

## WILLIAMSTOWN'S AFFORDABLE HOUSING

### What is Affordable Housing?

- Housing that has been built, at least in part, with local, state or federal funding and rented or sold (with deed restriction on appreciation to maintain affordability) to those with household income below the Area Median Household Income (AMI) as established by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).
- Williamstown's 2013 AMI is \$72,400 (Berkshire County minus Pittsfield).
- The standard for affordability is that a household spend no more than 30% of household income on rent or mortgage/taxes, water and heat.

### Why do we need Affordable Housing?

- In the last decade, Williamstown has grown older and wealthier, while the number of young singles and families with children in Williamstown has decreased.
- The Commonwealth sets a standard for municipalities that 10% of their total housing stock be affordable to households with income below AMI.
- Until the 10% threshold is met, communities are subject to Chapter 40B, a state statute allowing limited suspension of existing local zoning regulations for the construction of Affordable Housing.
- Williamstown has approximately 2800 households; 133 additional units are needed to reach the 10% threshold.
- Waiting lists are the rule at many of the Affordable Housing complexes in our area.
- Unmet need existed before Tropical Storm Irene.
- 155 low-cost homes were washed away in Tropical Storm Irene; only about 10% of those households relocated elsewhere in Williamstown.
- 66 households in the Spruces will soon be asked to relocate.

**2013 Inventory of Williamstown's Affordable Housing**

Existing Affordable Housing	Type of Housing	# of Units	Households on Waiting List	Property Manager
Meadowvale (Adams Road)	Senior	30	25	Williamstown Housing Authority
Group Homes (45 Adams Road and private)	Special Needs	19	No vacancies	Williamstown Housing Authority
Stetson Road (Stetson Road across from PhoTech)	Community housing	8	No vacancies	Williamstown Housing Authority
Proprietors Fields (Church Street)	Senior	60	64 Wait time of 3-5 years	Berkshire Housing Corporation
Spring Meadow (North Hoosac Rd)	Community housing	22	No vacancies	Scarafoni Associates
Church Corner (Cole Avenue)	Community housing	8	No vacancies	Scarafoni Associates
<b>Total</b>		<b>147 Units</b>		

## WILLIAMSTOWN SITES UNDER CONSIDERATION FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING – 2013

Site	Type of Housing	# of Units	Households on Waiting List	Property Manager
59 Water Street	Community	25-35		Town-owned/Developer TBD
PhoTech	Community	20-25		Town-owned/Developer TBD
Proprietors Fields	Senior	20	64	Berkshire Housing Corporation
Cable Mills	Community	13		Mitchell Properties
Lowry Property	Senior and/or Community	40	37	Town-owned/Developer TBD
<b>Total Potential Units</b>		<b>118-133</b>		

### **59 Water Street – old town garage, 1.2 acres**

Cleanup of this site has been ongoing and is almost complete. Currently, 70 cu. yds. of contaminated soil are at the site awaiting final analysis and disposal. Ground water testing remains to be done. Once the cleanup has been completed, we can conduct an engineering analysis of the site and assess its readiness for construction.

**Advantages:** town-owned, location in town center, proximity to utilities and services

**Challenges:** small size, underground infrastructure may need to be reworked

### **PhoTech – north end of Cole Avenue, approx. 7 acres**

Over \$1 million of federal, state and local funds have been spent to date on the cleanup of this Super Fund site. Cleanup of contamination along the riverbank remains to be done. Analysis of the viability of the existing structure is pending.

**Advantages:** town-owned, proximity to utilities, location in town center

**Challenges:** entire site lies within the 100-year or 500-year flood plains; housing limited to multi-family due to site contamination; 42" sewer main runs along southern edge of property; cost to demolish existing building.

### **Proprietors Fields – Church Street across from elementary school**

Town Meeting 2012 appropriated \$80,000 in CPA funds to property manager Berkshire Housing Corp. for preliminary plans for an additional 20-unit building.

**Advantages:** established community, Council on Aging headquarters there, location, same developer

**Challenges:** Funding timeline uncertain

### **Cable Mills – former Carol Cable facility on Water Street**

Plans for a 60-unit rental complex include 13 affordable units to which Town has committed \$1.5 million in future CPA funds.

