



**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: Wednesday, September 18, 2024  
Time: 7 pm  
Location: 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Meeting Room, Town Hall, 173 Main Street  
Members attending: Richard Perini, Carolyn Perkins, Phil Francisco, and Becky Pine  
Members absent: Charles Vander Linden  
Others attending: Greg Roy (Dillis & Roy engineer)  
Referenced documents: August 15, 2024 and September 5, 2024 draft minutes

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Becky Pine called the Affordable Housing Trust to order at 7 pm. Charles Vander Linden had a planned absence.

**Discuss new plan received for the Hoyts Wharf parcel (parcel 249-51 and part of parcel 249-57).**

Greg Roy explained the August 22, 2024 ANR plan that he prepared for the Housing Trust. The plan shows boundaries, shape metrics for zoning, and the plan can be legally described for the deed. The land shown was designed to be sufficient for 2 buildable lots – one conventional lot in the eastern corner of the Hoyts Wharf parcel and one adjacent backwoods lot (a/k/a hammerhead lot) to the west. The present plan does envelope the cart path. Trust members do not want to have the proposed lot include the cart path even if it is unlikely that the cart path could be developed into an alternate access to the ball fields (due the cart path traversing a wetland in parcel 249-57).

Greg Roy explained that he cannot flip two lots to bring the backwoods lot to the corner of the parcel because one cannot create frontage that is completely encumbered by an easement. The easement in question is the 50-foot-wide power line easement running along the eastern border of the Hoyts Wharf parcel. The ANR plan shows the location of the powerline easement.

Becky Pine said that the Trust wanted to send something like this plan to Natural Heritage. Greg Roy agreed stating that Natural Heritage will want the Trust to preserve two third (2/3) of the land plus identified corridors, exclusive of wetlands. It was stated that the Trust is following the recommendation of Jesse Leddick from Natural Heritage to concentrate development in this particular corner of the Hoyts Wharf parcel.

Becky Pine proposed and other Trust members agreed that it would be simpler for the Trust to reduce the plan to a single buildable lot. Greg Roy said that he would direct his crew to add the location of cart path on the plan for clarity. Greg Roy continued stating that he will submit the plan (Project Review Checklist Application) to Natural Heritage once the Trust approves. The best outcome for the Trust would be for Natural Heritage to determine that this plan proposes a “conditional no take”. In that event, the Trust would likely be expected to demark certain points. A full “take” requires a comprehensive management permit which is expensive. In Greg Roy’s experience with similar development requests for single lots, it is reasonable to hope for a conditional no take decision.

Trust members asked Greg Roy more about the permitting. Greg Roy explained that there are 3 main permits:

1. Natural Heritage,
2. the Board of Health for the septic permit, and
3. Earth Removal Storm Water for erosion control.

Well permits are easy and the location of the well will be noted on the septic plans. There is a 4<sup>th</sup> possible permit from the Conservation Commission for an Order of Conditions but this is not necessary if there are no nearby wetlands. A possible 5<sup>th</sup> permit would be the formal submission to the Planning Board for the ANR plan. It is hoped that all of this could be accomplished before the Spring Town Meeting. Spring Town Meeting is usually held at the end of April and the warrant would close mid-March.

Gathering those permits will put the parcel into a much more desirable position for development as it would be essentially "turn key" for RFP bidders. Greg Roy said that the presence of the powerline easement is 'not fatal' but in general people do not like encumbrances. If it is cheap to investigate, figure out and extinguish, then the Trust may want to do that. If it is expensive and \$20,000 was mentioned as the cost of a more expensive effort, then maybe not worth the cost. Trust members directed Fran Stanley to reach out to Town Counsel about investigating and extinguishing the easement. There is a good chance that the Town owns the easement through its purchase of land beyond the Hoyts Wharf parcel.

Fran Stanley and Greg Roy will check the present scope of work and compare it to the engineering and permitting steps that the Trust intends to take.

#### **Sand Hill Road Right of First Refusal parcel for property exiting Chapter 61A.**

Background: There is a 2.6-acre parcel with frontage on Sand Hill Road that the Town can exercise its right of first refusal to purchase for \$260,000 if so inclined. The rear of the parcel abuts the Nashua River Rail Trail.

The land abuts the group home owned and operated by Seven Hills. There is an easement to allow the group home residents better access to the Nashua River Rail Trail.

The Conservation Commission is looking at the site and there is a high-quality vernal pool on the site (not yet certified) and the Conservation Commission would like to provide a greater level of protection for that vernal pool than the law would otherwise provide. The price seems high to the Conservation Commission. In order exercise the option, the Town would need to purchase the parcel for the set price that the owner has already contracted with a private party to pay.

The group discussed the particulars. The vernal pool plus setback will consume some of the buildable land which may limit the potential uses. Carolyn Perkins explained that the Commonwealth as a rule does not site group homes near one another. Becky Pine suggested that the Trust has other options and so she does not think that it makes sense to pursue this purchase. Other group members agreed.

Phil Francisco will miss the October meeting unless it is held via Zoom. Zoom will probably work better for Becky Pine's schedule too.

#### **Minutes**

*Carolyn Perkins moved to approve the August 15, 2024 draft minutes as corrected. Phil Francisco seconded and the motion carried 4:0 (Vander Linden absent).*

*Carolyn Perkins moved to approve the September 5, 2024 draft minutes as corrected. Phil Francisco seconded and the motion carried 4:0 (Vander Linden absent).*

#### **CPC Grant Agreement for \$400,000**

Becky Pine announced that the CPC Grant Agreement for the \$400,000 of community housing funds has been fully executed.

**Executive Session**

*Phil Francisco 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]; Carolyn Perkins 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

Next meeting: Thursday, October 17, 2024 at 7 pm – regularly scheduled meeting