



TOWN OF GROTON
Affordable Housing Trust



Stuart M. Schulman, *Chair*
Sheila Julien, *Vice Chair*
David A. Wilder, *Treasurer*
Colleen A. Neff, *Member*
Joshua A. Degen, *Member*

Meeting Minutes
Regular Session

Date: Thursday, December 20, 2018
Time: 7 p.m.
Location: Town Hall, First Floor Meeting Room, 173 Main Street, Groton
Attending members: Stuart Schulman, Colleen Neff, David Wilder, Joshua Degen
Visitors: Arthur Prest, Donald Black, Becky Pine, Edward Perkins, Carolyn Perkins
Meeting handouts: Agenda, draft minutes from November 13, 2018

Stuart Schulman called the meeting to order at 7:10 pm.

Agenda Item 1: Speak with Donald Black regarding proposed senior development in North Groton. Votes may be taken.

Donald Black stated that he intends to postpone his discussion with the affordable housing trust until February. The reason for the postponement is that he will be going to the Planning Board first. Also, he is gathering materials in support of these development plans and those items will not be ready until later in January.

Agenda Item 2: Speak with Art Prest regarding development of senior mixed income housing at the Groton Country Club (Whitman Road). Votes may be taken.

Art Prest explained his understanding of the origin of the present idea to build mixed income senior housing at the Groton Country Club. Art Prest said that he enjoys the recreational offerings of the Country Club. The Country Club has made progress moving towards a revenue neutral or even slightly profitable operations. Even so, the nature of a large facility requiring ongoing maintenance (over 100 acres) with some revenues being weather dependent (golf, swimming), means that revenue can fluctuate.

Back in May, 2018, Art Prest started thinking about using some of the undeveloped Country Club land for a residential housing development might contribute property tax revenue to the Town which would assist with the continued operation of the Country Club as well as other municipal expenses. Part of the idea is that a senior (i.e., age 55 and up) housing is more likely to be revenue positive when the total cost of municipal services is weighed against annual property taxes. Typical residential land uses, i.e., non age-restricted housing, may require more municipal expenditure than is generated in taxes on those land uses. [See 2006 Penn State Extension study on land use ratios for municipal spending.]

In the late 1980s, resident Peter Myette had a plan to build homes around the golf course, but the Select Board at the time moved in a different direction and paid Wang \$1.9 million to purchase the Country Club property. Art Prest noted that building homes around a golf course is a familiar concept that has been done in our region at both Quail Ridge in Acton and now Fox Hills in Dracut.

The affordable piece is less familiar to Art Prest. Stuart Schulman said that the housing trust members are all listening for more information about the affordable component and that we will see what happens.

Agenda Item 3: Continue discussion of potentially purchasing 44 Farmers Row for use as affordable rentals. Votes may be taken.

Don Black said that he did speak with Edward Lawrence and communicated that the housing trust is interested in the property. Don Black explained that the Homestead Trust is evaluating the property now and intends to arrive at a sales price by taking the perceived value and subtracting the estimated cost of the work to be done to update kitchens and bathrooms. Trustees did not elaborate on the number of units.

The total assessed value in 2017 was \$1,108,200. Joshua Degen suggested that the housing trust ask for a list of required upgraded and estimated rehabilitation costs for fire walls and sprinkling from either the fire chief or the building inspector. Fran Stanley noted that since the property is in the historic district, then the extra costs of maintaining the exterior of the buildings to HDC standards should be factored in.

Agenda Item 4: Update from housing coordinator on pending Community Preservation Committee grant applications. Votes may be taken.

Fran Stanley reported that initial applications were made for two funding proposals: the update of the Town's Housing Production Plan that expires on June 29, 2019, and Country Club Senior Housing Feasibility Study.

Agenda Item 5: Discuss annual report for the housing trust. Votes may be taken.

Trust members discussed wording for the 2018 annual report and drafted the following by consensus:

At Boynton Meadows, all three affordable units have been built and sold. The project is nearly finished.

The Affordable Housing Trust is exploring and looking at other opportunities such as building mixed income housing at the municipally owned Groton Country Club as well as other proposals.

The Affordable Housing Trust welcomes ideas from the public.

Agenda Item 5: Review draft minutes from November 13, 2018 meeting

Members reviewed draft minutes.

Colleen Neff moved to approve and release the November 13, 2018 regular session minutes as submitted. David Wilder seconded and the motion carried 3:0 (Joshua Degen abstained; Sheila Julien absent).

Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 8:05 pm.

Next Housing Trust Meetings:

Wednesday, January 16, 2019 at 7 pm

Wednesday, February 27, 2010 at 7 pm

Other Meetings of Note:

February 11, 2019 CPC public hearing to discuss feedback on all complete draft proposals

March 11, 2019 CPC deadline for final proposals

April 29, 2019 Spring Town Meeting

Minutes by Fran Stanley.