**Advantages:** location, developer in place, potential for additional units

**Challenges:** funding timeline uncertain

### **Lowry Property – Stratton Road, south of East Lawn Cemetery, 30 acres**

The Town purchased this land for development in 1957. The Housing Component of the 2002 Master Plan recommended that a portion of the Lowry Property be used for housing.

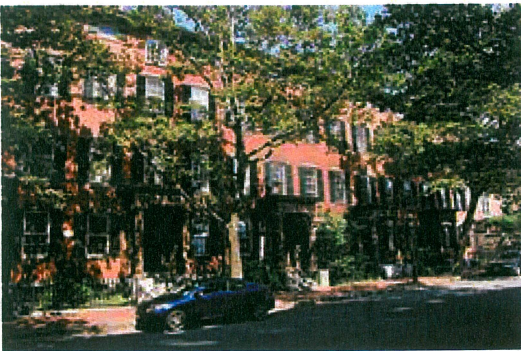
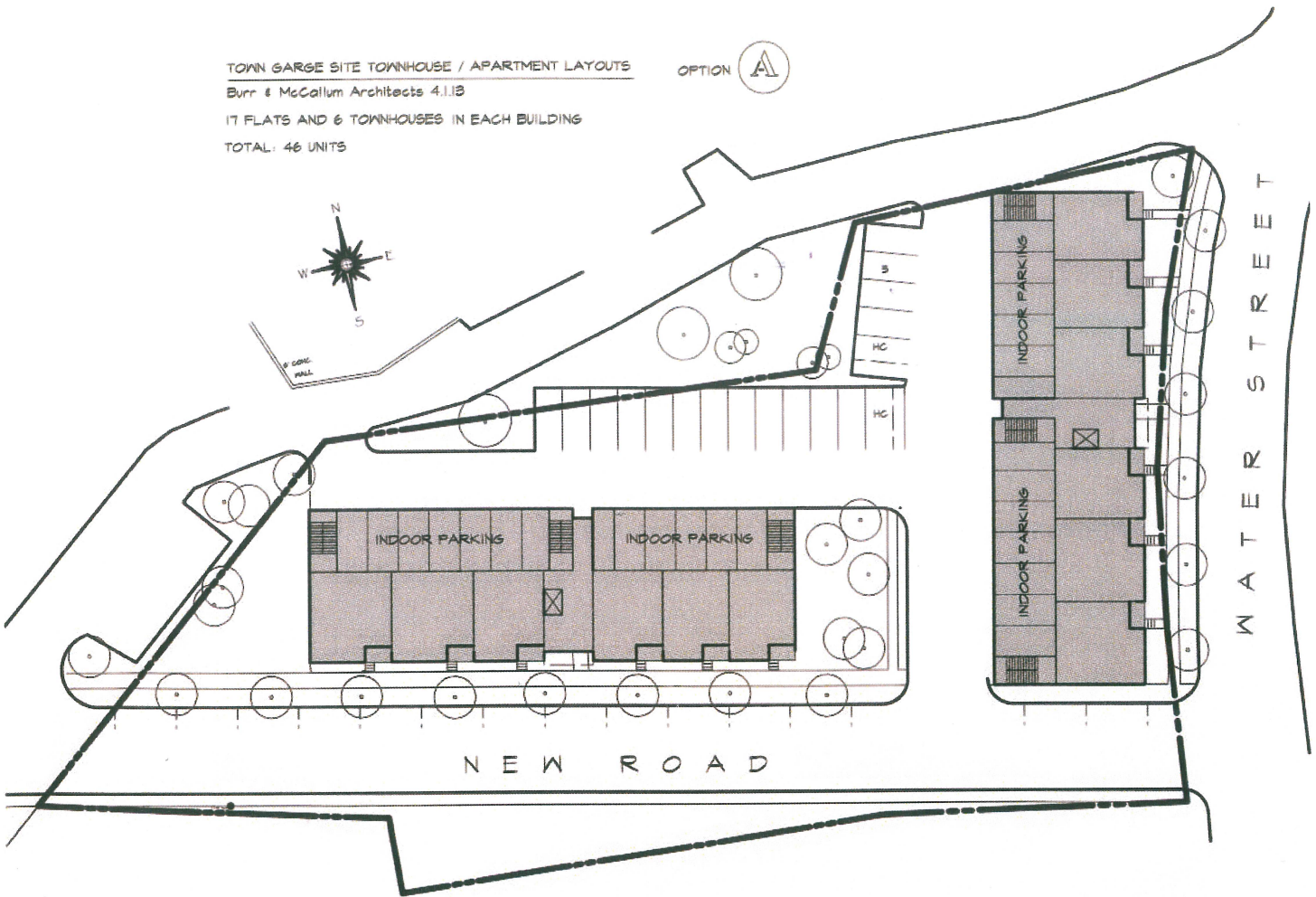
**Advantages:** town-owned, size, close to town water and sewer, close to services

