



Brewster Affordable Housing Trust  
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Office of:  
Select Board  
Town Administrator  
Housing Office

Dear Interested Brewster Residents:

The Brewster Affordable Housing Trust has received many comments over the past two and a half years about the potential development of the 16+ acre Town owned Millstone property now designated for community housing. Recently, the Trust received numerous emails from interested parties, most residents of Howland Circle and Fletcher Lane in Ocean Edge, regarding the Millstone master concept plan and the September 3<sup>rd</sup> presentation of the completed Millstone Feasibility Study. The emails expressed various questions, thoughts and concerns about the proposed development and some requested an individual response. The Trust has addressed many of the concerns throughout this process and then again, at the 9/3 and 10/8 meetings, which were streamed and are available on-line, and continued to discuss some of these topics at the November 12<sup>th</sup> Trust meeting. Much of this information is also available on the Housing Office webpage at <https://brewster-ma.gov/departments-mainmenu-26/housing-office> as similar questions and topics have been raised by residents previously and the Town has been regularly posting information. Additionally, in late September, Town representatives met with Howland HOA presidents and Ocean Edge management about the expressed concerns.

The Trust thanks everyone who brought forward questions and concerns and values your participation in the development process. All of the emails were provided to the members of the Trust and were posted on the website in the packet of materials for the 9/3 and 10/8 Trust meetings. The Trust is sending this response to all of the emails in furtherance of our commitment to responding to the public and to transparency in this process. Additionally, the email is also being sent to residents who have provided earlier comments, attended sessions, or requested future information about the Millstone property. Several similar themes emerged in the recent emails. These included (1) communication about the proposed development and public participation in the process, (2) location of the proposed housing and selection of Concept Plan #2 to guide the creation of a Request for Proposals (RFP), (3) potential storm water run-off and existing flooding concerns of the Howland Village neighborhood, (4) other potential disruptions to the Howland Village neighborhood from the proposed development (such as construction noise, light pollution and noise from neighbors), and (5) who will develop and operate the project and what are the next steps.

The Town acquired the major portion of the Millstone property in 2004 as part of a tax taking. There were Town Meeting approvals in 2005 and 2018 concerning the Millstone property. There was public participation in the Town Meetings and public approvals to designate the property for community housing and to purchase an access parcel connecting the property to Millstone Road. Recent community outreach regarding the development of the property began in March 2018 with several informational sessions prior to the May 2018 Town Meeting, a May 2019 Housing Forum, and a July 2019 presentation on the initial findings of the feasibility study. In 2019, Barrett Planning was retained to lead a community engagement effort including initial interviews, three community input meetings (each with 30-40 attendees), two online surveys

(averaging 225+ responses) and two reports. Announcements for these sessions and surveys were shared on the Brewster homepage as well as in the newspaper and through local organizations such as the Brewster Community Network. In an effort to inform and engage even more citizens, prior to the first community engagement session postcards with address labels provided by the Assessor's Office were sent to parcels within 300 feet of the Millstone property. This included the Ocean Edge Resort and Corcoran Jennison Property Management Company. Attached is a Millstone Property timeline from 1994 to present as well as expected next steps.

Questions emerged regarding the Millstone concept plan; this concept plan is an example of a possible way buildings could be placed on the property. It's used to help facilitate the Request for Proposal (RFP) process. An RFP is created to guide the selection of a potential developer of the property. Concept #2 was the preferred development plan based on a public survey (over 250 responses received) as part of the community engagement process and deliberations of the Trust. Supporting reasons include a design preference for smaller buildings, a desire to leave part of the parcel as open space, and the reduction in neighborhood construction disruption by having one phase of construction not two. Additional considerations in the concept design process were the need for rental housing identified in the Housing Production and Vision Plans and financial feasibility as well as property layout, infrastructure costs, a water easement on the south portion of the property and the collocation of similar style buildings. Comments about buffers in the concept survey led to the Trust requesting an increase to the buffer from that shown on Concept Plan #2. The purpose of the concept plan is to help guide the creation of the RFP. It is not a definitive construction plan.

Several abutters have expressed concerns regarding storm water runoff. Attached is a drainage diagram from Bohler Engineering showing that the drainage flow based on topography from the Millstone property is away from the Howland Village property. Required construction and site development practices mandate that there are no material adverse drainage impacts to the Howland Village property and any other adjacent property from the development of the Millstone property. However, in response to concerns raised and present flooding issues at Ocean Edge, the Trust has engaged Bohler Engineering to perform a watershed analysis of the property. The results of this analysis will be shared at a future Housing Trust meeting and posted on the Housing Office webpage. Additional study and stormwater planning will be required of any developer of the property.

Concerns regarding construction disruptions and the impact of future housing was also expressed. These will be addressed in the development process. Any disruptions to Howland Village from the construction of the proposed development will be temporary. The Trust has been cognizant of limiting the construction disruption by avoiding a multi-phase strategy. The Town and Trust will work with Ocean Edge, and all abutters, to have open communication and work to address neighborhood concerns. As a practical matter, disruptions from the occupancy of the proposed development will not be more than other residential development of the Millstone property. In fact, by managing the proposed development of this acreage through a Town-led process, we seek to provide community-wide benefit rather than see the parcel developed merely for the benefit of a third-party developer. Suggestions related to buffers, landscaping, and fencing were noted and design guidelines will also be included in the RFP. The Trust has determined that on-site management of the residences is a priority.

It's important to make clear that the Trust will not develop or operate any housing on this property. We've determined that to do so would not be economically feasible or logistically

practical. A common practice is for affordable housing projects to be developed and operated by third-party developers through a Request for Proposals (RFP) process. The Trust can only specify general guidelines in the RFP, evaluate the proposed developments in the RFP responses against the general guidelines and judge the quality of the third-party developer respondents. The Trust is planning to prepare the RFP over the next 4-6 months during Housing Trust meetings. An overview of the RFP process was shared at the November 12<sup>th</sup> Trust meeting. Feedback from the whole community, including these emails, has been and will continue to be considered in the creation of the RFP.

There will continue to be opportunities for community input throughout the development process. Please refer to the attached Next Steps document. The public is invited to, and will be able to participate in those steps. For example, we anticipate that actual development of the Millstone property would be via a so-called friendly 40B Comprehensive Permit project. In such a case, all abutters will receive official notification of a Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) Comprehensive Permit Hearing as required under State Statute, and have the opportunity to express concerns, ask questions and provide input.

We wish to thank all citizens who have engaged in this process. Your ideas, the questions you've asked, the concerns you've expressed, and the voices of support for affordable housing initiatives are integral to the success of the Millstone project and the balance of the Trust's work. Affordable housing is identified by our community in our Vision Plan as critical to maintaining Brewster's character and supporting our economic health. We're grateful for your assistance in furthering this worthy cause.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'B. deRuyter', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Ben deRuyter, Chair  
Brewster Affordable Housing Trust  
On behalf of the Brewster Affordable Housing Trust

Attachments:  
Brewster Millstone Property Timeline and Next Steps  
Millstone Property Survey with Water Flows  
Millstone Property Information Update November 2020