



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: Tuesday, November 21, 2023
Time: 7 pm
Location: Virtual meeting held via Zoom
Members in attendance: Carolyn Perkins, Charles Vander Linden, Richard Perini, and Becky Pine

Becky Pine called the Affordable Housing Trust to order at 7:07 pm.

Discuss Community Preservation Committee feedback on housing trust's Housing Fund Request (application #2025-10) which may include seeking support letters and preparing complete draft proposal due on January 11, 2024.

Trust members had an expansive discussion about the present draft and revisions to make in order to address Community Preservation Committee (CPC) feedback. Richard Perini said that the Committee may not understand that the Trust is building up a fund to buy land to do a professional development. Richard Perini said that he wants to open up as much opportunity as possible. Carolyn Perkins noticed that a couple of people were supportive (Robert DeGroot and Dan Emerson) and said that Becky Pines answered Russ Burke's workforce housing question well by stating that affordable housing is workforce housing.

Charles Vander Linden observed that without sufficient funds, i.e., a nest egg, the Trust will miss out on opportunities like the 12-unit apartment building at 21 Adams Avenue. Charles Vander Linden recommended addressing workforce housing, Bruce Easom's questions about progress and leveraging outside money, and accountability vis a vis accounting. Becky Pine replied that she addressed the same accounting question last year. Becky Pine agreed with the need to beef up the application, mention the gift to the Groton Housing Authority to fix up an apartment.

The group noted that people seem to have forgotten the concept from last year to this year. Bruce Easom's supporting information is 4 to 5 years old though he is holding firm to the stance that the Trust is on probation and a successful affordable housing would go a long way to engendering confidence in the Trust.

Becky Pine said that the Trust would like to build a group home on the Hoyts Wharf parcel and the Trust is waiting on the Park Commission for them to determine their plans for their ballfields. Becky Pine mentioned the missed Adams Avenue opportunity, the Conservation Commission cooperation and have already been put in touch with a developer.

Charles Vander Linden added that the Conservation Commission lists a history of its past projects and that approach was well received by the CPC and the Trust might take this approach too and list rental assistance, site assessment evaluations, and Still Meadow repair grant to the housing authority.

Fran Stanley said that the ongoing question about what the Trust is spending its money on may be based on the fact that site assessment funds discussed and spent in executive session end up with invoices reviewed by the

CPC where they have minimal context. Richard Perini advised that the Trust should share as much as we can on the invoices.

Richard Perini said that the CPC keeps asking for accountability and we gave that to them with the executed grant agreement for last year's \$200,000 grant. The Trust can assure the CPC that it will report to the CPC. The application might list who we have contacted including B'nai B'rith Housing, Massachusetts Housing Partnership, Chelmsford Housing Authority, Habitat for Humanity, veterans housing, Conservation Commission, Groton Housing Authority.

Letters of support can be requested from Conservation Commission, Planning Board, Housing Partnership, Groton Housing Authority, and the Select Board.

Review draft minutes from October 24, 2023.

Carolyn Perkins moved to approve the October 24, 2023 regular session minutes as corrected. Richard Perini seconded and the motion carried 4:0 by roll call vote of Vander Linden – aye, Perkins – aye, Perini – aye and Pine – aye (Francisco absent).

Discuss next steps to evaluate bid to place permanent restriction on public land near Heritage Landing site and discuss Hoyts Wharf parcel.

Trust members reviewed Becky Pine's draft email to the Park Commission about the Hoyts Wharf parcel. The Trust would like to ask the Park Commission where they stand but as Chuck Vander Linden commented neither does the Trust want to be at the mercy of them taking a long time to formulate their position. The Heritage Landing request adds a complexity for both boards. Charles Vander Linden said that the Trust's final paragraph to the Park Commission should have a statement of the Trust's intention.

Richard Perini said that the Trust knows that it would like to develop a single ANR lot and he seemed to recall that Jesse Leddick mentioned a size of 2.5 acres. Becky Pine said that the Trust may be able to get some help with drawing lot lines for the ANR lot. The Trust could then seek Select Board approval. Town Meeting would need to approve the sale/transfer of the ANR lot for development of affordable housing. Richard Perini will investigate group home requirements. Fran Stanley will ask Habitat for Humanity what their requirements are for a buildable lot.

Charles Vander Linden asked for a plan or list of steps for the Trust to take to develop the Hoyts Wharf parcel for a veterans group home or a Habitat for Humanity home. Fran Stanley will work with Richard Perini on a list.

The next Heritage Landing ZBA hearing will be Wednesday, November 29, 2023 at 6:30 pm.

Next meeting: Thursday, December 7, 2023 at 7 pm

Complete Draft Proposal due by 4 pm on Thursday, January 11, 2024

Regular session adjourned at 8:15 pm and Trust members voted to re-enter executive session.

Notes by Fran Stanley