

GROTON CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Minutes

March 28, 2006

Chairman Peter Morrison called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in the 2nd floor conference room in Town Hall. Members Craig Auman, Bruce Clements, Kris Corwin, Bruce Easom, Marshall Giguere, and Evan Owen were present. Conservation Assistant Barbara Ganem was also present.

Upon a motion by C. Auman, seconded by B. Easom, it was

VOTED: to approve the minutes of March 14, 2006, as amended.

P. Morrison abstained.

Upon a motion by K. Corwin, seconded by M. Giguere, it was

VOTED: to approve the Executive Session minutes of March 14, 2006 as written.

P. Morrison abstained.

After discussion and upon a motion by K. Corwin, seconded by B. Clements, it was

VOTED: to issue an Order of Conditions, as amended, for DEP #169-947 for 330 Lost Lake Drive.

In discussion on the request for an extension to DEP #169-854, members thought the applicant was somewhat grandfathered. The new Natural Heritage maps show the septic system site to be in a polygon. Commissioners noted the applicant has had three years in which to carry out the plan, with the Order expiring in June, 2006. A motion by B. Clements, seconded by B. Easom, to not grant an extension failed with B. Easom and B. Clements voting in favor, C. Auman, P. Morrison, E. Owen, and K. Corwin voting in the negative, and M. Giguere abstaining. Upon a motion by E. Owen, seconded by K. Corwin, it was

VOTED: to grant a one year extension for DEP #169-854 for Lot 1 Kemp St.

With the understanding the house was nearing completion and only landscaping remains to be done, upon a motion by K. Corwin, seconded by B. Easom, it was

VOTED: to grant a one year extension for DEP #169-706 for 7 Little Hollow Lane.

B. Ganem reported the Highway Department has been cleaning up the Petapawag Boat Launch, including cutting invasives and trimming tree limbs. B. Clements volunteered to repaint the routered lettering on the sign.

7:15 p.m. - Gilson Road ANRAD continuation

With the applicant's consent, upon a motion by B. Easom, seconded by M. Giguere, it was

VOTED: to continue the hearing to April 11, 2006.

7:15 p.m. - Lawrence Academy NOI continuation

B. Ganem noted the NOI specifies that this is a re-development project, and consultant Brandon Ducharme explained this would allow the applicant to take certain exemptions from full compliance with the Stormwater Management Policy. He stated, however, this project has been designed to be fully compliant with all aspects of the Policy, using Vortechs to handle the stormwater. Upon a motion by K. Corwin, seconded by B. Easom, it was

VOTED: to close the hearing for DEP #169-948 for Lawrence Academy.

B. Clements pointed out the applicant is likely to run into the same issue on limitations to an increase in runoff leaving the site when the Planning Board reviews the project. With several amendments suggested, upon a motion by K. Corwin, seconded by B. Easom, it was

VOTED: to issue the draft Order of Conditions, as amended, for DEP #169-948 for Lawrence Academy.

Commissioners reviewed the reminder for residents about the need to file with the Conservation Commission before doing any work within the 100-foot buffer zone and the 200-foot Riverfront Area. Last year, the *Groton Herald* agreed to publish this as a public service announcement, and B. Ganem will contact them about doing so again this year.

7:30 p.m. - Patenaude/Bridge St. ANRAD continuation

Brandon Ducharme explained the size of the watershed has been estimated by his firm's engineer to be 7.65 square miles. M. Giguere noted that Heidi Davis, an environmental analyst with DEP, reports that, based on a 9.5 square mile watershed, the curve numbers for stream width show an average of about 35 feet for a watershed of this size. Mr. Ducharme said showing Cow Pond Brook to be this wide would not be a problem. The 35-foot width will be split evenly on both sides of the 14-foot width based upon aerial photography. Commissioners commented this will extend the Riverfront Area further into the site, but will also give the applicant a larger number for the 10% alteration allowed under the law.

Mr. Ducharme commented the discrepancy between the size of the watershed shown in the USGS Streamstats application and that prepared by the engineer could be due to a number of factors. He agreed to provide an updated plan showing the new offset lines. Upon a motion by M. Giguere, seconded by B. Easom, it was

VOTED: to continue the hearing for DEP #169-945 to April 11, 2006.

B. Easom distributed copies of the proposed funding plan which the Community Preservation Committee accepted for the Campbell-Strachan land on Shirley Rd. and Farmers Row. The plan calls for short term borrowing for perhaps the first 5 years with total pay back in 15 years. This will allow the balance of CPA funds to be spent on other CPA projects. The Historical Commission has tentatively identified the project as qualifying under the historic landscapes component of the CPA, and this would free up money for potential open space purchases in the future. P. Morrison asked if anything was needed from the Commission, and B. Easom indicated he thought it was proceeding well at this stage. C. Auman expressed concern that there was the perception that this project should be all things to all people when he felt there should be a clear understanding that it is a good deal for the Town because it would protect so much land for an investment of \$5.6 million. B. Easom commented the CPC also supported setting aside an 11 acre parcel near the Ayer border with the understanding this could be designated for housing or recreation purposes in the future. No conservation restriction will be put on that parcel. B. Easom noted this funding scenario will allow paying down the loan in a conservative, but fairly aggressive, manner which minimizes the use of CPC funds to pay down interest fees.

