

[CPC Use Only: Date Received \_\_\_\_\_ By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Assigned CPC #2022- \_\_\_\_\_]

If possible, use word processor to fill out form. Please answer all questions, use "N/A" if not applicable.

1. a.) Applicant Name and Organization: Last **Stanley** First **Fran**

and Organization(s) (if appropriate) **Town of Groton Affordable Housing Trust**

b.) Regional Project: Yes or No? **No** If Yes, Town/Organization:

2. Submission Date: **January 11, 2021**

3. Applicant Address: St. **Town Hall, 173 Main Street**

City/ State: ZIP: **Groton, MA 01450**

4. Ph. # **978-732-1913** Email: **fstanley@grotonma.gov**

5. CPA Purpose. Check all that apply:

Community Housing: ☒ (Affordable Housing: ☒) Historic Preservation\*: Open Space:  
Recreation

\* As per MA General Law Chapter 44B, proposed historic projects that are not on the structures listed on the state's registry of historic places require a determination by the Groton Historic Commission that the proposed project is of historic significance.

6. Town Committee or boards participating: **N/A**

7. Project Location/Address: **Surrenden Farm Reserve Parcel on Shirley Road and various other Groton sites**

8. Project Name: **Site Assessment Study (formerly Reserve Parcel Feasibility Study)**

9. Additional Responsible Parties (If applicable): **For any town-owned land, the Select Board will be a responsible party. To date, no consultants have been engaged.**

10. As appropriate, indicate if proposal requires P&S agreement \_\_\_ Deed\_\_\_

Option agreement \_\_\_ Other-describe:

**There are no preconditions for this proposal. When the Affordable Housing Trust intends to conduct site assessment activities on town-owned land, then the Select Board's permission will be sought.**

**For investigations of privately owned land, the Trust will proceed in accordance with all applicable law and with permission of the land owner.**

Any other Trust activities that may be advanced with CPC funding will adhere to all limits set by the bounds of both CPC Community Housing parameters and the Affordable Housing Trust's Declaration of Trust which is the Trust's own foundational document<sup>1</sup>.

11. a.) Assessor info. (map/ block/ lot id.(s)): **220/33/2**

b.) Tax classification type: **Residential-Agricultural District [for Surrenden Farm Reserve Parcel]**

12. Permits required: Zoning: **N/A** Historic Preservation: **N/A** Other: **N/A**

13. Historic Commission Approval signoff (when required): **N/A** Date: **N/A**

c.) Committed from other sources: \$ **Approximately 25,000** worth of technical assistance, primarily in the form of engineering work, has been offered by Massachusetts Housing Partnership (MHP). MHP is a public nonprofit that promotes the development of affordable housing.

e.) Annual anticipated total expense: \$ **Unknown**

14. Funding:

a.) Project Cost: \$ **Variable** Estimate: \$ **May expend entirety of requested CPC funds or may have remainder** Professional Quote: \$ **N/A**

b.) Requested from CPC: \$ **150,000**

c.) Committed from other sources: \$ **25,000 (MHP verbal commitment)**

d.) Annual anticipated total income: \$ **None**

e.) Annual anticipated total expense: \$ **Unknown**

f.) Anticipated net income (loss): \$ **None**

g.) Estimator name/company: **N/A**

15. CCP Objectives - use codes from Section 5 to indicate all that apply:

**5.2.1 Encourage diversity of housing types for range of income levels and ages**

• **Provide housing for people with disabilities.**

• **Use CPA funds to address broader range of affordable housing needs, even if the CPA assisted units do not qualify for Chapter 40b requirements.**

16. Project Timelines: Proposed Start Date: **July 1, 2021** Projected Complete Date: **June 30, 2022**

17. Estimated Delivery Date of Completion Report to CPC: **July, 2022**

<sup>1</sup> [https://portal.grotonma.gov/storage/Affordable\\_Housing\\_Trust/Declaration\\_of\\_Trust.pdf](https://portal.grotonma.gov/storage/Affordable_Housing_Trust/Declaration_of_Trust.pdf)

## 18. Project description and explanation (attach additional sheets as needed):

The Affordable Housing Trust is exploring the development of low income housing tax credit (LIHTC) rental housing. As these projects typically yield about 50 units of housing and are rental projects, the total unit count and not just the subset of affordable units would be added to the Town's Subsidized Housing Inventory<sup>2</sup>. The Surrenden Farm Reserve Parcel (SFRP) is town-owned and was purchased with CPC funds. While most of Surrenden Farm was set aside for open space, the Reserve Parcel was allowed to retain development potential and community housing is one of the allowed uses of parcel. Therefore, the Trust intends to continue its exploration of the site using some of the requested CPC funds.

Expanded Scope

During the pendency of this application, the Trust took preliminary no cost steps to research the Reserve Parcel. The Trust held a site walk, initiated early community outreach through several housing trust meetings, gathered published environmental information, reviewed past subdivision plans, and examined a 2006 era legal agreement concerning the development of this parcel. The Trust did hear from individual community members and there was reportage as well as editorial comment in the *Groton Herald*. Some of this early feedback urged more community outreach and suggested that the process for securing community buy-in should include both an exploration of other locations as well as alternative project types. It was suggested that the Trust would be unwise to zero in on one parcel without a more comprehensive prior review to ensure an affordable housing outcome that meets community needs. Accordingly, this complete draft proposal expands the scope of the initial two-page application. The Affordable Housing Trust would like to use requested CPC funds to investigate affordable housing feasibility for certain town-owned parcels with development potential<sup>3</sup> and also the potential acquisition of any suitable parcels that are now in private ownership.

