



**TOWN OF
GROTON**
173 Main Street
Groton, MA 01450

Community Preservation Committee
Anna Eliot, Chair – Parks Commission
Aubrey Theall Vice Chair – Historical Commission
Bruce Easom, Treasurer/Clerk – Conservation Comm.
Vacancy – Planning Board
Daniel Emerson – Housing Auth.
Carolyn Perkins – at large
Richard Hewitt – at large

MEETING MINUTES

Date: Monday, January 27, 2025
Time: 7:00 PM
Location: 1st Floor Meeting Room, Town Hall 173 Main Street
Members Present: Dan Emerson, Anna Eliot, Richard Hewitt, Aubrey Theall, Bruce Easom, Carolyn Perkins
Members Absent:
Others Present: Micaela Moore, Rob Foley, Jon Strauss, Steve Lane, Tricia Upton, Mark Haddad, Kara Cruikshank, Peter Cummingham

The meeting was called to order by chair, Anna Eliot, at 7:05 PM.

Planning Board Representative Discussion- New administrator Micaela Moore was introduced.

REVIEW OF FY26 COMPLETE DRAFTS

2026-01 West Groton Rail Trail- Bruce Easom shared that this project is on a tight time frame. The filing for the Rail Trail must be done with other towns at the same time. Jon Strauss spoke on the time limits. Jon answered questions about how the funds will be used to buy rights to land, and that the funds will be focused on the Groton portion. Anna Eliot asked about possible price reductions.

2026-02 Conservation Fund 2026- Richard Hewitt stated that the requested amount may need to be lowered. Anna agreed with the suggestion of a reduction. Bruce Easom mentioned that the Conservation Committee doesn't want to be the only project to lower its asking amount, but if multiple projects are asked to reduce their amounts, they would be understanding.

2026-03 Fiscal Year 2026 Housing Funds Request- Daniel Emerson expressed that this is another proposal that may need to be more flexible with its financial request. Richard Hewitt suggested limiting the grant amount to the available funds in the housing bucket.

2026-06 Housing Coordinator FY26- Anna Eliot wants no financial reduction. Richard Hewitt said he is happy with it.

2026-09 Bancroft Castle Preservation Work Phase 2- Aubrey Theall informed the board that the Webber family is contributing 10% of the project cost. Anna Eliot stated that she would like to see the requested cost reduced. Mr. Theall informed the board that the state is also supportive of the project. Questions were raised regarding the upkeep of the structure after the project is completed.

2026-11 GDYBL Cow Pond Baseball Improvements- Carolyn Perkins expressed confusion about why there were two Cow Pond projects. It was explained that this project was presented separately from project 2026-05 and is being brought forward by a different group. Rob Foley informed the board that this was considered seven months ago, before they were even aware of 2026-05. Richard Hewitt raised questions about whether this work would need to be redone if the larger project were approved later. Mr. Foley stated that this project has already been reduced by \$32,000.

2026-12 Town Field Improvements- Rob Foley expressed that this is the priority of Groton Baseball.

2026-05 Accessibility, Renovation and Restoration Improvements at Cow Pond Brook Field- Mark Haddad informed the board that one of the reasons the work needs to be done is that one of the entrances interferes with wildlife. A one-million-dollar grant has been applied for. Mr. Haddad requested that this project be pushed to the fall due to the grant not being guaranteed. He also asked that the project designer be allowed to come and give a presentation at the next meeting on 2/3. The board was also informed that the grant is for water conservation, and no additional grants can be given if it is awarded.

2026-10 Prescott Community Center- Trisha Upton and Steve Lane spoke about the restoration and work they are requesting with this application, such as installing a new tin drop ceiling, historically accurate light fixtures, and restoring the wood floors currently covered in carpet. Carolyn Perkins, Dan Emerson, and Richard Hewitt all agreed that the wording in the application needs to be changed. As it stands, they stated, the application appears to be more about maintenance than restoration, so the language is not conveying the intent of the Friends of Prescott. Trisha Upton mentioned that their members are willing to do some of the work themselves, such as painting. Bruce Easom noted that making historic buildings usable is more important than strict preservation.

