



**TOWN OF GROTON**  
Affordable Housing Trust



Becky Pine, *Chair*  
Lynn Holdsworth, *Member*  
Carolyn Perkins, *Vice Chair*  
Phil Francisco, *Member*  
Charles Vander Linden, *Member*

Regular Session Minutes

Date: Thursday, December 18, 2025  
Time: 7 pm  
Location: Virtual Meeting held via Zoom  
Members attending: Phil Francisco, Carolyn Perkins, Lynn Holdsworth, Charles Vander Linden, and Becky Pine  
Others attending: John Sopka (Groton Housing Authority board member)

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Becky Pine called the Affordable Housing Trust to order at 7 pm. Cameras were on and votes were taken by roll call vote.

**1. Discuss Dan Emerson's concerns regarding addressing Petapawag safety issues considering limited CPC funding. (Item added 12/18/2025)**

Trust members discussed Dan Emerson emailed concerns about how limited Community Preservation Committee (CPC) funding may impact the Groton Housing Authority application for a generator to address safety issues. On December 15, 2026, Dan Emerson sent this email:

"May this find all in best possible health.

An FYI and FWIW

The CPC currently has funding proposals totaling over 5 million.

The largest is a 4 million plus project to make major and much needed improvements to the very heavily used community playing fields, including addressing significant safety issues related to children and heavy traffic. The state is offering a time sensitive reimbursement plan of around 30%, up to 1 million.

Odds seem high this project will be accepted in some form and it will have major impact on funds available for other projects in the coming fiscal year.

The unallocated bucket is projected to have around \$661 k available.

The Community housing bucket is projected to have approximately \$166 k, of which around \$80 k will most likely be approved for use supporting town housing coordinator, which would leave around \$86 k for other approved community housing proposals.

GHT has a preliminary request for \$300 k and GHA has one for \$265 k (for backup emergency power for residents)

See screen cap below *[not included here]* ...

As the math implies, nowhere near enough funds to meet all demands.

So am wondering: what are the possibilities/options for GHT and GHA working out/coordinating a plan to help address the GHA safety issue?

BTW Projects that don't make it onto the warrant for spring town meeting can likely reapply next year."

Phil Francisco wondered if a battery system could be an alternative to the \$265,000 gas fired generator. Becky Pine asked how Groton Commons (low-income senior housing on Willowdale Road) and Petapawag (19 Lowell Road) have addressed the risk of power failure in the past. John Sopka stated that he did not have data on hand. Carolyn Perkins asked if Groton Electric might have recommendations for a path forward. She added that people relying on electric powered oxygen machines for supplemental oxygen usually have a 6-hour window. The group wondered if Petapawag had ever experienced an outage of 6 hours or more. The group asked about the current backup plan for assisting Petapawag in the event of an emergency with prolonged loss of power. Lynn Holdsworth referenced a Fire Department list of residents who might require assistance in the event of an emergency. Fran Stanley noted that both Petapawag and Groton Commons are classified as independent living. Charles Vander Linden commented that he would like to learn about the outage pattern of the past 25 to 30 years.

Overall, the group asked for more information about current plans as well as the history of past events. Trust members directed Fran Stanley to research this matter and report back to the Trust. Carolyn Perkins approved of the dialogue between the 2 housing entities. She said that the Housing Trust has received a lot of money from the CPC and this generator request is the first real Groton Housing Authority request for CPC dollars. She added that at this point, there is not going to be a lot of money available. Becky Pine commented that there is a widespread belief that the Trust is stockpiling funds. The handwriting is on the wall that we will either be asked to reduce our request or less money will be available to the Trust.

Phil Francisco said that the presumption is that the current bond will be paid off and the Cow Pond project will proceed. The presumption is that the Cow Pond Fields project is the most important project in town. The Trust will be receiving a letter of support from the Board of Health. Phil Francisco will ask the Planning Board, The Sustainability Commission and the Council on Aging have also been asked.

**2. Discuss the Specialized Building Code that may be proposed at the Spring Town Meeting, particularly whether the advanced code could discourage affordable housing construction. (Item added 12/18/2025)**

The Specialized Code would highly prioritize all electric. Adopting the Specialized Code is a step needed for the Town to qualify as a Climate Leader which is a step beyond the Green Communities designation that the Town already possesses. Participation in the Green Communities program enabled Groton to receive multiple grants to improve energy efficiency and reduce energy demand. More grants would be available to the Town if Groton qualifies as a Climate Leader.

Trust members would like to learn more about the Specialized Code and its potential impact on affordable housing. Phil Francisco contacted Sustainability Commission chair Charlotte Weigel. Sustainability representatives can attend a future Trust meeting – either January or February's meeting – to speak with the Trust on this matter.

**3. Review draft minutes from November 19, 2025. (Item added 12/18/2025)**

*Phil Francisco moved to approve the regular session minutes for November 19, 2025. Charles Vander Linden seconded and the motion carried (5:0) by roll call vote of Holdsworth – aye, Vander Linden – aye, Perkins – aye, Francisco – aye, and Pine – aye.*

- 4. Executive Session #1. 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.” – PURPOSE – purchase or value of real property. Roll call vote may be taken.**

*Phil Francisco moved to enter executive session and not to return to regular session pursuant to G.L. Chapter 30A, §21(a), Clause 6 – to consider the purchase, exchange, lease, or value of real property with the chair having declared that an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the public body. Charles Vander Linden seconded and the motion carried (5:0) by roll call vote of Holdsworth – aye, Vander Linden – aye, Perkins – aye, Francisco – aye, and Pine – aye.*

- 5. Executive Session #2 – 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” – PURPOSE – Review, Approve and Consider the Release of Executive Session Minutes. Roll call vote may be taken.**

*Phil Francisco moved to enter executive session and not to return to regular session 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 – PURPOSE – Review, Approve and Consider the Release of Executive Session Minutes. Carolyn Perkins seconded and the motion carried (5:0) by roll call vote of Holdsworth – aye, Vander Linden – aye, Perkins – aye, Francisco – aye, and Pine – aye.*

Regular session ended around 7:30 pm.

Notes by Fran Stanley

Next Meeting: Thursday, February 19, 2026 at 7 pm  
CPC Final Application due: Wednesday, February 11, 2026 by 4 pm