



**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.
George Barringer– Planning Board
Daniel Emerson – Housing Auth.
Carolyn Perkins – at large
Richard Hewitt – at large

MEETING MINUTES

Date: Monday, February 10, 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, Carolyn Perkins
Members Absent: Bruce Easom, George Barringer
Others Present: Micaela Moore, Jon Strauss, Megan Donovan, Mary Jennings

The meeting was called to order by chair, Anna Eliot, at 7:00 PM.

Planning Board Representative Discussion- The board members discussed taking projects out of their binders that are near completion.

REVIEW OF FY26 COMPLETE DRAFTS FOR WRITTEN RESPONSE LETTERS

2026-01 West Groton Rail Trail- Jon Stauss updated the board that Squannacook Greenways has already negotiated with the MBTA for their section, where it will meet up with the Groton project. The money will be used in Groton, so there is no need for regional designation for this project as discussed in previous meetings. In-depth quotes have come in, and Bruce Easom has done some prorating on the costs. The new estimate for this project is \$63,250, and the asking amount would still be \$75,000 to account for a safety margin and legal expenses. The sequence of projected steps has changed. Anna Eliot asked about the possibility of a grant. Mr. Stauss informed the board that a grant cannot be obtained for this phase, but they may be able to apply for one in February 2026. Dan Emerson asked if there is any funding outside the CPC. Mr. Stauss stated that, unfortunately, there is not any currently, but other outside funding will be sought after. Micaela Moore read aloud the drafted letter based on the CPC meeting held on 2/3/2025. The board agreed that, with the new information, some of the comments were no longer necessary.

2026-02 Conservation Fund 2026- Richard Hewitt mentioned that for this project, the letter should note that the board is considering asking for a reduction of \$200,000. The application is otherwise good. Anna stated that we could also ask them to consider the reduction. Micaela Moore read aloud the drafted letter based on the CPC meeting held on 2/3/2025. No comments were made on the drafted letter.

2026-03 Fiscal Year 2026 Housing Funds Request- Micaela Moore read aloud the drafted letter based on the CPC meeting held on 2/3/2025. The board agreed that, with the new information, some of the comments were no longer necessary. A discussion was held regarding the fact that, with no plans from the Affordable Housing Trust, the money is just being stored, while other projects have actionable plans.

2026-05 Accessibility, Renovation and Restoration Improvements at Cow Pond Brook Fields- Micaela Moore read aloud the drafted letter based on the CPC meeting held on 2/3/2025. Richard Hewitt stated that a new application is needed because the current one does not reflect the change in plans or

budget decrease that was previously brought to the board by Mark Haddad. Aubrey Theall discussed the new surveys that will be included in this project, noting that some user groups expressed dissatisfaction with the first proposal. Anna Eliot informed the board that the Park Commission has decided to prioritize the town field proposal, with this proposal second. Richard stated that although the amount has already been lowered, they can still ask if it is possible to reduce it further.

2026-06 Housing Coordinator FY26- Micaela Moore read aloud the drafted letter based on the CPC meeting held on 2/3/2025. There were no suggestions on the proposal.

2026-09 Bancroft Castle Preservation Work Phase 2- Micaela Moore read aloud the drafted letter based on the CPC meeting held on 2/3/2025. Richard Hewitt stated that the suggested phasing was in case the entire project cannot be fully budgeted. Carolyn Perkins noted that the CPC does not have enough money for all the projects and emphasized that funding should go toward what will be lost or destroyed without it, as well as toward projects that could incur significant damage. Ms. Perkins highlighted that Bancroft Castle and Williams Barn are at risk, while Prescott School is not. Mr. Hewitt reminded the board that urgency is one of the categories by which projects will be scored. Carolyn would like the urgency of this project and all historic projects to be emphasized in their final applications. Mr. Hewitt also requested a letter of support from the Webbers that demonstrates their financial commitment and backing of the project. Additionally, a concern was raised about safety, and a plan for the construction vehicles should be included.