2026-15 Provide Curatorial Storage- Aubrey Theall shared that the Historic Commission had written a letter of support. Carolyn Perkins mentioned that the building holds Groton history, including documentation, memorabilia, and paintings. The historic ephemera require proper storage with ventilation for preservation. The ceilings and walls need to be stabilized. A storage unit may need to be rented to hold the artifacts while the work is being done.

2026-18 FY26 Williams Barn Renovations- Bruce Easom shared that he is on the committee bringing this project forward. Mr. Easom explained that some of the fieldstone basement walls in the barn need to be redone and that the sill plate has sustained damage due to water. The current beams are cracked and will be replaced with hand-carved ones.

CONTINUED PROJECT UPDATES

2025-01 Conservation Fund FY25 (BRUCE EASOM)- Waiting on the state to approve the conservation restriction on the Westminster's sportsman club.

2025-02 Cow Pond Play Fields (ANNA ELIOT) – No Updates.

2025-03 Milestone Markers Restoration (AUBREY THEALL) - No Updates.

2025-04 Sustainable Groton Funding (CAROLYN PERKINS) – No Updates.

2025-05 Prescott School Building Assessment (RICHARD HEWITT)- Anna Eliot congratulated Mark Haddad on completing the initial project under budget. Mr. Haddad informed the board that nothing else can be done until the specifications for the electrical system are defined. He requested that the leftover funds be used to hire someone to define the specs, so bids for the work can be received. Ms. Eliot asked Mr. Haddad to obtain quotes for this work. Bruce Easom stated that while construction is not covered, getting the specifications does fall under the categories for which the money was originally designated. Richard Hewitt made a motion for Mark Haddad to use the funds for an electrical assessment. Dan Emerson seconded the motion, and it carried, with Anna Eliot abstaining. The board also discussed the possibility of putting up a CPA sign at the school.

2025-07 Squannacook River Rail Trail Phase II Permitting (BRUCE EASOM)- No Updates.

2025-08 Bancroft Castle Preservation Study (AUBREY THEALL) – No Updates.

2025-09 Property Security, Safety, and Preservation (CAROLYN PERKINS) –

2025-10 Housing Fund Request FY25 (DAN EMERSON)- No Updates.

2025-11 Housing Coordinator FY25 (CAROLYN PERKINS) – No Updates.

2025-12 Tools and Equipment for Building and Enhancing Trails (RUSS BURKE) – No Updates.

2024-04 Rebuild Major League Baseball Diamond (ANNA ELIOT) – No Updates.

2024-05 Construct 2 Softball Diamonds at Cutler (ANNA ELIOT) – No Updates.

2019-08 Duck Pond Restoration (RICHARD HEWITT) – No Updates.

2022-04 Affordable Housing Site Assessment Study (DANIEL EMERSON) – No updates.

2022-09 Groton Dunstable Natural Field Restoration Plan (BRUCE EASOM)- Sign being remade it needed to be bigger.

2023-04 Nashua Riverwalk (CAROLYN PERKINS) – No Updates.

NEW/OLD BUSINESS

- **Budget Discussion-** Bruce Easom shared an update on the middle school track. They are currently going band to band and have received information from the town treasurer. There will be some additional payments in FY25, with the addition possibly around \$20,000, though the numbers are not final yet. Additionally, \$19,000 will go toward the CPC share of the Inter-departmental Administrative Assistant's salary and benefits, which is a prorated share. Currently, if all proposed projects are approved, excluding 2026-05, the CPC will be \$600,000 overdrawn. Savings need to be identified, and projects may have to be prioritized based on their scores. Aubrey Theall asked what was in the historic bucket for FY26 and was told it was \$446,000. Anna requested the figure for next week's available funds for applications.
- **Sign Invoices/ Project letters-** The present committee members signed invoices only, no project letters.
- **Next public meeting** will be February 3rd 2025, in the 1st Floor Meeting Room of Town Hall.

MEETING MINUTES

Committee members reviewed minutes from January 13th, 2025. Anna Eliot moved to approve the meeting minutes from Monday, January 13, 2025 as submitted, Aubrey Theall seconded and the motion carried by unanimous vote.

Carolyn Perkins moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:56PM. Daniel Easom seconded, and the motion carried by unanimous vote.

Respectfully submitted by Micaela Moore, Inter-Departmental Assistant

Approved: _____ February 10th 2025 _____