



December 12, 2025

Re: Funding for the proposed affordable housing at the Sea Camps Long Pond property

Members of the Select Board,

I would like to take this opportunity to comment on behalf of the Brewster Ponds Coalition regarding the proposed funding of design work for the proposed affordable housing at the Sea Camps Long Pond property. The Brewster Pond Coalition (BPC) believes that funding should not proceed at this time.

First, we continue to be concerned about wastewater discharges from the affordable houses proposed. At a previous Select Board meeting, Horsely-Witten representatives reviewed various alternatives for treating and discharging wastewater from the affordable housing:

- treating and discharging wastewater at the Long Pond property with connection of a number of nearby houses,
- pumping the wastewater to a remote site near the intersection of Millstone Road and Beach Plum Lane, out of the Zone II area, for treatment and discharge to groundwater, with connection of either a few or many area houses.

The discussion did not delve into exactly what level of treatment would be provided – i.e., just conventional biological treatment or further treatment for removal of pollutants of emerging concern, such as PFAs. The various alternatives have different costs, benefits, and impacts. We have heard of no decision as to which treatment alternative would be chosen. Until a wastewater management alternative is chosen and the costs and benefits understood, it seems too early to proceed with the housing design work, since the wastewater treatment plan materially affects the overall project cost.

Second, Horsely-Witten is in the process of finishing the update of Brewster's Integrated Water Resource Management Plan (IWRMP). This plan is supposed to consider a long-range view of ground and surface water protection and wastewater management needs for the Town. Until the IWRMP is finished and approved, it seems preliminary to approve a new significant housing project. Even if the wastewater treatment and discharge is moved outside of the Herring River/Long Pond drainage area and outside of Zone II, the IWRMP might still find long term concerns. There are hundreds of homes in the area suggested as a possible area for the wastewater treatment plant. The plumes from the septic systems of these homes would intermingle with the discharge from a treatment plant, potentially increasing the travel of pollutants from the various wastewater discharges. While there may be no adverse impact from

this, there is some possibility that downgradient ponds could be impacted. This possibility should be evaluated in the updated IWRMP and risks, if any, understood before the housing project proceeds.

Finally, at the Town Meeting where the overall Sea Camps development plan was approved, details of the proposed affordable housing were not provided, but assurances were given that the affordable housing plans would be considered further at a future Town Meeting. The citizens of Brewster were told that voting for the overall Sea Camps plan would not be their last chance to weigh in on the housing – either its location at the Long Pond property or the number of units and type of housing. These assurances should be honored. The Brewster Ponds Coalition does not oppose construction of affordable housing, but has recommended that all reasonable locations for affordable housing in Brewster be considered, and the selection of a site be made based on a fair evaluation of all factors important in such siting, ranging from environmental impacts, the desire to maintain open spaces, cost, access to services, road access and more. The Town has established a Task Force to look at long range land use planning. Before funding for the housing project is approved, the evaluation of possible affordable housing locations should be done, and the matter brought back to the citizens at a Town Meeting as promised.

Thank you for your consideration of our views.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Keith". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "J".

John Keith  
President, Brewster Ponds Coalition