



**TOWN OF GROTON**  
Affordable Housing Trust



Becky Pine, *Chair*  
Carolyn Perkins, *Vice Chair*  
Phil Francisco, *Member*  
Richard Perini, *Member*  
Charles Vander Linden, *Member*

Regular Session Minutes

Date: Thursday, October 24, 2023  
Time: 7 pm  
Location: Town Hall, First Floor Meeting Room, 173 Main Street  
Members in attendance: Carolyn Perkins, Charles Vander Linden, Richard Perini, and Becky Pine  
Others in attendance: John Sopka (Groton Housing Authority)  
Referenced documents: Draft CPC application  
Draft regular session minutes from August and October

---

Becky Pine called the Affordable Housing Trust to order at 7 pm.

**Review draft CPC application for 2023-2024 round.**

Group discussed the draft application agreeing that the main purpose for seeking these CPC funds is to enable the purchase of property to site an affordable housing development. The sentences describing income limits will be deleted. The Trust might need 6 to 8 buildable acres to site a project of a size that can attract outside funding from the state/federal government.

Richard Perini commented that the goal of housing for veterans should be included in the Community Preservation Plan.

Members also discussed the amount of money to request and settled on \$300,000 for the initial application.

*Charles Vander Linden moved to approve the submission of the CPC application for \$300,000 with the edits as discussed. Carolyn Perkins seconded and the motion carried 4:0 (Francisco absent).*

**Review draft minutes from August 16, 2023, September 26, 2023, and October 12, 2023.**

There are no minutes to be approved for the September 26, 2023 meeting as that was a community forum related to the development of a new Master Plan.

*Carolyn Perkins moved to approve the August 16, 2023 regular session minutes as corrected. Richard Perini seconded and the motion carried 3:0 (Vander Linden abstained; Francisco absent).*

*Carolyn Perkins moved to approve the October 12, 2023 regular session minutes as edited. Richard Perini seconded and the motion carried 3:0 (Vander Linden abstained; Francisco absent).*

**Update on proposed projects with affordable housing including Groton Farms, Heritage Landing and 797 Boston Road.**

No new information to report on Groton Farms or 797 Boston Road. The Heritage Landing project has no new information from the Zoning Board of Appeals permitting process. Similar to the housing trust, the Park Commission continues to look at whether Natural Heritage will allow the Commission to improve its Cow Pond Brook recreation facilities as well as potential synergies with the Heritage Landing developer.

**Update on Massachusetts Housing Partnership engineering efforts for Fieldstone Drive parcels.**

No update as MHP has not been in touch. Fran Stanley will follow up with MHP. If the Trust needs to contract for the work to be done, then Richard Perini said the Trust could ask a civil engineer for a site preparedness plan. That amount of work might cost \$10,000 for both parcels.

**Taking positions for Fall Town Meeting warrant articles including bid made to place permanent restriction on public land near Heritage Landing site.**

Becky Pine said that the Trust needs to take a position on these two warrant articles. Natural Heritage was not able to give the Town much guidance on what could be built on the Town owned land, particularly the recreation proposals, so it is difficult to assess the impact of tying up 14.5 acres with a permanent restriction. Misty-Anne Marold at Natural Heritage was willing to discuss the matter with the Town but it was too soon in their process for them to be able offer much in the way of definitive statements vis a vis the Park Commission's plans for this area.

Trust members discussed the pros and cons of the developer's bid.

The main cost of nonsupport is expected to be fewer bedrooms in the Heritage Landing development. Instead of 40 3-bedroom units, the developer would build some 2-bedroom units. Trust might be questioned about whether it is against affordable housing if it does not support the bid.

The cost of support? The Trust might assume a lost potential house lot on the Hoyts Wharf parcel. The amount of money offered by the developer (\$200,000) may not be enough and so there are uncertainties there. Uncertainty persists about whether the Town can secure an enforceable guarantee of 10 affordable units.

*Charles Vander Linden moved for the Trust to not support Articles 13 and 14 in the October 28, 2023 Fall Town Meeting at this time because the Trust does not know the ramifications for remaining town land including the potential house lot and the Park Commission's Cow Pond ballfield plans; and the Trust is not certain that the proposed price adequately compensates the Town. Carolyn Perkins seconded and the motion carried 4:0 (Francisco absent).*

Becky Pine asked Fran Stanley to notify Attorney Paul Alphen, the Park Commission, the Select Board and the Town Moderator. Carolyn Perkins will speak on behalf of the Trust and offer a report at Town Meeting to share this position.

**Review Town Counsel invoice for \$225 for legal advice on housing authority grant agreement.**

*Carolyn Perkins moved to pay October 6, 2023 invoice from Mirick O'Connell for \$225. Charles Vander Linden seconded and the motion carried 4:0 (Francisco absent).*

The Trust will pay this invoice from its unrestricted funds.

Next meeting:                                  Saturday, October 28, 2023 at 8:30 am  
[meeting before the start of Fall Town Meeting if needed]

Meeting adjourned.

Notes by Fran Stanley