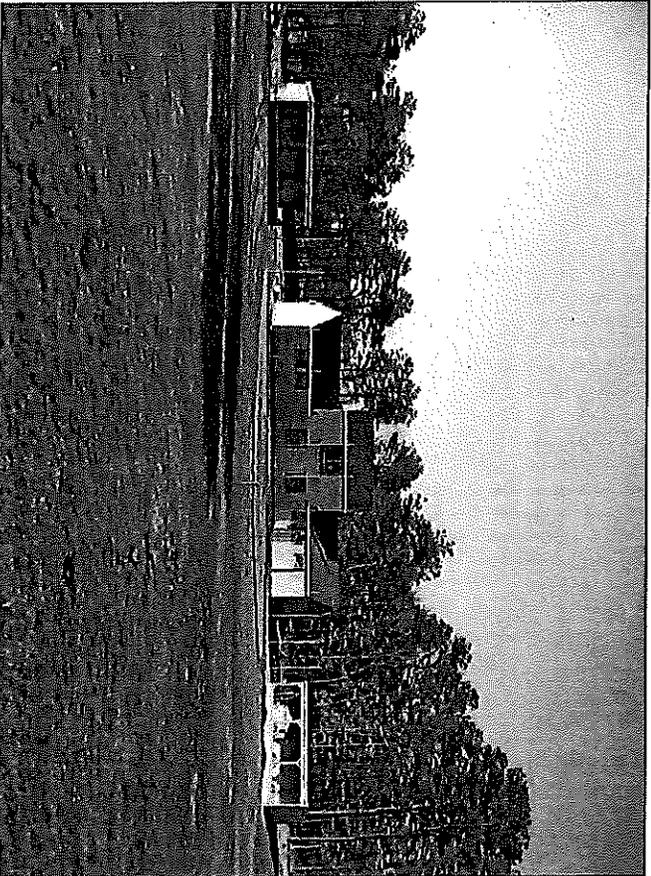
**Sheds:** Pine Harbor Wood Products

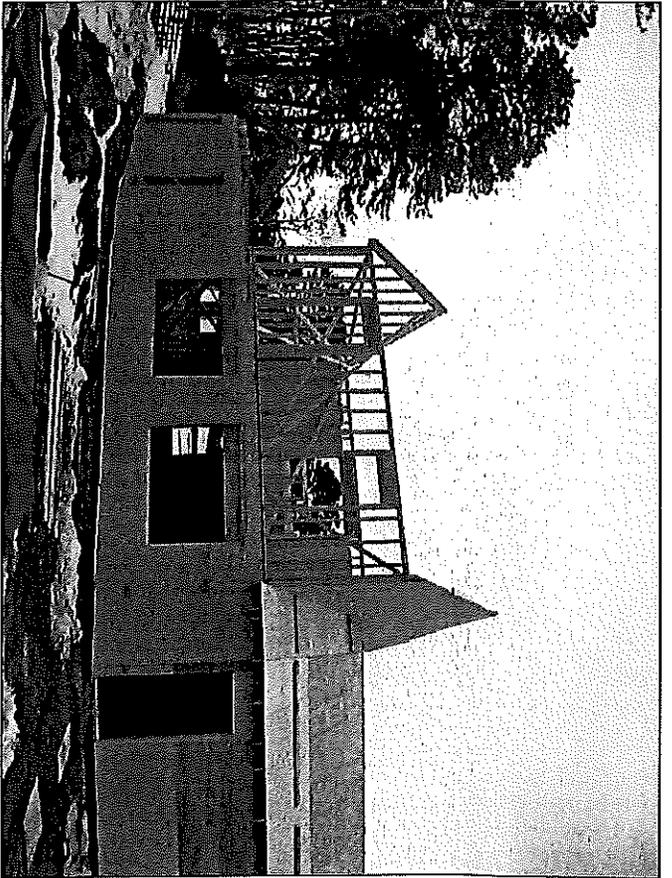
**Signs:** Signs by Jeff Perry

**Slab:** Jim Curran

**Snow Plowing:** Dave Hodsdon

**Tree Work:** Darrin Dion





## *Grand Benefactors*

The Boys & Girls & Parents of Dennis Youth Baseball, 2005 & 2006  
Kathrine Lee Hesse & Theresa Louise Hesse Memorial Golf Tournament

