



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, January 4, 2024
Time: 7 pm
Location: 1st Floor Meeting Room, Town Hall, 173 Main Street
Members in attendance: Carolyn Perkins, Charles Vander Linden, Richard Perini, and Becky Pine
Others: John Sopka (Groton Housing Authority)
Referenced documents: draft minutes, draft CPC application, draft annual report, draft FY24 grant agreement

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

Review draft minutes from December 7, 2023

Charles Vander Linden moved to accept the December 7, 2023 regular session minutes as presented. Carolyn Perkins seconded and the motion carried 4:0 (Francisco absent).

Heritage Landing 40B Update

At the ZBA public hear, the discussion centered on light pollution and RFI mitigation. The applicant did not have the traffic study ready. Abutters noted the list of outstanding information. Some stated that they were tired of successive meetings and did not want any additional extensions to be granted.

Review and approve FY25 CPC application for community housing funds

Trust members reviewed the draft Complete Draft proposal. The group approved wording changes. The application will have a number of support letters. Becky Pine noted that after speaking with Bud Robertson, she learned that the Finance Committee prefers to wait to weigh in on CPC applications at Town Meeting.

Charles Vander Linden moved to approve the CPC application as presented with amendments to the cover letter. Richard Perini seconded and the motion carried 4:0 (Francisco absent).

John Sopka joined the meeting at 7:25 pm.

Review and approve execution of grant agreement for FY24 CPC grant

Fran Stanley reported that the wording of the grant agreement assumes that each signatory has taken a vote to authorize a person to sign on the committee's behalf. The Select Board has already taken this vote. The grant agreement will be an agenda item on the Community Preservation Committee's January 8th meeting.

Charles Vander Linden moved authorize Becky Pine to sign the grant agreement regarding the Town Meeting vote of April 24, 2023 to appropriate \$200,000 from the Community Preservation Committee. Carolyn Perkins seconded and the motion carried 4:0 (Francisco absent).

Review draft annual report.

Charles Vander Linden suggested changes to the annual report that help to emphasize the Reserve Fund and partnership which the Trust adopted.

Carolyn Perkins moved to approve the annual report with corrections marked in red. Richard Perini seconded and the motion carried 4:0 (Francisco absent).

Review letter of support for the housing coordinator CPC application.

Trust members discussed preparing a letter in support of this position.

Discuss Hoyts Wharf parcel layout

Becky Pine asked about an updated plan. Fran Stanley said that the agenda item was added just in case there was a new plan to view – there is not one – and because there were questions asked at the last meeting about permitting.

The house lot may need to be drawn to avoid the existing cart path in case the Park Commission is allowed to improve it to be the access driveway for the Cow Pond ball fields. In case Natural Heritage wants 2:1 mitigation for the impact of building on the house lot, then the Trust should set aside other uplands for that purpose. If the lot lines do not cross the cart path, then the Trust may want to include land from the adjacent parcel 249-57 to ensure sufficient space.

As for permitting, Natural Heritage accepts MESA filings¹. If the project also needs review under the Wetlands Protection Act, then there is a 'streamlined' Notice of Intent process since project will be reviewed by Natural Heritage as well as our own Conservation Commission.

Charlotte Steeves, the Town's new conservation agent, reviewed the plan. Charlotte Steeves noticed that there is an intermittent stream on adjacent parcel 249-57 (shown on the Dan Wells habitat report) with some proximity to the uplands of the Hoyts Wharf parcel. Depending on the building plans, a Notice of Intent might be needed. The Trust can ask for a pre-submission meeting with the Conservation Commission to discuss. The wetlands have already been delineated by Stan Dillis so the Conservation Commission will have this data to review.

Fran Stanley said that she does not know if it is possible to pre permit with MESA and then transfer the permits to the future affordable housing developer. Richard Perini suggested that the Trust or Town send a letter to Natural Heritage and formally request a determination.

Update on Groton Housing Authority activities and the Still Meadow unit

John Sopka explained that the Groton Housing Authority will be sending a letter to their legislators in support of the Governor's proposed local option real estate transfer fee for affordable housing². John Sopka asked the housing trust to consider it. Carolyn Perkins commented that maintaining existing affordable housing is important.

John Sopka added that a Sandy Pond family rental unit that was vacated in November 2023 needs significant refurbishment. Short term tenants have moved in for now.

John Sopka gave a verbal report about the status of the Still Meadow affordable. He also provided 2 documents (contractor invoice and a punch list). The GHA has spent the Trust grant amount on unit repairs. Outside contractor Lion Services Inc. submitted this invoice to the Authority which the Authority has paid by adding some of the Authority's own funds to the Trust's \$15,398.93.

The contractor made some of the repairs on the 24Restore list. The contractor also found and made additional repairs with the approval of the housing authority. However, the contractor didn't address the entire 24Restore

¹ <https://www.mass.gov/how-to/how-to-file-for-a-mesa-project-review>

² The Governor's proposed Affordable Homes Act would create local option for adopting a real estate transaction fee of 0.5 percent to 2 percent on the portion of a property sale over \$1 million – or the county median home sale price. This fee--projected to affect fewer than 14 percent of all residential sales--would be paid by the seller of the property with the money to be used to fund affordable housing developments within the community (<https://www.mass.gov/news/healey-driscoll-administration-unveils-4-billion-affordable-homes-act-to-increase-production-and-lower-costs>).

scope of work. The Lion Services repairs were mainly carpentry and not the light fixtures, tile work, linoleum fixes, screen replacement, etc.

The second document from John Sopka was the Still Meadow Punch List. The punch list appears to be a punch list of needed repairs along with estimated costs for the same.

Charles Vander Linden spoke for the Trust when saying that the Trust would like to see the housing authority focus on what work is needed to get the unit in good enough shape (habitable, to code, etc.) to be rented and that the Trust was willing to have that brought back for its consideration.

Meeting adjourned 8:35 pm.

Notes by Fran Stanley

Upcoming dates:

Meeting Description	Date	Time
CPC reviews submitted applications	Monday, January 22, 2024	7 pm
ZBA Heritage Landing hearing	Wednesday, January 24, 2024	6:30 pm
CPC discusses feedback on applications	Monday, January 29, 2024	7 pm
CPC prepares written feedback on applications	Monday, February 12, 2024	7 pm
CPC final proposals due	Thursday, February 22, 2024	4 pm

Photos of Still Meadow Unit after Exterior Repairs

