

HILLSDALE HOUSING COMMITTEE
Meeting Notes
March 8, 2026

Present: Joe Browdy, Shirley Bresler, Rene Gibson, Nico Hernandez, Ellen Levy, Janis Smythe, Joan Wallstein

Absent: Frank Upham, Bart Ziegler

Discussion on potential property in Hillsdale:

Joe has seen the property in question, braving the snow cover. The lot in question is very hilly and forested.

Rene has spoken with the building inspector, who suggested that this might be a good case for the use of flexible lot subdivision (cluster development, which clusters the units together and leaves the balance of the property undeveloped) It was suggested that someone check with Lee to see if the property owners had contacted him.

Nico spoke with Chris Brown, Housing Development Coordinator, Columbia County Economic Dev. Corp., which spoke about the Columbia County Land Bank, could purchase the property, which would allow them to “hold the property while seeking an appropriate developer.” They could also do some pre-development work, making it easier for a developer to decide to move forward.

Other benefits of the land bank:

- They do not pay property tax, but must have insurance.
- There is a charitable deduction for the landowners. *
 - **Is this true if they purchase as well as if the property is donated?*
- They can do some predevelopment work, e.g., environmental testing, working with the Town to get local approvals, perc testing, and relationships with developers outside of our area.

Shirley contacted a local not-for-profit housing organization in Gt. Barrington, which has completed several successful housing projects. The director is quite new and told Shirley Their plate was quite full at this time. But we might still get some good ideas from their successful work.

Janis spoke with Habitat, who expressed an interest in the potential project and expressed an interest in seeing the property once the snow is gone.

The committee also asked Ellen to contact the buyers by phone to discuss their continued interest, whether they had closed yet, and if not, when, and if we could meet to discuss the options further.

Discussion on other properties available for sale in Hillsdale. It is a single-family house in poor condition. To be continued.

Thanks, Rene, for hosting!