



Great Barrington Affordable Housing Trust Fund

Town Hall • 334 Main Street • Great Barrington, MA 01230

FACT SHEET

The Affordable Housing Trust Fund's acquisition of the Alden Property

Where is the property? North Plain Road in Housatonic between 383 and 391 North Plain.

How big is it? 7.25 acres

What will it be used for? A development of affordable homes.

Who will develop it? A request for proposals will be issued. (see 5 below).

When will this happen? Probably 2022-2024

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Will my taxes be increased to pay for this development? No. The money to purchase the land is coming from CPA funds that have already accrued. The infrastructure will be paid for by a MassWorks grant. The buildings will be paid for by grants, volunteer labor and donations, plus a construction loan – paid back by the sale of the affordable homes. The new homeowners will pay property tax and sewer fees.

2. Who qualifies to buy an “affordable” home? Affordability is based on the area median income, calculated annually by HUD. This year, for Berkshire County it is \$80,900 for a family of four. The homes will be eligible to families who make 40%-80% of Area Median Income.

3. Is the land buildable? Are there any environmental limitations? Yes, the land is buildable. There are no zoning issues and an engineer's report was completed in April of 2020, establishing that there are no environmental limitations on the land.

4. Why do we need affordable housing? In Great Barrington, the median sales price of a single family home is \$311,600 and the average value of a single family home is \$319,056. The rule of thumb in affordability is that a household

should spend no more than 2.6 years of income on a home. That makes the median house price affordable to households making \$119,846 or more. This is out of reach for 93% of Great Barrington renters.

5. How is Habitat for Humanity involved? The neighbors of the property, as well as the Affordable Housing Trust Fund, expressed a preference for affordable home ownership. The entity most capable, of building affordable home owned units, is Habitat for Humanity. Thus, the feasibility study tested the feasibility of Habitat for Humanity building 14 units on the lot. Although Habitat is the most likely developer, the Trust is still required to issue a RFP for the development. However the RFP will require a similar density.

6. Why aren't we building more units, since there is such a need? The Affordable Housing Trust Fund cares about integrating this development with the existing neighborhood, where the average density is half-acre lots.

7. If I am an abutter, will I be required to connect to the sewer line? No. It could be an option if your septic system fails, but connecting to the new sewer line would require an easement from the developer or home owner's association.