## *Benefactors*

Phillip and Rachel Baroni

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The Andrea Holden Thanksgiving Race -  
In loving memory of Andrea Holden  
The Brodeur Family • Kate Byron • The Chamberlain Foundation  
Gerry & Betsy Garcia • Cape Cod Cooperative Bank  
Conway Foran Realty • Chuck Deluga & Paul W. Sullivan  
Scott & Mary Jane Keough • The Little Family  
Joseph & Rosemary Masse • Peter McDowell Associates  
Deanna Pierce - in memory of Fred Pierce  
Rotary Club of Harwich-Dennis • The Terrio Family

## *Grand Supporters*

The Allen Family • Brad Boyd • The Crosby Family & Dennis Public Market  
The Endres Family & Sundae School  
Hart Farm • The Kossack Family • Labarge Real Estate Services

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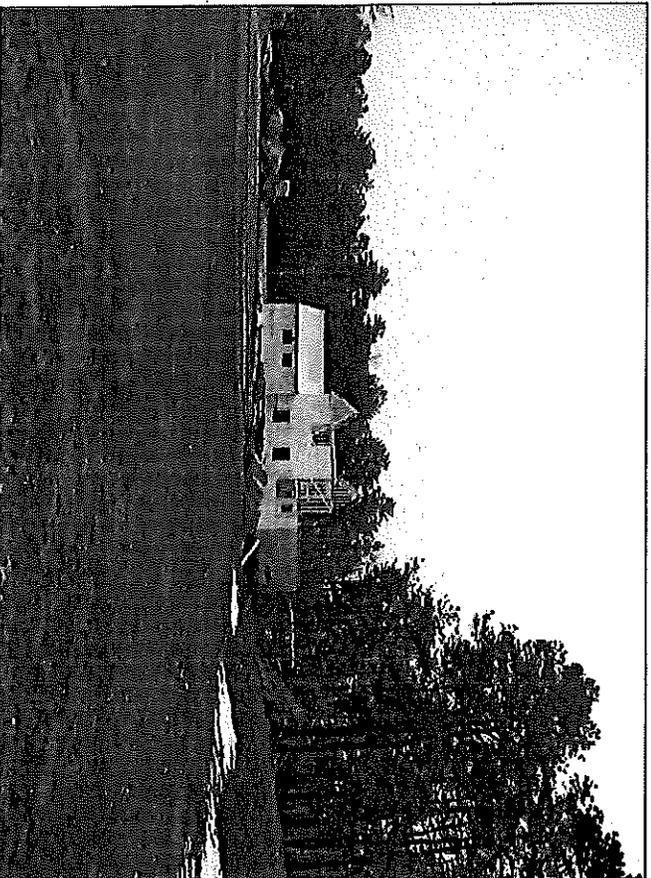
Tim Baker & Sons • Center Stage Cafe at Cape Playhouse  
Century 21 - Sam Ingram Real Estate • The Costello Family  
Beth & Joel Crowell • Dennis Harwich Lions  
Dennis Police Association • The Dickerson Family • The Foley Family  
Patrick Foran - in memory of John E. Foran • Marilyn Gardiner  
The Keele Family • McDevitt Realtors • Seminara Construction  
Law Office of Singer & Singer • Unique Properties Real Estate  
Troy Williams Septic Inspections • Bruce & Regina Work

