



TOWN OF GROTON

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Board of Selectmen

Joshua A. Degen, *Chair*
Stuart M. Schulman, *Vice Chair*
Anna Eliot, *Clerk*
George F. Dillon, Jr., *Member*
Peter S. Cunningham, *Member*

Town Manager
Mark W. Haddad

To: *Community Preservation Committee*

From: *Mark W. Haddad – Town Manager*

Subject: *Update on Affordable Housing Project*

Date: *November 21, 2008*



Thank you for the opportunity to meet with the Community Preservation Committee this past Monday, November 17, 2008. I enjoyed meeting the Committee and look forward to working with you. At the meeting, the Committee asked for an update on the Affordable Housing Project approved by the CPC and Town Meeting.

As requested, attached please find an update from Richard Heaton, the consultant hired by the Town to conduct the project. I hope you find this information helpful. Please let me know if you require any additional information, or have any questions.

MWH/rjb

cc: Board of Selectmen
enclosure

Richard Heaton
H&H Associates LLP

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TO: Mark Haddad
Cc: Josh Degen, Peter Cunningham, Michael Collette
DATE: November 21, 2008
SUBJECT: Report on Affordable Housing Project for CPC

Per your request, attached is a summary of my activity on the Affordable Housing Project for the CPC.

On February 19, 2008, I was awarded a contract by the Groton BoS to identify, prioritize, and rank town-owned parcels of land that might be suitable to construct affordable housing as well as assist in the selection of a developer to create housing on one of these parcels.

I worked with the respective members in Town, developed goals for selecting a site for affordable housing (see attached slide) that was approved by the BoS. Based on these goals, I reviewed 290 sites on 4,429 acres of town land and selected six sites as having high potential. The three highest potential sites were:

1. Prescott School
2. Cow Pond Road
3. Tarbell School

I concluded that the Prescott School was by far the most desirable location. It is close to the center of Town, has town water and sewer was recently vacated by the school. Therefore, I researched the deed and the lease for the building and concluded there was a way that the deed restrictions could be accommodated and the issues with the school lease resolved.

I met with the Planning Board and found there was support to tie Prescott School into the Station Avenue District, if the other issues were resolved.

Independent of my contract, I have worked with the BoS and the Interim Town Administrator to set up the Groton Affordable Housing Trust. This will provide Groton more flexibility in controlling their housing strategy.

I volunteered to work with the Selectmen outside the scope of the contract and met with the Groton Dunstable Regional School Committee. In September and November, Mr. Degen and I met with GDRSD School Committee and discussed the possibility of using Prescott School as a mixed-use building. As a mixed use building, it might include offices for the

regional school district and a mix of retail shops, professional offices and affordable housing. After consideration, the School Committee voted unanimously to authorize the school administration and the school, committee representatives to enter into discussions to develop an RFP for an alternative use of Prescott that meets the needs of the District and the Town of Groton. On November, Mr. Funch identified Mr. Sjoberg, Dr Genovese and Mr. Funch to represent the GDRSD in these discussions.

In November of 2008, the Board of Selectmen determined that it would be advisable to research the status of the restrictions placed on the property and Mr. Haddad is in the process of setting up a discussion with the Attorney General to seek their advice.

Consolidating the needs of the GDRSD with the need to construct affordable housing and compliment the Station Avenue district could result in the ability to leverage significant public and private financing that would not be available to either the GDRSD or the station avenue development. Other towns have found they can leverage \$20 to \$50 of public and private funds with each dollar of community funds. It would not be unusual for Groton to be able to leverage \$20 million of investment for several hundred thousand dollars of CPA funds. Numerous communities are using CPA funds as "seed money" to leverage significant public and private financial resources.

The process involves creating a conceptual plan for the project and if the plan justifies the investment, either the Affordable Housing Trust or the Town would issue an RFP. The conceptual plan will model the proposed project and develop a budget and financial plan that is consistent with industry costs and sources of public and private funds to construct a project.

As the GDRSD offices move from Tarbell School to Prescott School, there is a possibility that the Town could sell or lease the Tarbell School to a developer to create affordable housing. Tarbell was my third priority for affordable housing. I am doing background research on this alternative in the event the BoS should request that I develop an RFP to dispose of Tarbell.