2026-10 Prescott Community Center-Micaela Moore read aloud the drafted letter based on the CPC meeting held on 2/3/2025. Carolyn Perkins would like a statement on the potential historic loss if this project is not completed. Anna Eliot would like the Historic Commission to review what constitutes the historic asset. Ms. Eliot wants the assessment to be examined, and determinations made regarding which aspects are historic versus renovations. The question posed to the board was what the historical significance of the building is, considering its use, and what the taxpayer should be paying for. Aubrey Theall stated that he will put this on the agenda for the next Historical Commission meeting. Dan Emerson mentioned that it is a difficult balance with projects that have a historic classification but are being used in modern times. Anna Eliot informed the board that Gregg Yanchenko was scheduled for the meeting, but Mark Haddad canceled him. She read the email to the board, which stated: “Ms. Eliot: It has been brought to my attention that you invited Gregg Yanchenko to the CPC meeting tonight to discuss the Prescott Building Assessment. I need to remind you that as project manager Mr. Yanchenko works for me not the Community Preservation Committee. I attended the CPC meeting two weeks ago and gave the committee an update on the status of the project. The project is completed. Please be advised that I have canceled his attendance at your meeting tonight.” Ms. Eliot stated her intention to request a public information request for the assessment. Carolyn Perkins questioned whether this proposal required a review of the assessment, as only one room would possibly be affected by electrical work. An updated scope of work for this proposal will be needed. Ms. Perkins wants the urgency of preservation to be included in the final application. The board expressed an interest in understanding how critical this project is.

2026-11 GDYBL Cow Pond Baseball Improvements- Anna Eliot shares that this project is the lowest priority for the park commission. Richard Hewitt worries that this project could waste funds if the work needs to be redone later for a larger Cow Pond Brook project. Aubrey Theall expressed that the guarantee might not be possible with the 2026-05 redesign. Micaela Moore read aloud the drafted letter based on the CPC meeting held on 2/3/2025.

2026-14 Town Field Improvements-Micaela Moore read aloud the drafted letter based on the CPC meeting held on 2/3/2025. Anna Eliot stated the Park Commission's priority after a vote on this project. Ms. Eliot was unsure about everything that was being asked for in the application. The necessity and urgency of the drainage system work in the application were questioned. Richard Hewitt would like a timeline for when the work will be completed and the field will be usable again. Mr. Hewitt wants the Park Commission's priority support to be emphasized in their application.

2026-15 Provide Curatorial Storage- Aubrey Theall brought up that more letters of support would be important for this application. Richard Hewitt mentioned that at previous meetings, it was stated that this project could possibly be done for a lower amount, so that will need to be shown in their final application.

2026-18 FY26 Williams Barn Renovations- Aubrey Theall mentioned that Anna Eliot's idea from the last meeting of adding a structural engineer to the project is a good one. He added that including the engineer's fee in the budget is a positive addition. Even though the situation predated his involvement with the town, Mr. Theall compared it to Fitch's Bridge, a project that would have benefited from the involvement of a structural engineer. Mr. Theall emphasized that this project needs more letters of support, suggesting user groups and the historical commission as possible sources. Dan Emerson pointed out that the application does not include any outside funding, and that other commitments of funding would be a strong indication of public support.

CONTINUED PROJECT UPDATES

2025-01 Conservation Fund FY25 (BRUCE EASOM)- No Updates.

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)- No Updates.

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) – No Updates.

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

2025-11 Housing Coordinator FY25 (CAROLYN PERKINS)– Fran Stanley sent an email stating that Groton has been awarded a DLT A grant to draft a new Housing Production Plan. Richard Hewitt expressed confusion about how long the town will remain in safe harbor, as Ms. Stanley described it, and when the credits from the Groton Farms project will be pulled, and how it will affect the town, since the permits could be pulled at any point. Carolyn Perkins explained that because the construction of Groton Farms has not started within the time limit, the credits have been taken, but once construction begins, the credits will be reapplied. Anna Eliot asked how the MBTA designation might dovetail into this and who is responsible for the MBTA production plan or regional planning. Ms. Eliot proposed repeating a previous meeting with multiple housing departments where they explained how they work together.

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

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

NEW/OLD BUSINESS

- **Budget Discussion-** No discussion.
 - **Sign Invoices/ Project Letters-** The present committee members signed invoices only, no project letters.
 - **Next Public Meeting** will be February 24th 2025, in the 1st Floor Meeting Room of Town Hall.
 - **Change of Final Vote Date-** Anna Eliot brought to the board's attention that the original date chosen for the final vote, March 3, 2025, will not allow administrative assistant Micaela Moore to attend due to a conflict with the Board of Health meeting on the same night. Richard Hewitt moved to change the vote date to March 10, 2025. Carolyn Perkins seconded, and the motion carried with a unanimous vote. Anna Eliot suggested that the change in date should be included in the letters being sent to the applicants. Everyone agreed with this decision.
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MEETING MINUTES

Committee members reviewed the minutes from January 27, 2025. Richard Hewitt moved to approve the meeting minutes from Monday, January 27, 2025, as amended. Carolyn Perkins seconded, and the motion carried with a unanimous vote

Dan Emerson moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:09PM. Carolyn Perkins seconded, and the motion carried by unanimous vote.

Respectfully submitted by Micaela Moore, Inter-Departmental Assistant

Approved: _____ February 24th 2025 _____