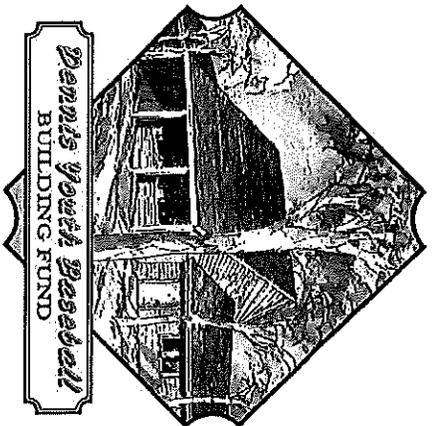
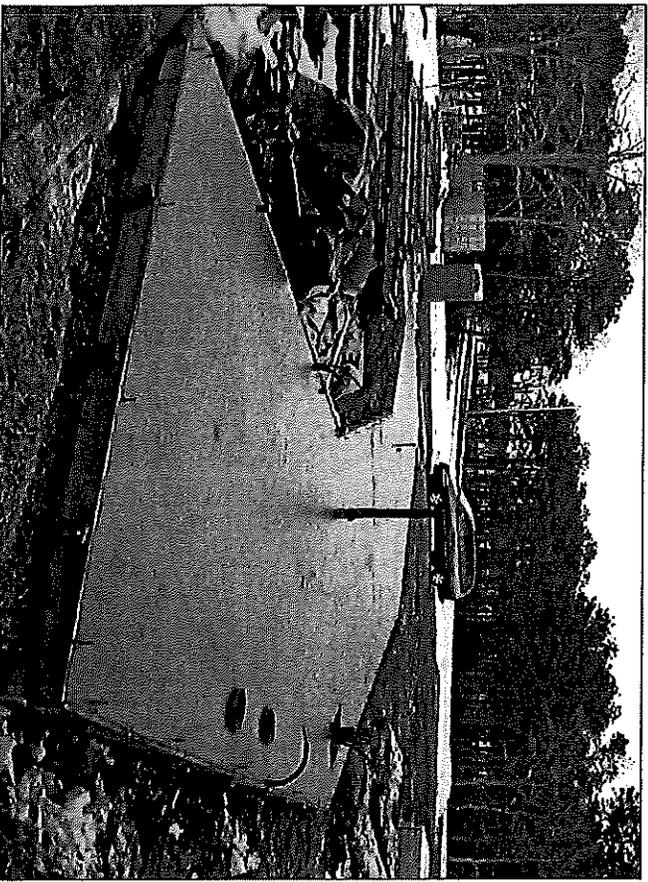
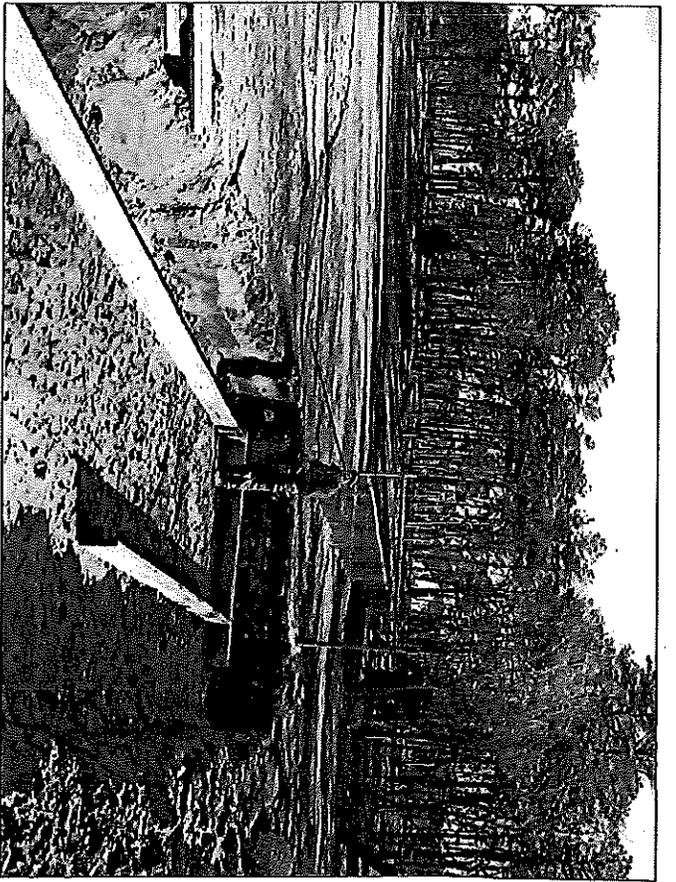
## *Contributors*

Pat Bresnahan • Robert DiGrassie • Bob Duby • Jerry Farias  
Mary & Joe Freeman • G. David & Mary Holden • Tom Perrino  
Reef Realty • Donna Summers • David Taugher • Gertrude H. White

Thanks to the

Dennis-Yarmouth Regional School District Committee for their support





This facility has been made possible through the efforts of many individuals, including

