

**TOWN OF GROTON**

Board of Health

173 Main Street

Groton, MA 01450

**BOARD OF HEALTH**

Robert J. Fleischer, Chairman

Michelle Collette, Member

Evan Thackaberry, Member

Date: Monday, December 6th, 2021

Time: 7:00 PM

Location: 1st Floor Meeting Room, Groton Town Hall

Members Present: Robert J. Fleischer, Chairman; Michelle Collette, Member; Evan Thackaberry, Member; Ira Grossman, Nashoba Associated Board of Health Agent

Others Present: Ananth Sreepathi, Adam Prescott, Marina Khabituyeva, Adam Burnett, Dr. Laura Chesson

**Robert Fleischer called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.**

**12 MOCKINGBIRD HILL ROAD – Variance Request to State Sanitary Code 410.250: Habitable Rooms Other than Kitchen -- Natural Light and Electrical Outlets**

Ananth Sreepathi was present and requested a variance to the State Sanitary Code *410.250 Habitable Rooms Other Than Kitchen-Natural Light and Electrical Outlets* for his property at 12 Mockingbird Hill Road.

Mr. Sreepathi provided an overview of the proposed plans for their basement. They would like to turn the basement into a theater space, storage / library room and also add a half bath.

Ira Grossman has no objections. Being used for a media room.

**Michelle Collette moved to grant the variances as presented for 12 Mockingbird Hill Road to the State Sanitary Code *410.250: Habitable Rooms Other than Kitchen -- Natural Light and Electrical Outlets* as described in the letter dated November 15th, 2021 and that the Board of Health Decision Notice be recorded with the Middlesex South Registry of Deeds prior to the issuance of the Building Permit.**

**Evan Thackaberry seconded and the motion carried.**

**OLD / NEW BUSINESS**

**MEETING MINUTES**

The Board reviewed the meeting minutes dated November 15th, 2021.

**Michelle Collette moved to accept the meeting minutes dated November 15th, 2021. Evan Thackaberry seconded and the motion carried.**

**PERMITS / INVOICES**

Board members reviewed and signed permits and invoices.

**50 ARROW TRAIL – Discuss Request to Remove Restriction on Number of Bedrooms**

Existing 1 bedroom home

Need to meet full compliance with title 5 and all regs; didn’t meet all of those requirements

Title 5 says 2 bedrooms but not in full compliance

Done as deed restriction to limit to 1 bedroom; leaching area for 2

Approved capacity is for one

Applicant change deed restriction from 1 to 2 – listening to advice of title 5 inspector; but BOHM is approving authority

NASHOBA IS NOT THE SUCCEEDING AUTHORITY

IG recommended not to provide a grant to the Deed Restriction

MC - Did they install upgraded system? YES IN 2008

Bob – what do they have to do to get 2 bedrooms? TESTING & FULL COMPLIANCE

Based on lot construction will not meet all of TOG regs

Acreage on it is tiny

Ig does not believe it is possible to do that

In Water resource protection district; probably is in zone 3 and does not apply to single family

Ig is not recommending that the Board change the restriction

Mc – alternative is to upgrade to 2 bedrooms but don’t think that is possible to do

Ig will reply to them

Bob – they don’t have enough area, offsets, etc. don’t meet any of the requirements

**Michelle Collette moved that the Board supports the Board of Health agent’s recommendation that the restriction not be amended for the property located at 50 Arrow Trail.**

**Evan Thackaberry seconded and the motion carried.**

**56 THRONE HILL ROAD – Variance Request to *State Sanitary Code 410.250: Habitable Rooms Other than Kitchen -- Natural Light and Electrical Outlets* and Discussion of Deed Restriction Notice**

Adam Prescott was present and requested a variance to the State Sanitary Code *410.250 Habitable Rooms Other Than Kitchen-Natural Light and Electrical Outlets* for their property at 56 Throne Hill Road.

Mr. Prescott provided an overview of the proposed plans for their basement. They are looking to finish the single space and turn it into a recreation room. There is currently one small window in the space.

Ira Grossman – only has one of the small small basement windows; less than 1% of the requirement; no proper good ventilation

Ig – neutral on that

Mc – is there a way to remedy that? Adam – no unless you demo part of the foundation

It’s a tiny window so wouldn’t be able to come close to the requirement at 1%

BOB – confirmed that this meets the building code; IG – yes

MC – the one window you have can you open it? YES; sliding window but would replace it w/a newer window, same dimensions

BOB – mechanical ventilation available? No; but there will be heat added; electric baseboard heat

IG – air exchange

Adam – all forced hot water; just a radiator, runs along the side

w/o air exchange it is a fan driven system – takes air from inside out

bc you’re turning it into habitable space

IG – is there any room in the headwall? Can talk to building commissioner regarding that

MC – continue this to the next meeting – explore what your options are to ensure you have proper air exchange

There are sizing requirements to consider as well

Adam was planning to do this work himself

MC – all depends on what your solution is; work with building commissioner and IG and then come back – they can give you direction on this

Dryer vent port – exchanger

Need air exchange and air flow

IG – need two total air turnovers?

Adam – if he came back w/air exchange, boh members would be amendable to approving this?

