

Nichewaug Inn and Academy Committee 2020
Town of Petersham, MA
**Nichewaug Inn/Maria Assumpta Academy Timeline Since
Town of Petersham Ownership
from 2007 to 2020**

2007

June 25

At a Special Town Meeting, voters approved receipt by the town of the Nichewaug Inn and Maria Assumpta Academy property contingent upon town acceptance of the property as a "gift" from The Trustees of Reservations (TTOR, now known as The Trustees), extinguishment of a septic/drainage easement for the Inn and Academy on the North Common Meadow TTOR property, and payment of \$100,000 to DEAL LLC made by TTOR and Friends of the Nichewaug Inn. The property transfer was to give the town more control of the property's fate and safety issues

August 21

Release and termination of septic/drainage easement

August 22-23

Closing of the property transfer of the Nichewaug Inn/Maria Assumpta Academy from DEAL LLC through TTOR to the Town of Petersham

November 13

A site visit was conducted

2008

Selectboard appointed the Nichewaug Inn Task Force (NITF) to recommend a future use for the property

2009

Large glass panes that were falling from the cupola to the roof and ground on the Academy Building (brick-clad back building) were removed and a barrier placed to prevent water percolating through the cupola into the building

*Members of the NITF, townspeople, and the Petersham Police Department worked to control intruders in the building, some local, some from out of state. A multi-faceted approach that continues into the 2020s led to a reduction of intrusions from multiples per year to less than one every 2 to 3 years, and around the end of 2009, an intrusion alarm system was installed after the NITF held discussions with the Police and Fire Departments, Selectboard members, alarm companies, intruders, town residents, and the town's insurance company. The town, through the NITF, applied for a grant to install an intrusion alarm. The design was developed in consultation between ADT and the NITF after award of the grant by the town's insurer, and ADT installed the system

2009 (continued)

May

The front of the property was given a general cleanup, plywood over the windows was stained to fit in with the weathered shingles, the flagpole was removed, and the plantings were weeded and pruned

June 9

A survey of Nichewaug Inn and Academy Property's 6.678 acres was recorded with the state by Berry Engineering, Parcel 46, Book 41699 Page 256

November

MIIA, the town's insurer, awarded the town a Loss Control Grant for the installation of an alarm system for the Inn and Academy building. Over the next few weeks, ADT worked with a member of the NITF to design the system that was installed. See the description of the effort to control intrusions at the asterisk (*) under **2009**

December 9

NITF received Septic System and PWS Well Report from SVE Associates of Greenfield MA

2010

NITF issued an opinion survey to residents about preferred uses for the Nichewaug Inn and Academy Property and preferred methods of development

James Meehan of Athol was hired to work with NITF as Consulting Project Coordinator and initial 3-month contract extended

An area was ploughed behind the Nichewaug Inn/Maria Assumpta Academy buildings and initiated as the town's Community Garden

May

NITF Chair met with officials from the MA Department of Environmental Protection at their offices in Springfield to get clarity on what they saw as issues with the current well and siting of a septic system

June

Flooding water in basements was certified as clean enough to pump from basements with surface discharge on the property

Water was temporarily pumped from basements to give access for ATC Associates of Springfield to complete the Limited Phase II Site Environmental Assessment. Because the power had been shut off in the building, the pumps were run by a large generator owned by the town. The oil tanks were not leaking

Heating oil (approx. 800 gallons) was removed from oil tanks and transferred to Petersham Highway Department's Town Barn. Five oil tanks were removed and transferred to the Highway Department

June 2010 (continued)

With the help of town employees, members of the NITF cleaned up debris and brush on the property. Metal fencing around tennis courts was removed and piled for later pick up and recycling

June 7

Petersham Memorial Library recommended at Town Meeting that the Town Meeting take no action on their warrant article to transfer some land from the Nichewaug Inn/Maria Assumpta Academy Property to the Library

June 23

NITF received a Limited Phase II Site Assessment soil report from Rob Smith, Division Director, Environmental Services ATC Associates of Springfield

July 8

NITF voted to recommend that the town apply for a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) to demolish all or part of the Nichewaug Inn and Maria Assumpta Academy

July 22

James Meehan resigned as consultant

September

Petersham Historic District Commission approved a Permit for Demolition of the Nichewaug Inn

October 4

At a Special Town Meeting, voters approved demolition of Nichewaug Inn and Academy contingent upon receiving CDBG funding for demolition

October

Through Montachusett Regional Planning Commission's Principal Planner Shelly Hatch, an application for CDBG funding for demolition of the Nichewaug Inn and Maria Assumpta Academy was submitted to Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development

2011

July 14

Town received letter from Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development stating that the town did not receive CDBG funding for demolition

2013

Selectboard appointed Nichewaug Inn Property Committee

Haynes, Lieneck and Smith of Ashby, MA was hired to solicit bids for hazardous materials abatement and total demolition of Nichewaug Inn

November 10

Selectboard voted to declare the Nichewaug Inn and Academy property as surplus and available for disposition (with exception of the garage) and to post a Request for Proposals (RFP) on the state's Central Register

2013 (continued)

November 18

Selectboard voted to award the contract for abatement and demolition engineering plans to IEG, not to exceed \$21,000

2014

December

Transfer, Re-use and Redevelopment of the Nichewaug Inn RFP was posted on MA Central Register with proposals due January 30, 2015

December 9

A site visit with walkthrough of buildings was conducted

December 15

Selectboard extended the RFP due date from January 30, 2015 to February 28, 2015

2015

February 28

The town received two proposals in response to the RFP, one from Michael Tavares and one from Petersham Committee, Inc.

