

WALTHAM



Waltham Land Trust, Inc.
P.O. Box 541120
Waltham, MA 02454-1120
www.walthamlandtrust.org
781-893-3355

A non-profit organization dedicated to preserving our community's natural resources through open space advocacy, education, acquisition, and protection.

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**Protecting
Waltham's land
...forever.**

November 27, 2018

Dear Waltham School Building Committee,

The Waltham Land Trust is pleased to see an end to the long period of both rumored and real threats to Waltham's presumably protected open space assets. We are grateful that one of the lowest impact sites has prevailed in the mission to replace the Waltham High School.

We applaud the work going into the latest plans, which show the new high school built mostly on previously developed land at the Stigmatine campus. While the School Department contended throughout the process that the entire site was being considered for development, they have clearly pushed for plans with less of an impact on the city's green space. We're also happy that the amount of land area proposed for surface parking is less than in previous designs.

We offer four recommendations:

1. Please continue to limit (and further reduce, if possible) the footprint of the development on existing green space, such as by minimizing surface parking.
2. Because it seems likely that *some* green space will be lost, engage in a parallel effort to permanently protect equivalent green space elsewhere on the property or elsewhere in the city, as described in WLT's position on development, available online at walthamlandtrust.org.
3. Set aside a location for public trail access into the woods above and behind the school, so that future trail builders can connect the existing trail network at Jericho Hill and Sanderson Heights to the Western Greenway Trail at Chesterbrook Woods.
4. Utilize the intact, forested hillsides, old stone walls, and interconnected habitat at the new high school as a natural laboratory to help our students enjoy and perpetuate a legacy of conservation in Waltham.

Kindest regards,

Sonja Wadman
Executive Director