



**Town of Amherst
Town Council Meeting
October 19, 2021
Virtual Meeting
Executive Session Minutes**

Councilors Participating Remotely: Bahl-Milne, Brewer, De Angelis, DuMont, Griesemer, Hanneke, Pam, Ross, Ryan, Schreiber, Steinberg, and Swartz

Councilors Absent: Schoen

Others Participating Remotely: Town Manager Paul Bockelman, Assistant Town Manager David Ziomek, Clerk of the Council Athena O’Keeffe

Griesemer called the executive session to order pursuant to MGL c.30A, s.21(a)6: to consider the purchase, exchange, lease, or value of real property; the chair declares that an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the public body; and confirmed members can hear and be heard, and that no other person is present or able to hear the discussion at the remote location.

Town Manager Bockelman and Assistant Town Manager Ziomek gave an update on land that may be available to purchase for affordable housing, three parcels on Belchertown Road, and on a meeting with the Affordable Housing Trust in executive session about using funds for this purpose. Two parcels have existing buildings, and one of the buildings is currently vacant. The properties are relatively flat and dry, are connected to public water and sewer, there are sidewalks on either side of the road, the properties are walkable and bike-able to the village center, there is space for future community gardens, and the parcels are on a bus line.

The Town is working on a wetlands evaluation, appraisal, zoning and building potential. The Town estimates there is potential for 40 affordable housing units with parking. The project would require a comprehensive permit. The asking price for all three parcels is \$780,000. The Housing Trust is considering available funding, a developer could be found for these parcels and the East Street School.

Ross asked about funds not covered by CPA, and timeline.

The Housing Trust has funding available for \$300,000, and the Town is working with the Community Preservation Act Committee (CPA) and private funding to meet the balance.

If the Town or the Housing Trust holds the property, it is not taxed, when it is completed by a developer it will be assessed and returned to the tax rolls.

Pam asked for details about the plans, including gardens, elevators, and a play structure.

Hanneke asked about options to buy the land and then enter a long term lease or sell it to a partner.

Bahl-Milne asked about the existing structures.

The Town Council adjourned in executive session at 10:46 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Athena O'Keeffe".

Athena O'Keeffe, Clerk of the Council