

Hull has changed since formation of the HRA; its goals should change as well...

To the Editor: I write in support of efforts to maintain the beautiful open space in Hull, also known as the HRA parcels. The world has changed since the 1970s, when 76 homes were demolished with the support of a federally-funded program to revitalize urban and suburban areas that were deemed blighted. While well-intentioned to follow through on the original HRA plans, the current proposal does not address the current desires and needs of town residents and the increasing data on the impact of global warming on our community.

Even the Woods Hole study, commissioned by the HRA, does not support development on the parcels. According to The Boston Globe (Feb. 25, 2023), "The Center for Coastal Studies in Provincetown found in 2018 that around 65 acres of Massachusetts' shoreline is swallowed by the sea annually."

Further, the current proposal suggests creating between 117 and 141 housing units to replace the 76 that were demolished in the 1970s. Data on how many housing units have been added to Hull's base since then has not been cited by the HRA. Indeed, many housing units have been added since the 1970s. How many? Certainly, more than 76.

Maybe there are bigger reasons that the HRA property has not been developed over the past 50 years. Some have been mentioned in the current Hull Redevelopment Authority Urban Renewal Plan Public Review Draft (<https://tinyurl.com/h3zc4425>). Maybe it needs to remain a beautiful open space for all of us residents, as well as visitors, to enjoy.

The HRA has a pile of money that it needs to spend eventually. There has already been mention of "other" projects that the HRA may get involved with once the current one is developed. Well, as others have suggested, why not pause on the current Option 2 and try out some other, citizen-focused-proposed ideas rather than remain focused on a developer-driven boutique hotel and housing in this open natural resource? The HRA is a rather unique entity that needs citizen input to proceed. Many citizens have begun to step up and provide input solicited from the HRA in Zoom meetings and in person.

Incorporating the voices that are speaking up is vital to provide a wonderful solution to the current dilemma – the HRA has lots of money to spend, a 50-year record of non-development and several years of hard work devoted to the memory of the folks who lost their homes in the 1970s. The world has changed dramatically since the 1970s. It's time to take another look at what an effective solution will be for the current citizens and visitors to Hull, as well as future generations.

Creating a vibrant recreational, cultural and arts venue in the open space will bring revenue, visitors and a gathering spot for Hull's citizens. Sincerely, Mary Jane Walsh A