



TOWN OF GROTON

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Town of Groton Affordable Housing Trust

Colleen A. Neff, *Chair*
Allen B. King, *Vice Chair*
Stuart M. Schulman, *Treasurer*
Joshua A. Degen, *Secretary*
David A. Wilder, *Member*

Town Manager
Mark W. Haddad

Meeting Minutes

Date: August 24, 2011
Time: 7 p.m.
Location: 2nd Floor Meeting Room, Town Hall
173 Main Street Groton, MA 01450

Present Members: Colleen Neff, Allen King, David Wilder, Stuart Schulman, Josh Degen
Others in attendance: Jackie Eschle
Meeting handouts: agenda, letter from Town Treasurer

The meeting was called to order at 7:10 p.m.

Stuart moved to approve February 2, 2011 meeting minutes. David seconded the motion. Motion carried 4-0 with abstention by Josh.

Josh moved to approve April 6, 2011 meeting minutes. Allen seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.

David moved to approve May 18, 2011 meeting minutes. Allen seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.

Allen moved to approve July 27, 2011 minutes as amended. David seconded the motion. Motion carried 4-0 with abstention by Josh.

Agenda item 1: 134 Main Street

Allen updated group regarding scheduled Planning Board site walk of 134 Main Street scheduled for August 25, 2011.

Josh stated that he had attended both Design Review Committee and Conservation Commission meeting regarding the proposed development. Tim Hess was interested in a right of way along the rear of the property to accommodate a possible future bypass from Hollis Street through to Route 40. Josh offered comments to the Design Review Committee suggesting that the committee review the design as presented. Stuart added that he had offered similar comments at a previous meeting. Generally, the Design Review Committee seemed to want tweaking on the triplexes and some minor tweaking on the duplexes. Josh raised with developer Bob France the idea of granting the Town of Groton a right of way at the rear of the property which would be well within the wetlands buffer zones.

Regarding the Conservation Commission review, Josh noted that the peer review study opposed the proposed removal of invasive plant species. Josh added that the Conservation Commission disliked the proposed intrusion of a building inside the one hundred foot buffer.

Josh moved to adjourn into Executive Session at 7:25 pm with intent to later convene into open session in accordance with MGL c. 30A, Sec. 21: To discuss strategy with respect to litigation and the chair so declares. Stuart seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote: Degen – yes; Neff – yes; Wilder – yes; King – yes; Schulman – yes.

Meeting reconvened into open session around 7:40 p.m.

Agenda item 2: Expanding Town Overlay District: impact on affordable housing & Agenda item 4: 128 Main Street (Groton Inn)

Josh commented that exploration of this issue is premature and that direction needs to come from the Planning Board.

Agenda item 3: Prescott School re-use survey results

Stuart noted that the survey findings, which included questions about affordable housing, did not issue a clear mandate to the committee regarding residents' preferences. The group briefly asked how much of a commercial base can the Town support for that structure type and what mix of business uses such as office space, other commercial or retail.

Agenda item 5: Habitat for Humanity build update: Drumlin Hill Road

Allen updated the trustees regarding Habitat for Humanity's plan to construct affordable housing on its Drumlin Hill Road lot. Habitat for Humanity plans to meet August 29, 2011 and Habitat has postponed its previously planned meeting before the Housing Partnership on August 24, 2011. Daniel Wolfe has re-engineered the site and Tim Hess has offered to do some pro bono work.

Allen stated that the proposed location for the well had been less than fifty feet (50') from the abutter's well. Habitat has since re-perked (also known as re-percolation) and relocated the well approximately 140 feet from the other site. Stuart questioned whether there would be an issue with the septic if the plan calls for mounding of the soil over the septic field. Allen thought not provided that appropriate landscaping was employed. Meeting attendee and Drumlin Hill Road abutter Jackie Eschle stated that there have been well problems in other locations in the area and thought that the abutter's existing well had been hydrofracked (also known as hydraulic fracturing) three times by three different owners. Allen stated that Ira Grossman from the Nashoba Associated Boards of Health had reviewed and approved engineered designs. Jackie Eschle questioned this status as she said that she had not been notified of any public hearings as an abutter.

On behalf of Habitat for Humanity, Allen said that he would be looking for Trust support of the Habitat build. Josh stated that the Affordable Housing Trust would need a full presentation made to its group.

Agenda item 6: Fall seminar targeted to affordable housing consumers and Agenda item 7: Meet with realtors for a discussion about affordable housing and referral of prospects

Allen suggested that a meeting with area realtors should precede the consumer seminar in hopes of using realtor contacts to build greater attendance at the seminar. The realtors meeting might happen in October with the consumer seminar scheduled for November. Stuart noted that buyers of affordable homes are a distinct group differing from those buyers able to pay more and so opt out of affordability deed restrictions. Given this difference, the trustees discussed their hope that area realtors who serve the private housing market would help identify affordable housing homebuyers and also identify properties that might be converted to affordable housing.

Allen asked Fran to distribute a list of the DHCD affordable housing requirements and compile a list of area realtors. Given the economic climate and the slow real estate market, Stuart questioned how the statistical districts are drawn and how those decisions impact affordable housing on the ground in Groton.

Revisiting Agenda item 1: 134 Main Street – Funding

Trust members reviewed investment choices submitted by Town Treasurer Vicki Smith in a one-page handout. A brief discussion ensued during which the trustees agreed that they had confidence in the Treasurer's judgment and believed her to be in a superior position to make the decision.

Josh moved that the treasurer invest \$400,000 in an investment mechanism for no more than three months. David seconded this motion. Motion carried 5:0.

Josh moved that in the event that the Treasurer chooses to invest the Trust's funds in a money market account, she could also add in and invest the remaining \$12,000 of Trust monies. Motion carried 5:0.

Allen moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:30 p.m. Josh seconded the motion. Motion carried 5:0.

The next meeting of the Town of Groton Affordable Housing Trust is scheduled for Wednesday, August 31st at 7:30 p.m.

Minutes drafted by Fran Stanley.

Meeting Minutes Overview

Meeting Date	Status	Town Website
September 8, 2010	Final	Posted
October 13, 2010	Final	Posted
November 17, 2010	Final	Posted
December 20, 2010	Final	Posted
February 2, 2011	Final	Posted
April 6, 2011	Final	Posted
April 25, 2011	*	n/a
May 18, 2011	Final	Posted
June 27, 2011	**	n/a
July 27, 2011	Final	Posted
August 24, 2011	Draft	In process of being posted

* See Town record of Spring Town Meeting of even date.

** See Selectmen's minutes of even date.