My budget for the project is \$25,000 and I have billed \$\$18,264. I have enough in the budget (\$6,736) to complete the project as contracted.

Attached are several slides from the reports that I have provided to the Selectmen that summarize my activity.

Sincerely,

Dick Heaton

Summary of Groton Affordable Housing Project
By H & H Associates
Dick Heaton

Summary of Process

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Establish Goals | End Goal |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Define Criteria | <input type="checkbox"/> Develop RFP |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Propose Sites | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Define housing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gather Input | <input type="checkbox"/> Number of units |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BoS | <input type="checkbox"/> Style |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Planning Board | <input type="checkbox"/> Price Range |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GDRSD | <input type="checkbox"/> Solicit Proposals |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ConCom | <input type="checkbox"/> Select Developer |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Parks Dept | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Water Dept | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Neighbors | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Recommendation | |

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Housing Goals for Groton

- #1 Get out from under 40B
 - Build 17 to 20 affordable Units per year
- #2 Provide Housing for Seniors on Fixed Income
 - Work with Housing Authority to implement their plan
- #3 Provide Housing for Public employees (teachers, emergency services, town employees, etc)
 - Affordable Housing Study
- #4 Provide Housing for Residents that wish to downsize
 - Affordable Housing Study
- #5 Provide Housing for Residents starting out in Town
 - Affordable Housing Study
- #6 Provide Housing for Residents under stress
 - Affordable Housing Study

Reviewed at March 31st BoS Meeting

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Town Land

Excluded Sites

- Electric Light
- Water Dept
- Conservation
- Municipal
- Not acceptable

Site Codes	Acres
30-36 Potential Site	461
26 Municipal Land	492
27 Electric Light	31
28 Water Dept	144
25 Conservation	3207
22 Less than 3 Ac	26
20 Not Acceptable	87
Total Town Land (Ac)	4,449
280 Sites	% of 32.5 sq mi
	2.1%

Potential Sites

1. Prescott School
2. Cow Pond, Hoyts Wharf
3. Pepperell Rd (Tarbell School)
4. Townsend Road
5. Lowell, Brown Loaf
6. Shirley Road

Refer to Attached Summary

#1 Prescott School

Advantages

- Center of Town
- Space for 30 to 80 units
- Town Sewer/Water
- Federal/State Funds Available
 - Assessed Value \$2,015,000
- Adjacent to Station Ave District

Disadvantages

- School Plans are Unknown
 - Feb 27, 2008 – "School off line"
 - Staff \$298K
 - Utility \$35K
 - Capitol Improvements \$570K
 - Capacity not needed (FTF 3 Findings)
- Deed 1870 exclusively for Education of Groton Children
- Lease to GDRSD 2015



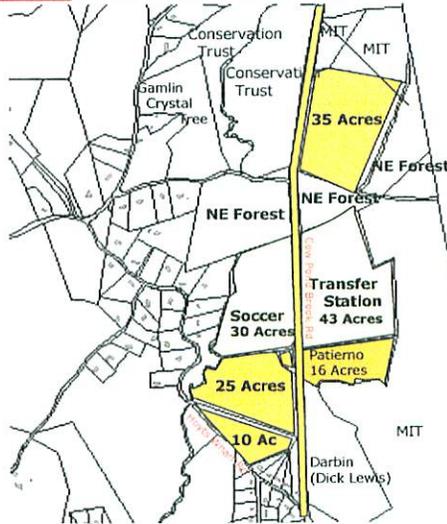
#2 Cow Pond, Hoyts Wharf

Advantages

- Create Recreation/
Multifamily Housing
District (100 Acres)
- Housing would pay for
services for athletic
fields

Disadvantages

- Possible expansion of
Athletic Fields and Transfer
Station
- Social stigma
- No Sewer/Water
- High Ground Water



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#3 Pepperell Rd (Tarbell)

Advantages

- 10 to 15 units
- Neighborhood location

Disadvantages

- Lease to School District
- Small Lot
- No Sewer
 - Holding Tank/Limited Capacity
 - West Groton Sewer Study



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