Bob Brodeur, Peter Lomenzo, Eric Oman & Dave Raunela

as well as members of the

2006 DENNIS YOUTH BASEBALL BOARD OF DIRECTORS

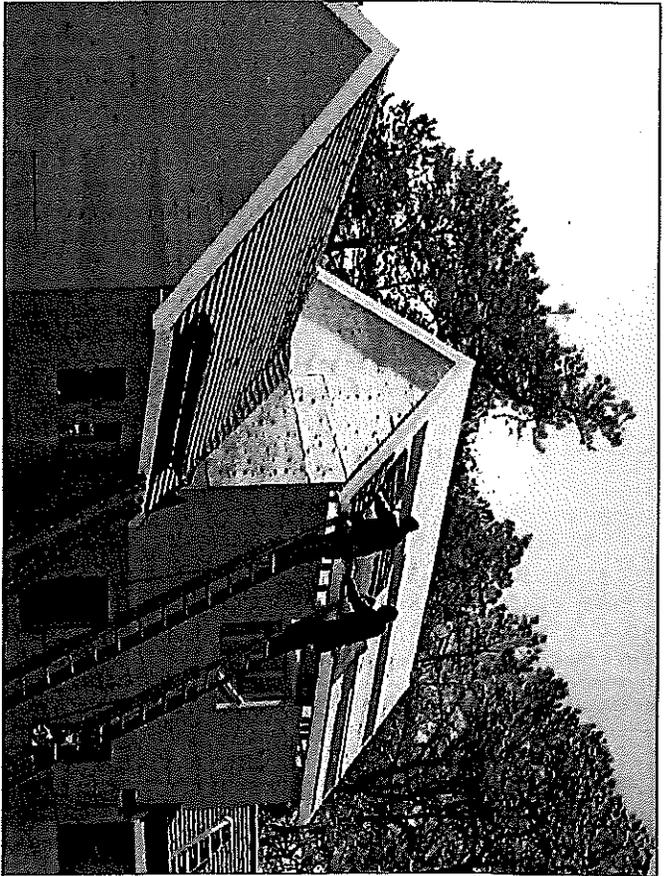
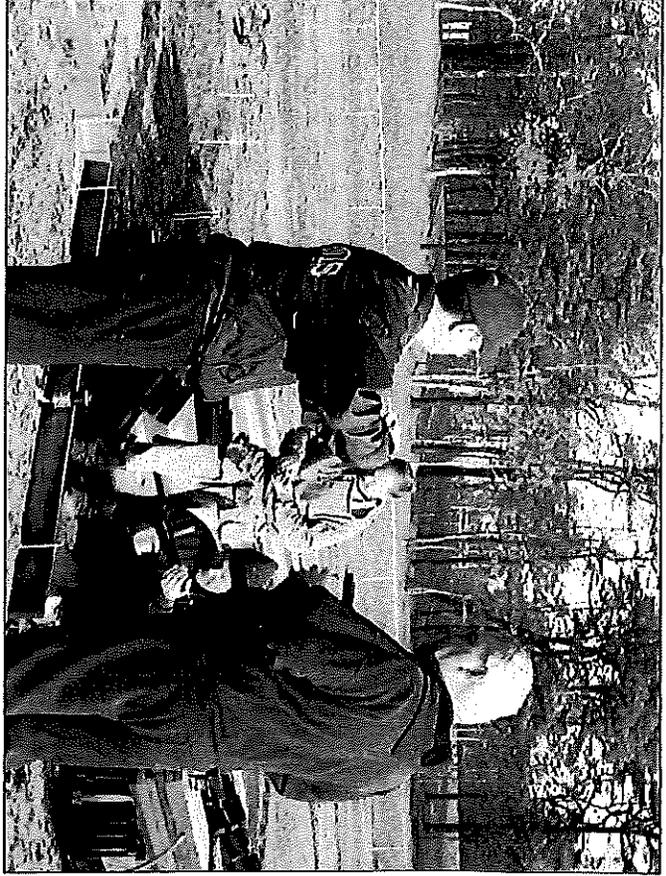
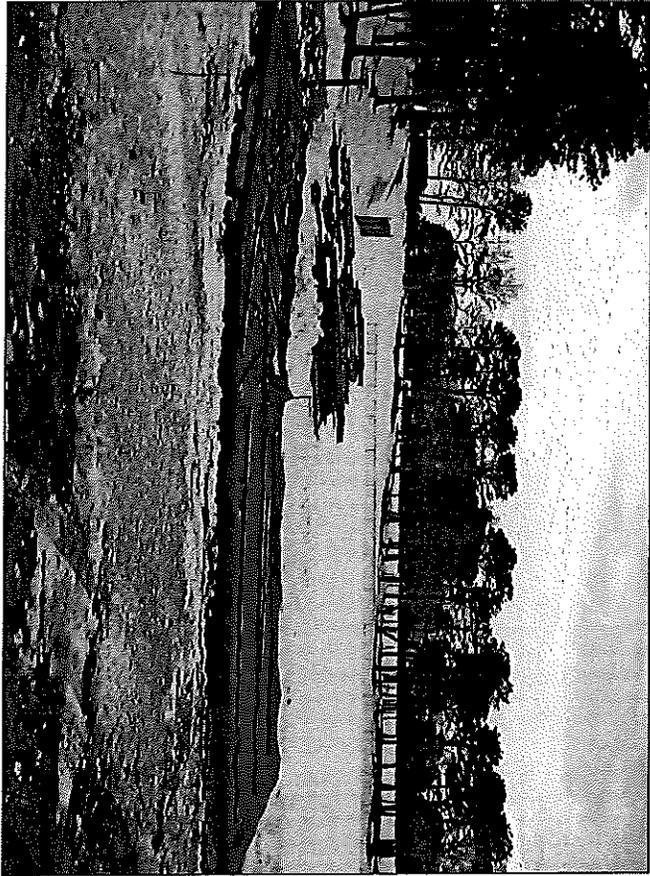
President: Bob Brodeur