**Challenges:** under conservation restriction; infrastructure costs; loss of agricultural land

**Next steps:** Facilitate town-wide discussion and incorporate community feedback in the decision making process. Determine appropriateness of all sites for building, taking into account ecological and financial feasibilities; evaluate suitability of housing types for target populations; develop site concepts; draft Requests for Proposals; engage developer(s).

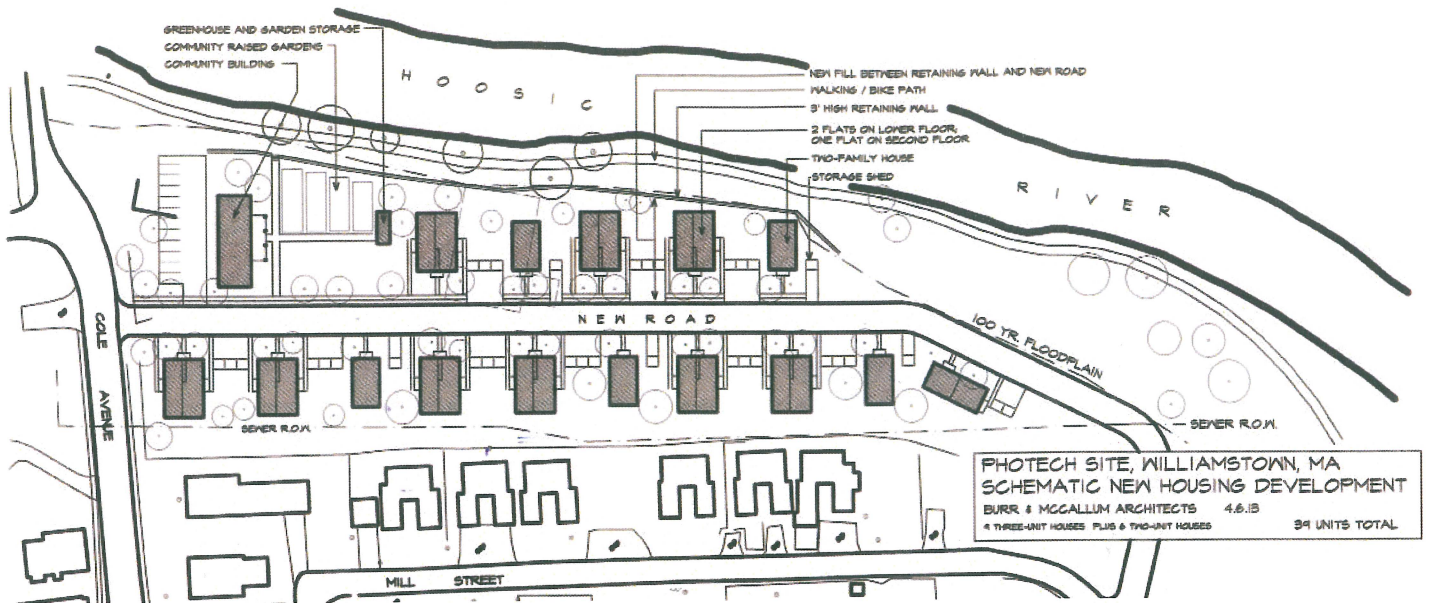
TOWN GARAGE SITE TOWNHOUSE / APARTMENT LAYOUTS  
Burr & McCallum Architects 4.1.13  
17 FLATS AND 6 TOWNHOUSES IN EACH BUILDING  
TOTAL: 46 UNITS

