



**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, August 15, 2024  
Time: 7:30 pm  
Location: Town Hall, First Floor Meeting Room, 173 Main Street  
Members attending: Richard Perini, Carolyn Perkins, Phil Francisco, and Becky Pine  
Members absent: Charles Vander Linden  
Others attending: John Sopka, Daniel and Andrea Murdock, other unnamed neighbors from the Hoyts Wharf Road area  
Referenced documents: July 31, 2024 draft minutes, August 14, 2024 Dills & Roy invoice, age restricted housing definition (2 proposed bylaw revisions)

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Becky Pine called the Affordable Housing Trust to order at 7:30 pm. Charles Vander Linden had a planned absence and Phil Francisco was running late.

**Review draft minutes from July 31, 2024.**

*Richard Perini moved to approve the draft regular session minutes from July 31, 2024 as corrected. Carolyn Perkins seconded and the motion carried (4:0) (Vander Linden absent).*

**Update on Affordable Homes Act of 2024.**

Becky Pine commented that she received the overview of the new state ADU zoning which was written by Planning Board member Russ Burke. The ADU zoning does not take effect until February 2025. Fran Stanley said that some of the new Act's provisions, such as the ADU zoning, may be further interpreted by agency regulations and guidelines and Housing and Livable Communities (EOHLC) has not weighed in yet to issue such guidance.

**Update on Hoyts Wharf Parcel predevelopment efforts, including placeholder warrant article, communication with other boards and committees, and Town Meeting materials (parcel 249-51 and adjacent parcel 249-57).**

Richard Perini summarized the engineering work which included surveying, perc tests, preparation of a concept plan for a lot appropriate for veterans or others who could make use of the lot for housing. Phil Francisco joined the meeting. Fran Stanley added that the Affordable Housing Trust is working with Greg Roy from Dillis & Roy and that the survey crew has completed most of the field work. A revised plan is expected but has not been completed yet. There appears to be room for a conventional lot as well as a backland lot (also known as a hammerhead lot). The parcel referenced in the Town Meeting warrant article will show the outer boundary. Engineers have planned for the lot to accommodate the Natural Heritage required 2:1 offset of conserved land to developed land.

Becky Pine provided an overview of the Trust's activities to look at Town owned land that would be suitable for the development of affordable housing. The Trust is concentrating on this parcel because it appears to have potential unlike several of the properties noted in the Town's Housing Production Plan. Because of Natural

Heritage constraints, the Trust expects that only limited development will be allowed. The Trust is considering a group home which while resembling a single-family home will have all bedroom count as individual units on the Subsidized Housing Inventory (SHI). There are other group homes in Groton and cited Bridgewell's group home for adults with autism as an example. Richard Perini stated that the Trust's engineers are preparing an application to Natural Heritage to sort out exactly what that agency will allow.

A question from the public came in asking if there is a group home, what kind of supportive services would be associated with a group home. Carolyn Perkins said that depending on the needs of the residents, services may include nursing, other staffing, transportation to day programs, social services, ADL (activities of daily living) care as needed). Andrea Murdock asked "can you assure me that this is not a place for homeless veterans?" The answer was no, we cannot give you that assurance. Richard Perini said that I wish you would not say that. He continued stating that he himself is a veteran. Andrea Murdock followed up with saying she was "not against veterans but I don't want you to bring big city problems [to town]."

Richard Perini said that the Affordable Housing Trust has tried to make the parcel the least imposition on the neighborhood in terms of placement of the driveway [further away from 234 Hoyts Wharf Road driveway] and buffered view from the abutting neighbor [239 Hoyts Wharf Road]. Richard Perini continued stating we need affordable housing. We are trying to have the neighborhood be least impacted by the Trust's housing plans.

There were additional questions about:

- the Request for Proposal (RFP) – not issued yet so we do not have the criteria.
- who can operate a group home – must be licensed to provide the services and meet federal guidelines.
- access to water – the plan includes space for a well, septic system, and drainage.
- how long – the biggest problem is the environmental hurdle which has a slow process.

Phil Francisco stated that Natural Heritage will not give the requestor a firm yes or no until the person is deep into the process.

### **Discuss proposed bylaw changes to the age restricted multifamily zoning (Section 218-3).**

Becky Pine updated the group on a conversation that she had with Russ Burke about his thoughts about this bylaw. Apart from the SHI inclusion and federal law compliance tweaks, a major overhaul of the Town's multifamily zoning could come after the Planning Board addresses MBTA Communities<sup>1</sup> and the Master Plan. Housing Trust members discussed the number of units in a development that must be affordable. The present requirement is for 50% which seems prohibitively high. The group aimed for a percentage that is economically feasible while still creating an adequate number of affordable units. Comprehensive permit projects under state 40B zoning have profit limitations and require that one quarter of the units be affordable. 25% affordable under the bylaw with no profit limitations was proposed.

*Carolyn Perkins moved to send a letter to the Planning Board to advise setting quantity of required affordable units at 25% because we think this requirement is more likely to develop a project. Richard Perini seconded and the motion carried (4:0) (Vander Linden absent).*

### **Consider approval of CPC Affordable Housing Grant Agreement related to \$400,000 CPC funding and authorization for Becky Pine to sign on behalf of the Housing Trust.**

Housing Trust members discussed the need to execute another grant agreement with the Select Board regarding the most recent grant of \$400,000 in CPC funding. The obligations for the Trust under this grant agreement will be the same as the obligations agreed to in the grant agreement executed in early 2024 for the \$200,000 in CPC funding voted at the 2023 Spring Town Meeting. As with the earlier agreement, the contract is between the Affordable Housing Trust and the Select Board with the Community Preservation Committee signing in acknowledgement.

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<sup>1</sup> Groton's due date for compliance is December 31, 2025.

*Phil Francisco moved to approve the CPC Affordable Housing Trust grant agreement related to the \$400,000 in CPC funding and to authorize Becky Pine to sign on behalf of the Affordable Housing Trust. Richard Perini seconded and the motion carried (4:0) (Vander Linden absent).*

**Review Dillis & Roy invoice for \$3,050 dated August 14, 2024 related to engineering work on the Hoyts Wharf Parcel.**

*Charles Vander Linden moved to approve payment of the \$2,695.61 invoice dated July 10, 2024 from Dillis & Roy. Phil Francisco seconded and the motion carried (5:0).*

At about 8:30 pm, Trust members voted to leave regular session to enter executive session and then to adjourn without re-entering regular session.

*Carolyn Perkins moved to enter executive session and later to adjourn without returning to regular session pursuant to G.L. Chapter 30A, §21(a), Clause 6 – “To consider the purchase, exchange, lease or value of real property if the chair declares that an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the public body” for the purpose of town owned properties [Becky Pine as chair so declared]; and pursuant to M.G.L., c.30A, §21(a), Clause 7 – “To comply with, or act under the authority of, any general or special law or federal grant-in-aid requirements” for the purpose of review, approval, and consideration of the release of executive session minutes. Richard Perini seconded and the motion carried (4:0) by roll call vote of Perini – aye, Perkins – aye, Francisco -- aye, and Pine – aye (Vander Linden absent).*

Notes by Fran Stanley

Upcoming Trust meetings: Thursday, August 22, 2024 at 7 pm – attend Planning Board meeting  
Thursday, September 9, 2024 at 6:15 pm – review of FTM warrant  
Thursday, September 18, 2024 at 7 pm – regularly scheduled meeting