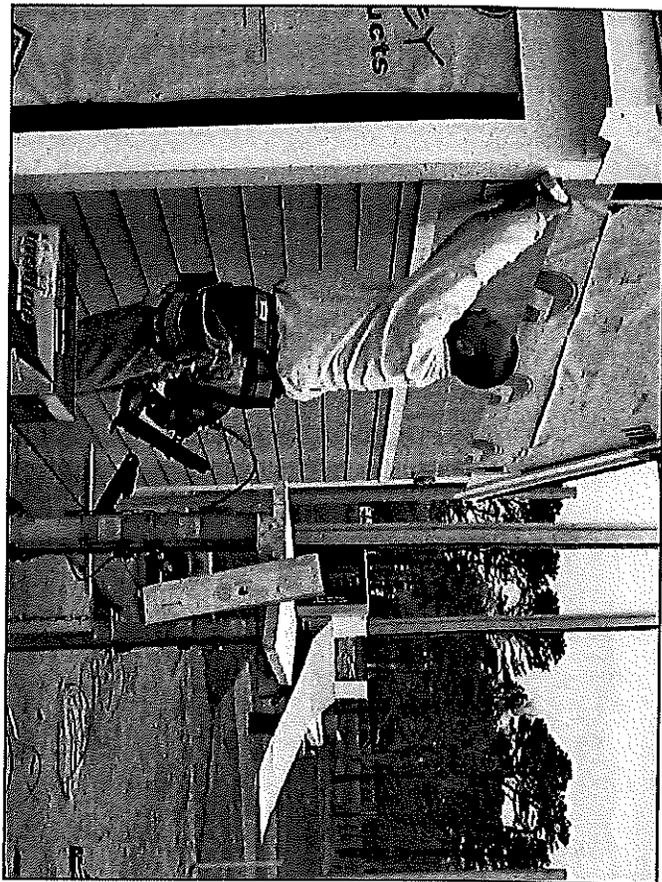
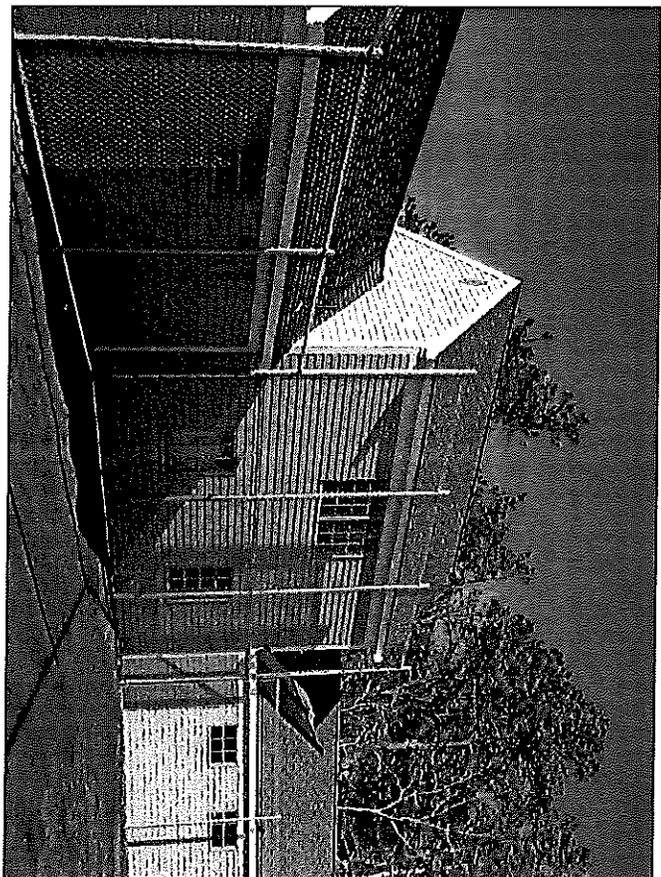
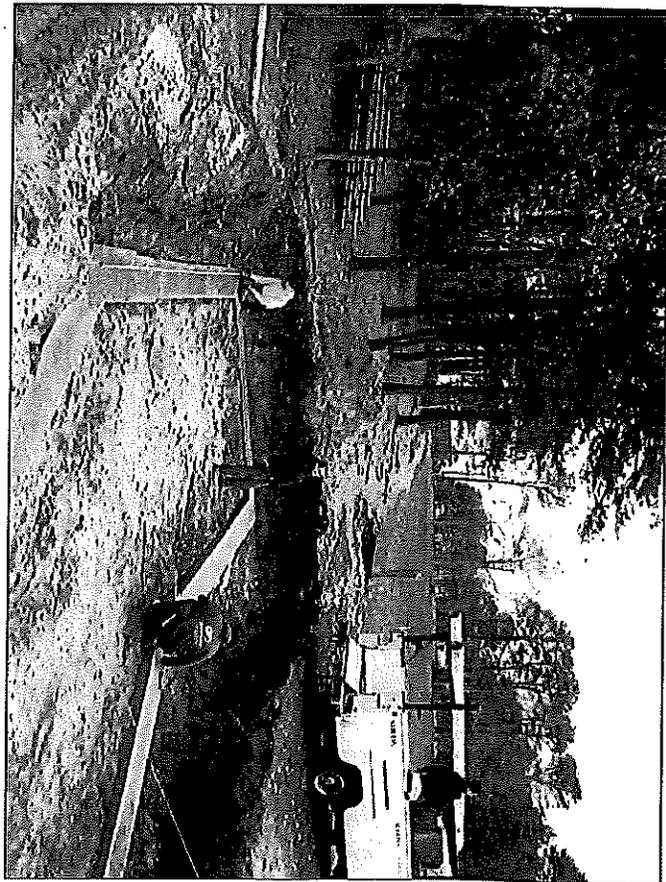
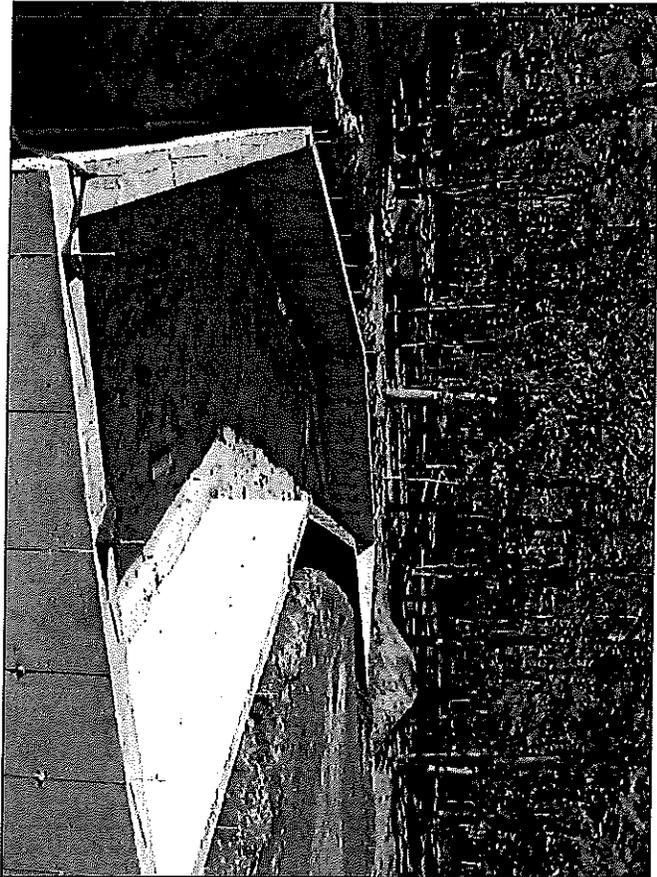
Vice President: Rob Labossiere

