To: Lisbon Town Council
From: Lisbon Development Committee
Date: March 13, 2023
Re: Proposed Pinewoods Project and Conservation Committee Concerns

Thank you for your time and consideration.

During a meeting of the Lisbon Development Committee (LDC) in the fall of 2023, the question of whether the Town of Lisbon owned land that could feasibly be developed was brought forth, with multiple benefits being presented as part of this idea, those being:

1. Increasing the tax base, thereby benefiting the town with additional tax revenues
2. Filling a dire need for mid priced homes for those wishing to move to the region by partnering with a developer who would be required to meet the specific requirements of the Town
3. Removing the maintenance, management and other costs associated with the selected parcel from the Town, thereby saving on expenditures
4. Adding an attractive and new housing development to encourage families to make the move the Lisbon, increasing the appeal of our town to potential commercial investors

Tasked with this duty, Economic Development Director Ross Cunningham returned to a subsequent LDC meeting to report on the availability of the Pinewoods Road parcel. LDC, in following meetings, put a plan together to determine the practicality of such a project, knowing there were no funds allocated for a feasibility study within the town budget. These plans included a site walk through the parcel with a licensed forester on November 9th, which included members of LDC, Ross, Town Manager Glenn Michalowski and Town Counselor JoJean Keller. The intent of the site walk was to determine if harvesting the lot for lumber could yield sufficient revenues to fund a feasibility study. Additional plans also included a presentation to the Conservation Commission on January 16th to uncover any additional barriers to the project.

After many discussions, and a few presentations to Council, LDC was presented with a letter outlining the concerns of the Lisbon Conservation Commission. A major area of concern was highlighted in the second paragraph of said letter indicating that “any development or disposal of town own(ed) resources should be considered fully before moving forward to avoid the polarizing effect on the community, or loss of future opportunities….” indicating there have been similar transactions in the past (namely the sale of the Worumbo site, and a site on Rt 9) which had adverse consquences for the Town. Additionally, the Conservation Commission listed multiple points about the proposed project which conflict with the Town’s Comprehensive Plan, as well as concerns about the viability of well water on that site, adverse effect on public utlilities, adverse effects of rapid growth on the town infrastructure, etc.

The Lisbon Development Committee acknowledges the concerns listed in the letter are valid, and looks to the Town of Lisbon, and the Conservation Commission for further guidance, and

would like to continue to explore the development of the Pinewoods parcel in a manner that addresses the Conservation Commission's concerns. LDC would also like to continue to explore other development opportunities which are presented to us in the future. The overarching goal of the LDC is to improve the economic landscape of our town, and to be successful, we must collaborate with other stakeholders to ensure the Town's time and resources are used wisely. We welcome the chance to name, develop and implement the best demonstrated practices for future collaboration between Town entities at an upcoming LDC meeting. We look forward to hearing from any Town official or committee member who would be interested in assisting us move forward to improve the economic status for the Town of Lisbon, and its residents.

The Lisbon Development Committee formally proposes to the Town Council that we (the Town of Lisbon) sustainably harvest the property on Pinewoods Road, and that any proceeds from that harvest be allocated to fund a feasibility study for future uses of that parcel.

Respectfully submitted-

Angela D'Amours
Chair
Lisbon Development Committee