



TOWN OF GROTON
Affordable Housing Trust



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

Meeting Minutes

Regular Session

Date: Thursday, January 30, 2020
Time: 7 p.m.
Location: Town Hall, First Floor Meeting Room, 173 Main Street, Groton
Attending members: Sheila Julien, Colleen Neff, Becky Pine, David Wilder,
and Stuart Schulman (remote participation)
Meeting handouts: Agenda, draft 2019 Annual Report, draft minutes from October 3 and 28, 2019 and
draft Housing Coordinator letter of support

Meeting called to order by Sheila Julien at 7 pm. Stuart Schulman called in by telephone to participate in the meeting remotely.

2019 Annual Report

The group reviewed the draft annual report. Becky Pine asked to insert the phrase “use the data from the Housing Production Plan” in the first sentence of the last paragraph.

Colleen Neff moved to approve the annual report as revised. David Wilder seconded and the motion carried 5:0.

Housing Coordinator letter of support

The group reviewed the draft letter. Fran Stanley left the meeting for the duration of this agenda item. The housing trust voted to authorize the chair to sign a letter of support.

Change in leadership

Sheila Julien explained that she does not have the time or capacity that she anticipated when she assumed the position of chair. She added that the housing trust is at an exciting time with the prospect of new projects. She is planning to step down from the housing trust altogether in June but is also willing to resign now. After some discussion, the group agreed that Becky Pine should step in to be the chair and Sheila Julien will remain on as a member. Becky Pine said that she would prefer Sheila Julien stay on. She will speak with the Select Board regarding their ideas and preferences for member composition and then report back to the housing trust.

David Wilder moved to have Becky Pine serve as chair for the remainder of her tenure with Sheila Julien to serve as a member of the housing trust. Sheila Julien seconded and the motion passed 5:0.

Update on housing related zoning changes

Fran Stanley shared Planning Board’s ideas to make two proposed changes to the Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) bylaw. First, there is a thought to make the current process for obtaining an attached ADU ‘by right’ instead of requiring the applicant to have Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) approval. Second, the Planning

Board may propose allowing detached ADUs that meet almost all of the attached criteria but with ZBA approval. Stuart Schulman volunteered on the ZBA for many years and he had some questions about the exact nature of the proposal and how many applications for ZBA review might be generated. The ADUs may not add to Groton's affordable unit count, but such changes might increase the housing stock and add to the diversity of the housing stock. The Planning Board plans to hold a public hearing on the matter in the next couple of months. Any proposed zoning change requires Town Meeting approval.

Boynton Meadows

The Select Board would like to meet with the housing trust on March 2, 2020 in executive session to discuss the Boynton Meadows project and see how the Select Board and the housing trust would like to proceed. There continues to be interest in receiving additional information and even all the information related to the housing trust's investment. Becky Pine had some additional questions about Boynton Meadows as she joined the Select Board well after the time of the housing trust's investment in the project.

Minutes

The group reviewed the draft regular session minutes from recent meetings.

Colleen Neff moved to approve the October 3, 2019 regular session minutes as drafted. David Wilder seconded and the motion carried 5:0.

Sheila Julien moved to approve the October 28, 2019 regular session minutes as drafted. David Wilder seconded and the motion carried 4:0 (Colleen Neff abstained).

Sheila Julien adjourned the meeting at 8:10 pm. Minutes by Fran Stanley.

draft 2019 annual report handout

Affordable Housing Trust

The Town of Groton accepted M.G.L. Chapter 44 Section 55C, Municipal Affordable Housing Trust Fund to the Town Bylaws at the 2008 Fall Special Town Meeting. The purpose of the Trust is to provide for the preservation and creation of affordable housing in the Town of Groton for the benefit of low and moderate income households earning up to 125% of area median income as defined by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

The Town of Groton Affordable Housing Trust was created on November 17, 2010. Members of the Trust are appointed by the Select Board provided that at least one the five members is drawn from the Select Board.

As a first project, the Trust invested in the Boynton Meadows subdivision which produced three new construction affordable homeownership units. All three affordable units have been built and sold. The project is nearly finished.

The Housing Trust is participating in the development of the Town's new Housing Production Plan. The Housing Production Plan identifies current housing needs, identifies parcels with development potential and reviews current zoning. In order to produce a new Plan, the Town follows a process that draws in community ideas and preferences and then seeks to build consensus for a path to meet the identified needs.

Going forward, the Housing Trust expects to coordinate with the Select Board and Community Preservation Committee to create new affordable housing. The Affordable Housing Trust welcomes ideas from the Groton Housing Authority and the Housing Partnership as well as the general public.

Respectfully submitted,

Sheila Julien, *Chair*
David A. Wilder, *Vice Chair*
Colleen A. Neff, *Treasurer*
Becky Pine, *Member*

Stuart M. Schulman, *Member*

draft Housing Coordinator letter of support handout

[Date]

Daniel Emerson, Chair
Community Preservation Committee
173 Main Street,
Groton, MA 01450

RE: Support for Housing Coordinator funding
Dear Mr. Emerson and CPC members,

I am pleased to offer this letter in support of continued funding for the Housing Coordinator position using Community Preservation Act (CPA) funds. The Affordable Housing Trust (“the Trust”) has been well served by the Housing Coordinator over the years.

In the past year the Housing Coordinator, Fran Stanley, assisted the Trust in exploring the potential for new opportunities such as building mixed income housing at the municipally owned Groton Country Club or purchasing existing residential structures for conversion to affordable rentals. She also conducted research for the Trust on tax credit financing of affordable housing, as well as income limitations established by various state/federal housing subsidy programs. The Housing Coordinator continued to update the Trust on the approved affordable units at Boynton Meadows, Reedy Meadow Estates, and Academy Hill. In addition, she kept the Trust informed about prospective Local Initiative Projects (LIP or “friendly 40B”) on Townsend Road and Gratuity Road.

The Housing Coordinator is an asset to the Town of Groton in general, and the Affordable Housing Trust in particular. On behalf of the Trust, I urge you to recommend continued CPA funding for the position. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Sheila Julien, Chair
Affordable Housing Trust