March/April

Nichewaug Inn Evaluation Committee (NIEC) was appointed to evaluate the feasibility of the two proposals the town received in response to the RFP

May 19

A site visit with walkthrough of buildings was conducted

June

NIEC voted to approve the proposals from Michael Tavares and Petersham Committee, Inc. as feasible for further consideration

Petersham Committee, Inc. withdrew its proposal

July 15

RFP for bids for abatement & demolition of Nichewaug published in MA Central Register

August 12

Haynes, Lieneck and Smith received four bids for abatement and demolition

September 21

At a Special Town Meeting: voters did not approve selling the Nichewaug Inn and Academy Property to Michael Tavares; voters did not approve by the required 2/3rds majority vote funding for total demolition; voters did not approve by a 2/3rds majority vote funding for partial demolition of the connector wing; voters did not approve funding by a 2/3rds majority vote abatement of hazardous materials in the buildings; and voters did approve hiring of a planning consultant

2015 (continued)

November 3

Request for Proposals (RFP) for Consultant for Nichewaug Inn and Academy Property was posted on state's Central Register

December 11

In answer to RFP, proposals were received from Ted Carman of Concord Square Planning and Development, Inc.; Jennifer Goldson of JM Goldson Community Preservation and Planning; and Albert Rex and David Kirk of MHA and Kirk Co. Real Estate Counselors

2016

March 15

Selectboard awarded planning contract to Ted Carman of Concord Square. Ted Carman subsequently conducted three open public meetings, met with relevant town committees, and produced Site and Schematic Floor Plans.

October 6

Ted Carman of Concord Square made final public presentation of his 154 page report with *pro forma* financial analyses and review of six potential development scenarios. All of his possible financial scenarios stipulated that the town would need to pay for removal (abatement) of hazardous materials

December 12

At Special Town Meeting, voters approved (with one dissenting vote) funding for the removal of hazardous materials from Nichewaug Inn and Academy Property; voters did not approve total demolition of Nichewaug Inn and Academy; voters did not approve demolition of the connector portion of the Nichewaug Inn (partial demolition); voters did approve issuance of a new RFP seeking possible development of the property once hazardous materials are abated

2017

March 6

Town Election—Debt Exclusion passed, 132-46, allowing for funding of the removal of asbestos and other hazardous materials from the Nichewaug

April

Selectboard signed contract with Wilcox & Barton to assist Town as a third party monitor of the removal of the hazardous materials.

Selectboard signed contract with the low bidder from 2015, Associated Building Wreckers of Springfield, to conduct removal of hazardous materials

May

Work commenced to remove (abate) all hazardous materials in the Nichewaug buildings

November 6

As the abatement of the hazardous materials neared completion, the town posted an All-Options RFP for the Nichewaug Inn and Academy Property

2017 (continued)

November 27

A site visit with walkthrough of buildings was conducted by Selectboard

December 11

A second site visit with walkthrough of buildings was conducted by Selectboard

December 15

Associated Building Wreckers completed their abatement project

2018

January 23

The proposal deadline for the All-Options RFP was extended to June 28, 2018

March 6

Letter from Wilcox and Barton sent to Selectboard certifying completion of the hazardous materials abatement in Nichewaug Inn and Academy buildings

June 28

In response to the All-Options RFP, the town received a proposal from the Petersham Community Cooperative Project Working Group for the repurposing of the Nichewaug Inn and Academy property

August

The Selectboard received a petition opposing the Petersham Community Cooperative Project's proposal

The Petersham Community Cooperative Project Working Group withdrew its proposal before the Selectboard formed an Evaluation Committee

September 11

Selectboard voted to convene open forums and general discussion on the Nichewaug property with Bart Wendell serving as facilitator

October 17

The first of five Public Forums was held with Bart Wendell as facilitator

2019

April 10

The last of the five Public Forums was held

December 23

The Selectboard appointed the Nichewaug Inn & Academy Committee 2020 (NIAC) which was charged with "assisting in the planning efforts for the town's Nichewaug Inn and Academy property"

2020

January 11

NIAC convened to begin its work

2020 (continued)

March

Selectboard signed contract for part-time assistance of a planner to work with the NIAC through the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission's District Local Technical Assistance program

September 21

NIAC mailed a public opinion survey to town residents about the future of the Nichewaug property