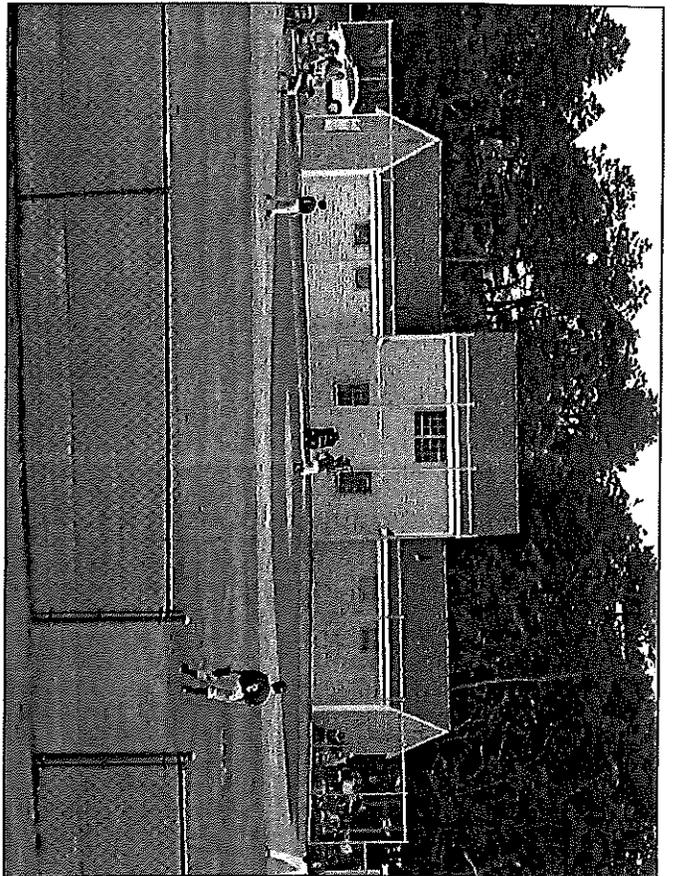
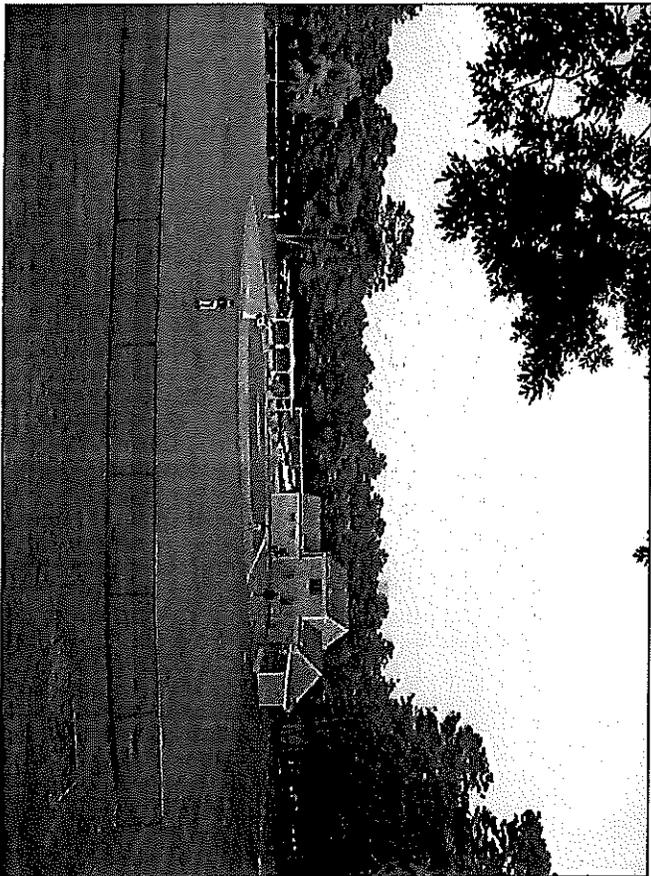
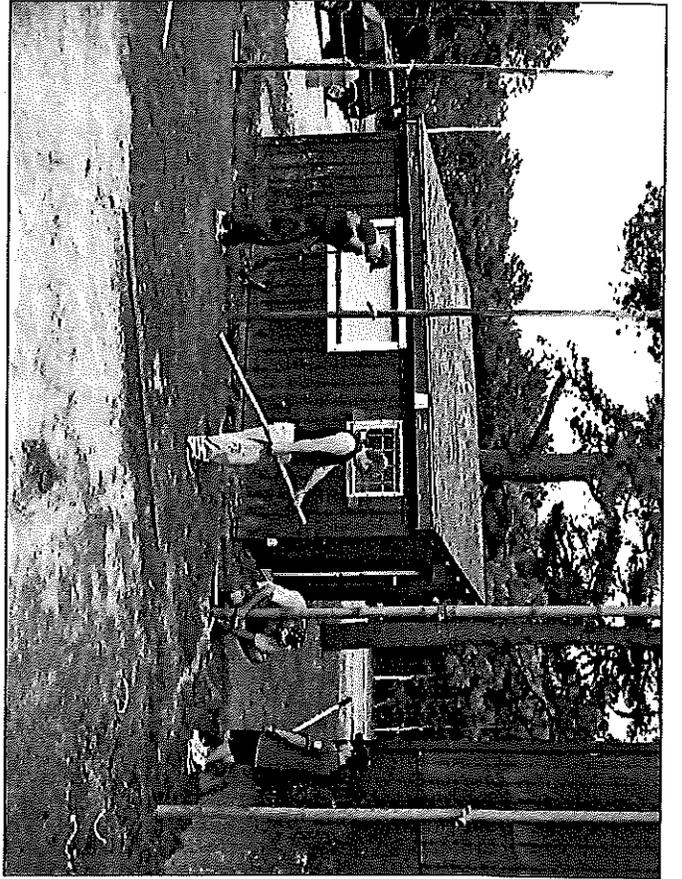
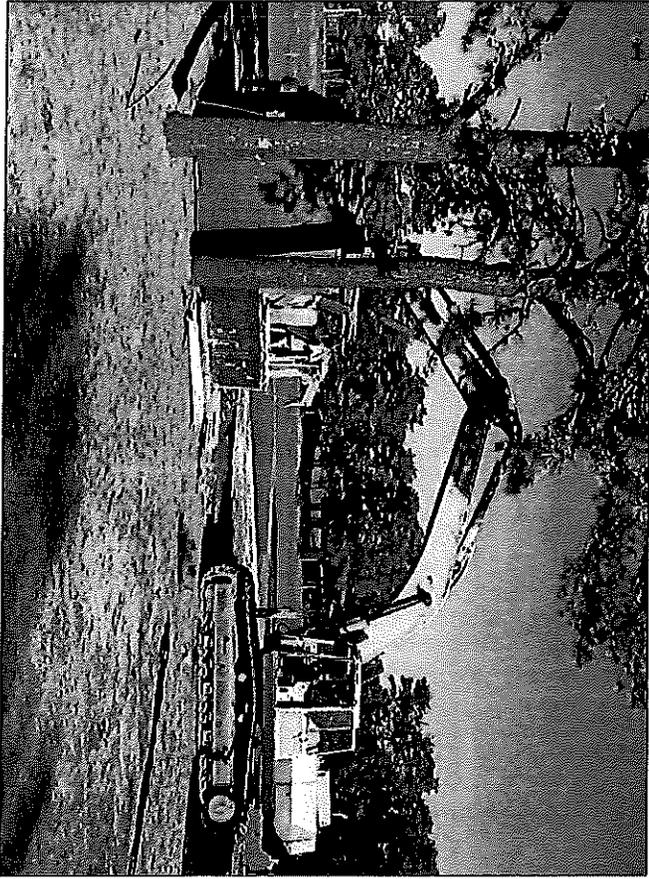
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Scott Allen, Tom Andrade, Brian Beasley, Paul Campbell,  
Lisa Clark, Mike Coutte, Don Dickerson, Darin Dion, Brad Gardiner,  
Scott Keough, Don Kossack, Peter Lomenzo, Todd Martin, Ken Merrill,  
Bert Mosher, Jack O'Connor, Dave Raunela, John Terrio, Troy Williams  
Snack Bar Coordinator: Nancy Kossack







