



TOWN OF STOUGHTON

OFFICE OF THE TOWN MANAGER

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2025 Message to the Citizens of Stoughton

Greetings Stoughton Citizens,

I write this letter to answer a few frequently-asked questions regarding the Train Depot's progress and future usage. I am thrilled that so many of our residents expressed interest in this building's completion and, in the interest of clarity, I want to keep you fully informed.

Why is the project so expensive?

This project's interior budget was created in 2020. The estimated cost to complete the internal renovations was approximately \$4 million; restoration is far more expensive than new construction. If Town Meeting members approve the article for \$350,000, we will be able to complete this phase of reconstruction, including a completely new electrical system, plumbing infrastructure, HVAC, and major structural improvements. The final total is approximately \$2.5 million, roughly \$2.15 million provided through state grants.

Why are you using drywall instead of keeping the original wood paneling?

Our initial budget did not account for the significant destruction we discovered, including water damage, mold, and termite infestation. Very little external wood paneling could be saved and we retained what historical value we could. Years of neglect took their toll and we needed to ensure a safe and hygienic space for residents; thankfully, most of the underlying structure was intact. In rebuilding the train station into a community center, the primary objective is to preserve what we can while also creating a first-class function area.

What will the community center be used for?

In addition to its use as a first-class meeting space for town government, it may be used for weddings, showers, bar and bat mitzvahs, birthday celebrations, christenings, family reunions, block parties, Friday afternoon social hours, community gatherings, fundraisers, charities, and any other event you can think of.

This space can only be utilized by Stoughton residents and employees; it will not be rented to out-of-town applicants or organizations. Because this is solely for community use, the fee will reflect that of a non-profit: the only rental charges will be for janitorial and bartending services. There is no kitchen in the facility, so any food must be supplied by an outside vendor.

Will you offer retail space in the finished building?

This facility will be strictly used for Stoughton community events and will not be open to the public outside of pre-scheduled dates. As we approach the opening, we will publish rental information.

How will parking be situated when the project is complete?

The town-owned spaces versus MBTA spaces will remain the same. If Commuter Rail passengers park in town-owned spaces, they will be ticketed as they are now.

What adjustments have you made to support people who require special accommodations?

Town-owned handicapped parking spaces directly face the ADA-approved accessible entrance, which is wider than the others and opened through a hand pad. The external ramp will be replaced with a more user-friendly pitch and safety handrails. The entire depot will be fully regulation-compliant with a separate unisex ADA-compliant bathroom, an inclusive bar-serving area, a water fountain constructed at the appropriate level, and a floor design free of sudden elevation changes.

What about that old safe I've seen photos of online? Are you going to preserve that?

I am happy to announce that yes, we will retain this historical artifact: the 130-year-old, 3,000-pound ticket office safe will be refinished and converted into a 50-year time capsule. It will be encased in unbreakable glass and located in the middle of the community center's main function room. Contents will include letters, books, artifacts, and documents from today which will be opened, read, and examined by the Stoughton community of tomorrow.

Each person asked to write a letter to be included in the time capsule will be issued four tickets to attend the capsule opening 50 years to the date and time of the capsule's sealing. The closing ceremony will happen in conjunction with the community center's opening and dedication in early February.

What will happen with the building's exterior?

The station's exterior design and engineering is well underway. That project will include replacement of rotted wood, painting, outside patio construction, and planted gardens to provide an outdoor option for town and resident celebrations. At present we are requesting funding for this space from CPC.

Hopefully, this report answers many of your most commonly-asked questions. I invite any interested individual or group to contact me if you would like a tour while under construction. If you want to learn more, please feel free to contact my office.

Thank you,

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

Thomas J. Calter,
Town Manager