OPTION 

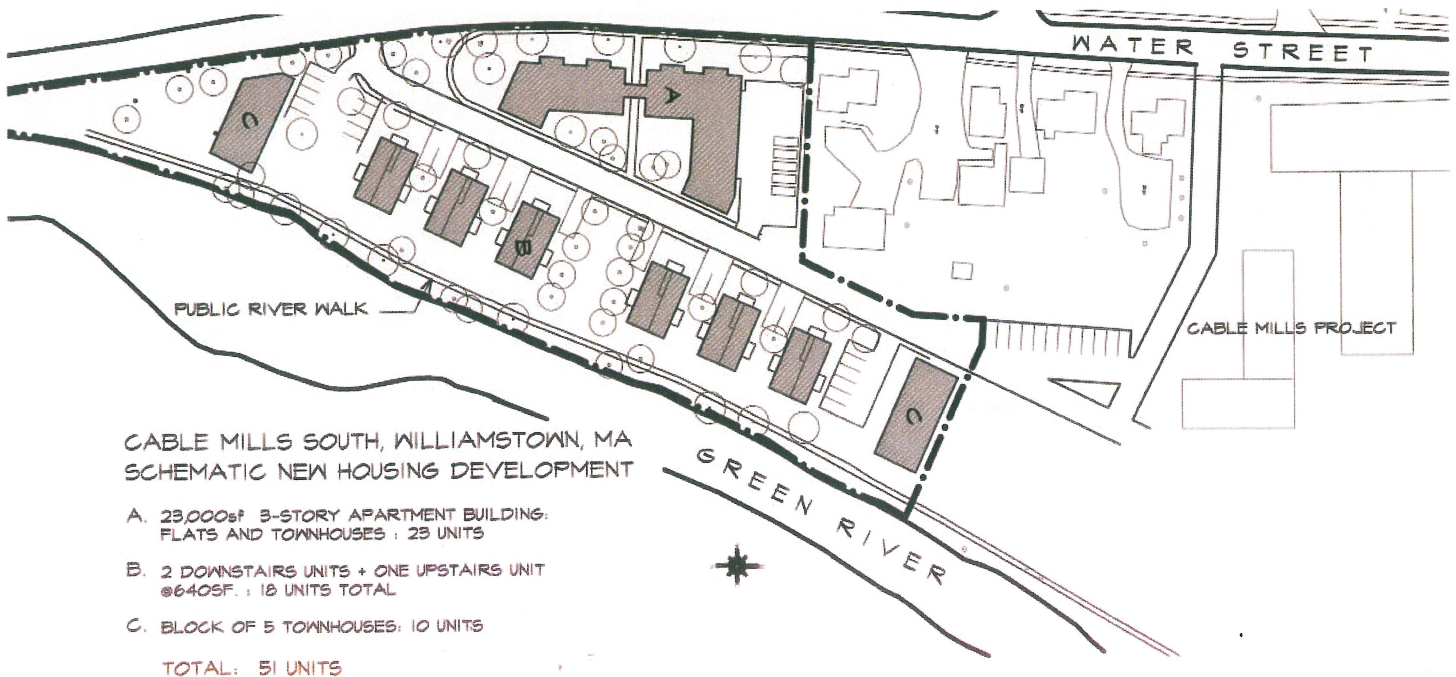


Possible layout for the old **Town Garage site** on Water St. A new road connecting Water St. to the end of Meacham Street would increase the road frontage, allowing for two blocks of new housing. This plan shows town houses for the first two floors, and two floors of small single-story apartments above. Total count: 46 units.

The photographs show examples of similar housing developments to illustrate what these buildings might look like.



Sample plans for the town-owned Photech site (above) and the privately-owned Cable Mills South site (below). Photos show nearby affordable housing projects illustrating what these two projects could look like.



