



TOWN OF GROTON

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HOUSING PARTNERSHIP

Peter Cunningham, Chair
Anna Eliot
Richard Perini
Carolyn Perkins

Regular Session Minutes

Date/time: Tuesday, March 15, 2022 at 5:30 pm
Location: Virtual Meeting
Members in attendance: Peter Cunningham, Carolyn Perkins, Anna Eliot and Rick Perini
Others in attendance: John Sopka and Richard Harrington
Referenced documents: draft Heritage Landing comment letter

Peter Cunningham called the meeting to order at 5:38 pm with a quorum in attendance. Cameras for Housing Partnership members were turned on.

Agenda item: Review draft comments letter to be submitted to MassHousing regarding Heritage Landing proposal. Votes may be taken.

John Sopka asked to see the draft comment letter and asked what about Carolyn Perkins' comment about having a play place for children in the development. Fran Stanley emailed draft comment letter to John Sopka. Housing Partnership members introduced themselves.

Anna Eliot confirmed that the Housing Partnership's comments will include reference to desired cooperation with the Park Commission to help level the hill across from the site entrance. Anna Eliot also noted that the market rate homes will have small lots and relatively smaller homes – few houses are built like this in Groton.

Carolyn Perkins asked about the approval process to allow removal of trees and sand from Town owned land. Peter Cunningham guessed that it would require Town Meeting approval but that preliminary environmental permitting might be at the developer's expense.

Carolyn Perkins moved to approve the draft Heritage Landing comment letter to be submitted to MassHousing. Rick Perini seconded and the motion carried 4:0 by roll call vote of Perini – aye, Eliot – aye, Perkins – aye and Cunningham – aye.

Agenda item: Review draft minutes from February 22, 2022. Votes may be taken.

Carolyn Perkins moved to approve the February 22, 2022 regular session minutes. Rick Perini seconded and the motion carried 4:0 by roll call vote of Perini – aye, Eliot – aye, Perkins – aye and Cunningham – aye.

Agenda item: Discuss citizen's petition for changes to the definition of Age-Restricted Housing. Votes may be taken.

Peter Cunningham stated that Jeffrey Brem addressed the Select Board last night regarding the Citizens Petition. Peter Cunningham explained that Jeffrey Brem owns land on Main Street that used to be the site of the Bridle and Spur restaurant [3 parcels – 468 Main Street (4.7 acres), 478 Main Street (1.3 acres), and parcel 216-101 (1.5 acres with frontage on Taylor Road)¹. Jeffrey Brem is interested in building an age restricted development there. The Planning Board will hold its public hearing on the Citizens Petition on Thursday, March 24, 2022.

¹ In a January 19, 2022 Sewer Commission meeting, Jeffrey Brem described a development plan for 24 age restricted units.

Fran Stanley provided a brief overview regarding updating the age restriction definition and removing the affordability requirements. Carolyn Perkins said that the definition needs updating but needs a better re-write. As an example, Carolyn Perkins referenced the section that appears to require the Planning Board's individual approval of family members who are not age 55 and up. John Sopka recommended rejecting the citizens petition at Town Meeting and then having town committees work on bringing forward other zoning. John Sopka added that proceeding ad hoc may not be a good process. Peter Cunningham said that he is not comfortable taking a position on this now.

Anna Eliot asked if the MBTA Communities zoning requires a district of 50 contiguous acres. Fran Stanley thought not though an overlay district would need at least 25 acres. [Note: DHCD's draft guidelines do call for 50 contiguous acres.]

Meeting adjourned at 6:08 pm. Notes by Fran Stanley

Next meeting: March 24, 2022 – attend Planning Board public hearing