Mc – get technical assistance for this

Adam - Blower / identify a location – January 3rd, 2021

**Michelle Collette moved to continue the hearing for the basement renovation at 56 Throne Hill Road to the next Board of Health meeting date on January 3rd, 2022 at 7PM.**

**Evan Thackaberry seconded and the motion carried.**

**71 NOD ROAD – Greenway Committee’s Request to Meet with Board of Health to Discuss Potential Initial Site Assessment**

Marina was present

Watershed – Nashua River

One of greenway’s agenda item is nod road; has been on here for the last 3 years

Water tasting volunteer program – Nashua River watershed association

Chair name is Adam

Objective – to try to involve students from environmental program at UML

Broader mission – interested in looking at better uses in terms of environment; this piece of land was former dump site; don’t know what was placed in it; no one ever really documented what’s coming out of this site

A lot of garbage coming through thin unknown cap; want to do more investigate further

Probs to environment

What can be done to this piece of land so it has a higher or better use

Trees growing up through cap, exposing dump site

No as builts available; not sure how it was “closed”; couldn’t find designs either

No plans or as builts for this whole site

Where cover material, what it is; don’t even know what’s in the dump

Nod brook is being visually impacted; measured mineralization going into the site; leachy material

Iron oxide

What needs to be done to stabilize and manage site; potential uses; recreational trail maybe?

Could be a valuable corridor for wildlife

Future uses; betterment of site

EVAN – was it residential? Think so; maybe paper products was being disposed there

MC – was referred to as the dump back in 1971

Dump closed; sanitary landfill – cow pond 1976

Residential trash; big dump trucks with industrial waste

Town would be involved in the 21E Mass Contingency Plan

It’s a known site and also that things are coming out of it; we don’t even know if it’s impacting ground water or well water

Back channel – some of it got capped; hard to know where it is

Garbage

IG – transfers / landfills – DPW

If it’s town land – would have to work w/Mark Haddad

Prudent for us BOH to initiate conversation with Highway Dept and Mark

Ideally would want to get these capped

Students – huge liability

May have to be done through, with a licensed contract; a lot of liability and security issues

IG recommend that through the board – initiate a conversation with the town

Some time in the future use for recreational purposes

As long as capped appropriately and managed and become useful sites

Passive recreation

IG – think it’s a great idea

Surprise to hear hat there’s visible thing going into the river

MC – really good step – talking to uml james hess first

Would need a Licensed site professional in order to proceed; town has a legal obligation to continue with the process

Would need to be closed off properly

BOH can make that recommendation to the Select Board

Can kick it up the chain

Can’t just enter w/o town’s approval; liabilities due to the unknown

MC – in the meanwhile do not go trotting out there w/students due to potential hazards

EVAN – just Nashua River watershed assocs – nod brook – samples reviewed by them

Brook is the border maybe?

NRWA – has had water quality monitoring program for many years

Sample from rich state forest; go along the edge of it

IG – from state’s website; a whole bunch of unknown

Adam – found 1 page specification for reclamation?

Bob – does anyone from DPW go there periodically to observe? IG – we can find out

1976 – predates other regulatory framework vs. today

Rodents, fires that wouldn’t go out, ground fires

Next step – approach SB

**Michelle Collette moved that the Board of Health in conjunction with the Greenway Committee approach the Select Board and begin discussions on the Nod Road site.**

**Evan Thackaberry seconded and the motion carried.**

**MEET WITH SUPERINTENDENT OF GROTON-DUNSTABLE SCHOOL DISTRICT TO REVIEW THE VACCINATION AND POSITIVE COVID CASE DATA**

Dr. Laura Chesson was present and presented the attached data.

Unvaccinated staff - 2 for health reasons; 1 for religious

Ran a couple of clinics

90% target

MC – asked re disparity – dr. c can only speculate

MC – CONFIRMED THAT IT INCLUDES ALL STAFF; CONTRACT STAFF ETC.

Have only 5 positive cases at the HS; higher vaccination rates

1 staff member was vaccinated

1 student vaccinated and 4 were not

Data comparison from last year to this year – meeting on 12/8

From 55 positive cases last year to 5 this year; vaccinations weren’t available

1400 – 1500 students tested every week (pool testing)

No positive pools at the HS

Dr. c’s opinion – is do nothing until 1/15/2022

Extreme contact tracing

Oct – 2 students and teacher at swallow union; 3 students in Grade 5 at MS

Advised by NABH to treat as a cluster

Have not been able to see any trend beyond that

MC – thanked Dr. C for coming to the BOH and giving presentation

This is presented at every school committee

Present consistently on the same schedule

EVAN – cases at flo ro last week (all at the same time); DR. C confirmed no cases at HS

Tues & wed – do pool testing

5 – highest # of cases at North

New Software will automatically pull data directly from middle school; sometimes due to siblings

Submit Waiver request to desi – only if school committee requests dr. c to do so

Submit to the state; how to enforce; parental permission?

State wants to know details of procedure

Already know who’s vaccinated or not

Very compliant students

Will keep records of who’s not abiding

Dr. C gave examples

Fed regs require masks on buses

Does not reflect sports as it’s indoors rn

MC – asked dr. c how concerned she is with breakthrough cases? Has not seen anyone with anything more than mild

It is worth consideration for a pilot since we had such low incident at the HS; not sure if we will reach 80% at elementary or middle schools

Last year spike after thanksgiving, not Christmas

MC – have to follow desi unless you receive a waiver; Dr. C - doesn’t think desi will drop that 80%

Will apply for waiver for the HS only

Dr. C – wait until 1/15/22 and don’t even take a vote until then; doesn’t take long to submit the waiver and receive response

School with highest vaccinated – demonstrates

Evan - #’s right now say that this is the worst time; would not recommend any changes now; after the new year

Dr. C – watch the HS and see how it goes

Evan – 2 weeks off and 2 weeks on – doesn’t think that’s really an experiment; can’t compare those data

Hopkinton – only school that has tried this hence why Dr. C used them

Percentage – depends on where pandemic is too

MC – stats show vaccinations work

MC - Sit tight, see what desi does; continue current protocols; not safe to come out of the water yet

Dr. c - Will come back prior the 15th

**Evan Thackaberry moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:26p.m. Michelle Collette seconded and the motion carried.**

Minutes by Sammie Kul.