

July 4, 2025

The Town of Bedford Select Board  
10 Mudge Way  
Bedford, MA 01730

Dear Mr. Mortenson, Ms. Malone, Mr. Hanegan, Mr. Brosgol, and Mr. Parker:

When I learned that my Complaint to the Attorney General was on the recent Fire Station Building Committee agenda, Richard Hughes and I made the trip to Bedford to audit the discussion. We made comments at the beginning of the meeting and then waited for the agenda item to come up. But when the time came, Jeff Cohen skipped past it to the next item! He was very respectful and but explained that the scope of the complaint was not in the Committee's purview. That left us to wonder on the long trip back to New York why it was on the agenda.

I realize that the committee members are there to do a job, and understand why they think it is not in their purview to evaluate the moral and legal basis of the project. But it is certainly in your purview to do just that. And once you were made aware that you are leading the people to fund a massively expensive and massively destructive project whose foundation was blatantly corrupt, it became your job to make sure Bedford's citizens have all the facts before changing the character and face of a significant historic district forever.

We all have a job to do and as proud and grateful citizens, job number one is to fight corruption in our own spheres of influence – not to be counted with the “good men who do nothing”. The statue of Cornet Page is supposed to remind us of a uniquely proud heritage. And yet, fifty yards or so from Veteran's Park, at the very entrance to the Bedford Center Historic District, you are planning to deface a gracious streetscape and the stone wall that was built to connect the two Bacon properties together with an out of place and out of scale industrial facility – while the people remain in the dark about the corrupt origins of what they are funding.

They know they are funding a fire station for a very deserving department of public servants. But they don't know of the glaring evidence of how dishonest and devious the site selection and procurement were. And they should. I have kept you informed of the painstaking steps I have taken to document that the Select Board was manipulated by Sarah Stanton. And there is no doubt if Matt Hanson had been in her position none of this would have taken place. The problem is that the people of Bedford deserve to know that the Historic District is being vandalized to satisfy the ambitions of an unethical, arrogant, and self-centered woman as she passed through town.

The Attorney General's Office informed me that they will take no action. That was not a surprise. I expect politicians to circle-the-wagons. But the allegations of wrongdoing are not mere opinions. Any conclusions and speculation are based on documented facts. I will therefore do my best to find a journalist who will report that the Attorney General's White Collar and Public Integrity Division decided that some fraud and corrupt practices are okay. So that the record will be there to speak for itself.

On this July Fourth, I am writing to implore you to demonstrate that Bedford's exercise in self-government is not a charade. That shading the truth is not something you will stand for. That the ends do not justify the means. I am very sad to see the carriage house demolished when it could have been transformed into something that would have enhanced the Historic District, rather than something that will undermine and scar it. But in my mind, this has always been about saving the block above all. It is still possible to protect a property that is uniquely lovely and defend the integrity of the town's authentic character.

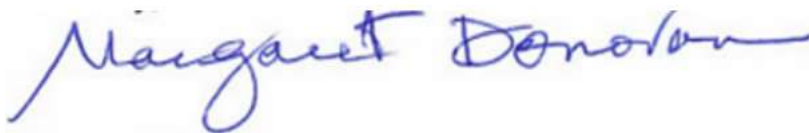
I misspoke at the committee meeting when I said that walking up the Statehouse steps with Louise K. Brown to deliver the Town's petition was my mother's proudest moment. But it certainly was one of them – and one of the happiest, because they truly believed that they were protecting their cherished town from the sort of short-sighted exploitation that is now taking place.

It is a shame that this debacle was ever concocted but it is not your burden to enforce it. Let the people know what took place – that the democratic process was defeated when the article passed. By simply airing the information in my complaint so that it can be examined and discussed by the people, you would be free of the stain of promoting Sarah Stanton's scam. The firefighters and the townspeople deserve that much.

As it stands, the cart is before the horse. That is why there have been so many problems with the project. It would have been easier to revisit if the AGO had shown some political courage, but you can still show some by simply letting the people decide the issues. If the town wants to correct course, I think you would be amazed at how quickly it would all fall into place – because truth carries its own power – and rewards.

I don't think it is possible to read my complaint and not see that the basis of the project was and is dishonest. You are not professional pols. Please be professional citizens and give the people what Sarah Stanton's manipulations denied them – the right to choose what is best.

Once again, my sincere best wishes,



Margaret Donovan

Copies to:

Matthew J. Hanson, Town Manager | Chief James Bailey | Captain Mark Sullivan | Lieutenant Mark Daly | Captain Scott Ricker | Captain John Daniels | Fire Station Building Committee Chair and Co-Chair | Bedford Historic District Commissioners

Elizabeth Hacala | President, Board of Directors, *The Bedford Citizen*