# **DENNIS YOUTH BASEBALL**

**Dedicated 2007**

**This facility made possible by the generous contributions of  
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**Eric Oman, Oman Construction**

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**Foundations & Dugouts: Chris McGrath, Pine Harbor Wood Products**

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**Alarm System: Cape Cod Alarm**

**Framing: Mark Grant, Quality Construction and Dave Hodsdon Construction**

**Infield: Paul Campbell & Hart Farm**

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**Siding: B.L. Mosher Construction**

## **Excavation and Grading**

**Dennis Water District • Northern Paving & Sealcoating • Yardscape Landscaping • Cape Electric Supply**

## **Building Materials**

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**Mid Cape Home Centers • Snow and Jones • Stonewood/Northeast Pine**

## **Landscape Materials**

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**Septic System: AccuSepcheck • Sheds: Pine Harbor Wood Products • Signs: Signs by Jeff Perry**

**Slab: Jim Curran • Snow Plowing: Dave Hodsdon • Tree Work: Darrin Dion**

## **AND TO THOSE WHO MADE CASH DONATIONS**

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Malcolm Wells, Architect - Underground Art Gallery

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Cape Cod Alarm

*Construction*

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*Field Engineering Plans*

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*Foundation Slab*

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*Framing Lumber*

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Stonewood/Northeast Pine

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*Painting*

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*Permits*

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Snow and Jones

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R.E. Brodeur Printing

*Roofing*

Mid Cape Roofing

*Roofing Materials*

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*Septic System*

Joe Martins - AccuSepcheck

*Sheds*

Jamie McGrath - Pine Harbor Wood Products

*Siding*

B.L. Mosher Construction

*Signs*

Jeff Perry - Signs by Jeff

*Snow Plowing*

Dave Hodsdon

*Tree Work*

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