## Comparative Site Alternatives by the Numbers

	Lowry Property	Photech	59 Water St	Cable Mills South**
Area of Site in Acres	10.5 acres*	4.9 acres	1.2 acres	2.5 acres
Removal from Conservation	10.5 acres	0 acres	0 acres	0 acres
Length of Access Road	2500 feet (1/2 mile)	950 feet	470 feet	650 feet
Proposed Number of Units	41 units	44 units	46 units	44 units
Area of Impervious Surfaces	4 +/- acres	1.5 +/- acres	0.9 +/- acres	0.9 +/- acres
Infrastructure Cost Total	\$2,000,000	\$550,000	\$575,000	\$550,000
Infrastructure Cost Per Unit	\$45,000 - \$50,000	\$10,000 - \$15,000	\$10,000 - \$15,000	\$10,000 - \$15,000
Building Construction Cost	\$7,175,000	\$6,954,400	\$7,040,000	\$6,834,400
Total Development Cost	\$9,175,000	\$7,504,400	\$7,615,000	\$7,384,400
Total Development Cost Per Unit	\$223,780 / Per Unit	\$170,554 / Per Unit	\$165,543 / Per Unit	\$167,827 / Per Unit

**Notes:**

\* The Lowry Property contains a total of 30 acres currently under Conservation Restriction. 10.5 acres is proposed for removal from conservation for development.

\*\* Cable Mills South is a privately owned property. Acquisition of the property could add an estimated \$10,000 per unit cost to the total.

All financial estimates are based upon conceptual plans.

Area of Impervious Surfaces are those areas covered by roads, sidewalks, parking, driveways, building footprints and rooftops.

The information contained in this summary is drawn from a financial analysis compiled by Robert J. Scerbo. Mr. Scerbo's career in the industry of real estate development spans 35 years in acquisition, development and marketing of real estate, including affordable housing site selection and more specifically private land development. In that capacity he has served as both a principal shareholder and senior executive of a publicly traded (NYSE) land development company and Senior Managing Partner for several privately held land development entities. Mr. Scerbo's estimates are prepared with reliance upon local Berkshire County surveyors, engineers, soil scientist, architects, planners and construction contractors.

# Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD)

## Low Income Housing Tax Credit Program (LIHTC): 2013 Qualified Allocation Plan

The Low Income Housing Tax Credit Program is one of the principal funding sources for affordable housing in the Commonwealth. The Department uses these criteria to evaluate affordable housing proposals for other programs as well and they are also used by partner entities.

Summarized below are several of the criteria the DHCD uses to evaluate low income housing tax credit applications.

**Quality of Site:** Sites should be reviewed in light of the May 2007 sustainable development principles. *“Infill sites near services and transportation, buildings for adaptive reuse of former commercial and industrial sites, and other “smart growth” opportunities exist in rural and suburban communities. The Department encourages the development of projects in such locations, especially since such projects tend to offer greater opportunity to an underserved population.”*

**Evidence of Local Support:** “DHCD encourages applications from tax credit projects that have full local support.”

**Consistency with May 2007 Sustainable Development Principles:** “The sustainable development principles will be applied as a threshold for projects seeking funding from DHCH and its partner entities.”

### Sustainable Development Principles:

- 1) **Concentrate Development and Mix Uses.** “Support the revitalization of city and town centers and neighborhoods by promoting development that is compact, conserves land, protects historical resources, and integrates uses. Encourage remediation and reuse of existing sites, structures, and infrastructure rather than new construction in undeveloped areas. Create pedestrian friendly districts and neighborhoods that mix commercial, civic, cultural, educational, and recreational activities with open spaces and homes.”
- 2) **Advance Equity.** “Ensure that the interests of future generations are not compromised by today’s decisions.”
- 3) **Make Efficient Decisions.** “Make regulatory and permitting processes for development...in accordance with smart growth and environmental stewardship.”
- 4) **Protect Land and Ecosystems.** “Protect and restore environmentally sensitive lands, natural resources, agricultural lands, critical habitats, wetlands and water resources, and cultural and historical landscapes. Increase the quantity, quality and accessibility of open spaces and recreational opportunities.”
- 5) **Use Natural Resources Wisely.**
- 6) **Expand Housing Opportunities.** “Build homes near jobs, transit, and where services are available.”
- 7) **Provide Transportation Choices.** “Maintain and expand transportation options that maximize mobility, reduce congestion, conserve fuel and improve air quality. Prioritize rail, bus, boat, transit, shared vehicle, bicycling and walking.”
- 8) **Increase Job and Business Opportunities.**
- 9) **Promote Clean Energy.**

**10) Plan Regionally.**

Summary of information reference: [www.mass.gov](http://www.mass.gov) Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD)

*\*See reverse side.....*