Assembling necessary financing for affordable housing projects is complicated. Following all legal requirements governing the actions of a municipal affordable housing trust is also complex. The Trust will need to contract for expert advice on feasibility and obtain specific legal advice in order to sift through its options and present a sound project to the Town. In order to explore available options, the Trust will need to expend time and money and, since every site is unique, snags and unknowns may present that will need to be resolved. For all of these reasons, the Trust would like to retain any unspent funds remaining at the June 30, 2022 conclusion of feasibility study so that the Trust will have the flexibility to make effective progress for the acquisition or creation of affordable housing as the process unfolds.

Initial Site Planning and Site Assessment

The Affordable Housing Trust needs to answer basic questions about each site under consideration in order to assess its development potential. Information gathered and advice received will help the housing trust and the public decide what is wanted for the site and how best to create desirable affordable housing.

---

<sup>2</sup> Many tax credit projects are mixed income developments. The type of tax credit project that is most likely to be built on the Reserve Parcel is a mixed income development with some deeply subsidized. Currently, a one-bedroom apartment rented by a household earning up to 60% of the area median income costs approximately \$1,440 a month. That is an example of a lightly subsidized rental unit. While qualifying as affordable housing by the Department of Housing and Community Development and qualifying as allowable community housing under Community Preservation Act requirements, the rents will fall upon a spectrum.

<sup>3</sup> See current Housing Production Plan for details.

The Affordable Housing Trust anticipates that it would use CPC funding to engage one or more consultants to advise the Trust on predevelopment issues such as

- bringing utilities to the site (water, sewer, etc.)
- advising on necessary infrastructure (road improvements) to access the site
- advising on initial financial feasibility (majority of development funding will be from a combination of outside funding such as grants and tax credits)
- advising on MGL c. 40B permitting and potentially local multi-family zoning
- considering the preparation of a master plan to guide future development of larger sites (ex. identifying portions of the site for phased development)
- structuring Requests for Proposals (RFPs) to meet legal requirements while inviting development proposals advantageous to Town interests.
- conducting preliminary engineering (may include title searches, surveys, conceptual site plan)
- appraising site for future disposition
- conducting environmental reviews such as wetlands delineations, Natural Heritage, etc.
- conducting market analysis to guide decisions regarding the appropriate mix of one-, two-, and three-bedroom units, and/or age-restricted units.

The Affordable Housing Trust has explored alternative funding sources for feasibility and predevelopment. The results of that research are as follows:

- Massachusetts Housing Partnership (MHP): verbal commitment of \$25,000. When investigating a target site, it is recommended that the MHP consultants act first so that local dollars can follow up and be used to address further work that MHP experts recommend.
- Community Economic Development Assistance Corporation (CEDAC): not an option. CEDAC works with private developers not municipalities.
- MassWorks Infrastructure Program: if an affordable housing project is dependent on public infrastructure improvements, then this type of project would be eligible for MassWorks funding.

19. Feasibility: **This proposal is feasible. Based on a review of other towns<sup>4</sup> and the Community Preservation Coalition website, funding applications for initial site planning, site assessment and the acquisition or creation of affordable housing are common funding requests.**

20. List of attachments: **None**

21. Additional Information: **For town-owned parcels, any reports made or data gathered will be submitted as part of the final report.**

22. Management Plan:

Overall, the Affordable Housing Trust strives to direct the expenditure of these funds in the most cost-effective way possible to achieve the goal of creating a significant amount of affordable housing.

#### METHODOLOGY

The Affordable Housing Trust will maintain regular contact with the CPC liaison. The Affordable Housing Trust will coordinate with the Town Manager, who also serves as Chief Procurement Officer, and the Town Accountant to ensure that its actions adhere to public procurement law as well as municipal rules

---

<sup>4</sup> Acton, Billerica, Chelmsford, Harvard, Stow, Sudbury and Westford.

for spending public funds. More specifically, the Trust will vote on expenditures and only spend CPC funds on allowable expenses. Trust will direct the Housing Coordinator to assist with Trust activities as needed. If professional advice is required to ascertain the legal or prudent course of action, then the Affordable Housing Trust intends to contract for that advice whether it comes from legal counsel, engineering firms, affordable finance experts, etc.

#### SELECT SITE

The Affordable Housing Trust will evaluate the merits of each opportunity to create affordable housing and, by majority vote, select an appropriate site [an appropriate site is defined as a combination of either a site with developable land or a site with existing structure/s suitable for use as affordable housing together with an evaluation of financial feasibility to accomplish this goal]. Occasionally a resident will approach the Trust or respond to invitations from the Trust to propose new affordable housing. At times, the Town is notified of its right to first refusal on a parcel under the M.G.L. Ch. 61 tax program.

#### IDENTIFY SUPPLEMENTAL FUNDING ALTERNATIVES

With the cost of creating below market rate housing and the desire to maintain long-term affordability (30 years or perpetual), the Affordable Housing Trust understands that almost all housing beyond the production of a single unit will depend on the identification and utilization of non-local funding alternatives. For example, the Low Income Housing Tax Credit program (LIHTC), which is the primary federal program for funding new affordable housing, requires local municipal support. That local support could take the form of the provision of Town owned land and/or funding available through the Affordable Housing Trust.

Another example of useful outside funding is the Commonwealth's MassWorks grants which can fund infrastructure projects such as road improvements or sewer. In rural communities such as Groton, town sewer is limited, town water is not always available and existing roads may not be adequate for site access.

#### ONGOING SITE ASSESSMENT

The Affordable Housing Trust might purchase a site and arrange for the development of affordable housing or it may contribute funds to a project undertaken by a developer who has already devised a credible project. Regardless of the path, the Trust must engage in ongoing assessment of feasibility, one element of which is site assessment, in order to ensure that efforts are productive and cost effective.

23. Applicant Signature:   
Co Applicant Signature: not applicable  
Co Applicant Signature: not applicable

Date: 