

9.12.19

OFFICE OF THE TOWN ADMINISTRATOR

Phone (508) 430-7513

Fax (508) 432-5039

732 MAIN STREET, HARWICH, MA 02645



Christopher Clark, *Town Administrator*
Joseph F. Powers, *Assistant Town Administrator*

MEMO

To: Community Preservation Committee
From: Christopher Clark
Town Administrator

cc: Board of Selectmen
Affordable Housing Trust

Re: Land Acquisition Article 55 2018 Update
Housing Trust and Part-Time Housing Coordinator Article 58 2018 and Article 42 2019

Date: September 12, 2019

The Community Preservation Committee has requested an update from myself on item number 12 entitled Land Acquisition Judah Eldredge Property Purchase – article 55 2018 Annual Town Meeting and item 13 Housing Trust and Part-Time Housing Coordinator – article 58 of 2018 Annual Town Meeting and article 42 2019 Annual Town Meeting.

Town Counsel has been engaged in the eminent domain taking on the Judah Eldredge plan taking contained in article 55 of the 2018 Annual Town Meeting. Counsel has worked with a title search company to complete a due diligence search of property owners to be able to identify potential parties that could draw from an escrow account. The title search company requested an updated survey be completed on the site prior to finalization. Town Counsel is engaged in obtaining the necessary survey to complete this project. The title search is been far more extensive than originally anticipated for eminent domain purposes.

Housing Trust and Part-Time Housing Coordinator article 58 of the 2018 Annual Town Meeting and article 42 of the 2019 Annual Town Meeting. The two articles combined for the housing trust total \$800,000 of which said funds are still available. The affordable housing trust has said priorities for the land designated as affordable housing trust land by town meeting in 2019. Said parcels include Oak Street and Sisson road both under active review for development. Massachusetts Housing Partnership has been working with the trust on the development of the sites. The trust is also received inquiries to partner with Chris Wise, Real Estate and Open Space committee (On Deacon’s Folly) and preliminary interest with the developers of Chloe’s Path. Please see attached Harwich land inventory prioritization matrix discussed at today’s Affordable Housing Trust meeting. The trust has actively contracted with CDP for part-time housing coordinator services for both FY 19 and 20 that will fully expand by the conclusion of FY 20 but to CPC allocations.

Harwich Land Inventory Prioritization Matrix

Parcel	Potential # of units	Strategy	Description & Status
Town-Owned			
1A 0 Oak Street	1	The Harwich Affordable Housing Trust was established in 2018 and identified five town-owned properties with affordable housing development potential which were brought to 2019 Annual Town Meeting to approve 1) transfer from general municipal use to affordable housing use and 2) bringing them under the jurisdiction of the Affordable Housing Trust. In 2019 the Trust selected two priority sites on which to explore the feasibility of a housing development. Priority 1A was Oak Street and Priority 1B was Sisson Rd. The Trust then secured a Technical Assistance grant from Mass Housing Partnership (MHP) to assist with predevelopment activities for sites that have potential for multifamily. The Trust is focused on supporting sites with a high likelihood of success.	Mass Housing Partnership provided \$10,000 to begin feasibility studies on Oak Street. After a wetlands delineation was completed, the firm determined that a bog on the site is certified as a vernal pool, which brings with it mandatory buffers. The Oak St site is not likely to support more than one single family home due to extensive wetlands and septic capacity. At the August Trust meeting, Habitat for Humanity indicated preliminary interest in developing the site. Given existing interest, the Trust will consider whether to move forward with releasing a Request for Proposals for developers to develop the site. Due to the impossibility of developing multifamily on the site, MHP will not commit additional funding for predevelopment activities on this site. In order to develop an RFP that will attract high quality developers, the town must complete predevelopment work on the site to collect additional information for the RFP. Such work may cost \$5,000 - \$10,000 and could include a survey which will be needed for a building permit.
1B 265 Sisson Road	12 - 16 units based on existing conceptual plans	Street and Priority 1B was Sisson Rd. The Trust then secured a Technical Assistance grant from Mass Housing Partnership (MHP) to assist with predevelopment activities for sites that have potential for multifamily. The Trust is focused on supporting sites with a high likelihood of success.	The Sisson Rd site has been studied for affordable housing development in the past by both Housing Assistance Corporation and the Harwich Ecumenical Council for Housing and both resulted in conceptual plans that indicate potential for a small-scale development while preserving the Harwich Junior Theater on the site. When Oak St lost potential for multifamily housing, the Trust switched focus to Sisson Rd. The Trust approved that MHP move forward with a feasibility study and is currently awaiting preliminary results.
	70 Willow Street	Unknown	No activity to report.

Harwich Land Inventory Prioritization Matrix

Parcel	Potential # of units	Strategy	Description & Status
Depot Road	Less than 33 units based on		This site was identified in the town's most recent Housing Production Plan. The site includes vernal pools which will restrict development to the northern portion. No activity to report.
Depot Street	Unknown		No activity to report.
Earle Road	Unknown	Earle Rd was originally part of the site identified by the Trust in 2018, however, there was insufficient clarity regarding its current approved use to bring it to town meeting.	No activity to report.
Privately Owned			
Chloe's Path	Unknown	Not applicable	A private developer is expected to address the Trust at their October meeting.
1 Deacon's Folly	Unknown	Not applicable	The Harwich Conservation Trust approached the Affordable Housing Trust and Real Estate & Open Space Committee about jointly acquiring a site for both affordable housing (north side, closer to the road) and open space purposes (south side). An acquisition recommendation was sent to the Board of Selectmen and the town is awaiting an appraisal. The Affordable Housing Trust and Real Estate & Open Space Committee are submitting a joint application for Community Preservation Act funding to acquire the site. The Town Planner confirmed Lots 5, 6, 7 would be under conservation and Lots 1 through 4 would be potential development. 6.65 acres.

Harwich Land Inventory Prioritization Matrix

Parcel	Potential # of units	Strategy	Description & Status
Wise Living	96 - 120 units	Not applicable	<p>A private developer approached the Affordable Housing Trust to indicate interest in developing unsubsidized market rate housing for residents with moderate incomes. They have submitted plans for a subdivision with the Planning Department as a last resort but do not intend to follow through with the plans as long as they are able to work with the town on an affordable housing development. The developer has indicated to the Town Planner that certain accommodations regarding sewer capacity may be requested of the town to ensure the feasibility of the project. The site is 12 acres and he is interested in 1 to 3 bedroom duplexes, 8 to 10 units per acre, rental housing under 40B.</p>