A list of "questions and answers" was also prepared and will be available to residents. A public site walk is scheduled for April 22, 2006. Residents will also receive a mailing from the Groton Conservation Trust and The Trust for Public Land prior to town meeting. B. Easom suggested members look at the recent article by Connie Sartini in the *Groton Herald* about the Millerites, a religious sect who lived on the site in the mid-1800s.

7:45 p.m. - Knittel/241 Hill Road RDA

Homeowner James Knittel explained an aboveground pool is proposed within the buffer zone and Riverfront Area of Wrangling Brook. M. Giguere noted this will require cutting and filling in the hillside that is presently a lawn area. He questioned how chemicals such as chlorine will be prevented from entering the wetland resource areas. P. Morrison suggested the pool could be emptied by draining away from the wetland into a dry well that would allow infiltration. C. Auman questioned whether the pool could be moved outside of the buffer, and the Knittels indicated this location was selected because of symmetry between the wall and the trees. He also noted there should be silt fencing or haybales installed before construction to assure that no sediment reaches the wetland. K. Corwin said this project is exempt from our Bylaw because it will take place within an already disturbed lawn area. Upon a motion by B. Clements, seconded by B. Easom, it was

VOTED: to issue a negative #2 and #3 Determination for 241 Hill Road for work within the buffer zone and Riverfront Area with the condition that silt fencing be installed at the perimeter of the work area prior to the commencement of work and that a dry well be located outside the buffer zone for the Bordering Vegetated Wetland.

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8:00 p.m. - Cotter/48 Martins Pond Road RDA

With no applicant(s) present, C. Auman reported the roof has been removed, and work is underway. They are not changing the footprint of the structure, just raising the roof in one section of the house and replacing the roof in both the main and ell sections. Upon a motion by C. Auman, seconded by E. Owen, it was

VOTED: to issue a negative #3 Determination for 48 Martins Pond Road for the proposed work providing a silt fence is installed and that the area is kept cleaned of construction debris.

Upon a motion by E. Owen, seconded by C. Auman, it was

VOTED: to ratify the Emergency Certification for the 48 Martins Pond Road allowing the work to go forward immediately, pending the submittal of a Request for Determination of Applicability.

8:15 p.m. - Bue/14 Island Road NOI continuation

Chris DeLoge of Whitman Bingham explained his client had obtained estimates from an architect for the design of the retaining wall. These plans will be necessary before submittal to the Building Commissioner, but the owner would like an indication from the Commission whether the project is approvable before he incurs the cost of an architect. Mr. DeLoge presented revised plans showing an approximation of the retaining wall design and also roof drains. He noted the plans also show a cross section where filling will occur. The final garage design will include rebar and concrete according to the architect's specifications. Five-foot long riprap pads are proposed at the garage downspouts as roof runoff is not considered contaminated.

E. Owen questioned whether he was expecting the Commission to close the hearing before the plan is completed. P. Morrison said he did not have a problem with the basic concept for the retaining wall. K. Corwin requested clarification on how much filling will occur between the 217' and 218' elevation, and Mr. DeLoge responded that storage would occur underneath the garage at elevations 216' and 217'. The finished floor elevation will be 217' and water could flow in and out through a doorway opening during flooding events. K. Corwin recommended allowing the roof runoff to infiltrate into the ground via a dry well rather than flow across the land surface into the Lake. Pending receipt of the final plans, upon a motion by E. Owen, seconded by C. Auman, it was

VOTED: to continue the hearing to April 11, 2006

The Commission then reviewed the changes proposed in the Bylaw Regulations. The draft version will be available in the Town Clerks's office with the new changes highlighted. The public will be invited to comment at a hearing, and then the Commission can take a final vote on the changes. Upon a motion by K. Corwin, seconded by E. Owen, it was

VOTED: to accept the March 28, 2006 draft as amended.

C. Auman thanked K. Corwin and M. Giguere, on behalf of the Commission, for their work in putting together the revisions for NOI filings and replication areas. It was decided the public hearing will be held at the regular April 25 meeting.

In other business, E. Owen reported he plans to use the brush cutter to clear invasive species, without disturbing the ground, in the wet meadow at the Hurd parcel. He also noted someone has been breaching the beaver dam adjacent to the Groton Conservation Trust land across from the Shattuck property, and water is down about 2'. Dirt bikes appear to be using the power line right-of-way. B. Easom said he plans to get the white pines into the ground at the Crosswinds Conservation Area. P. Morrison reported he had informed the Hurds of the Commission's vote on the naming of the property, and they seem very pleased with the decision. K. Corwin said she would like to gather information on the pool at the Housing Authority property on Nashua Road, and would request permission beforehand. She noted this is a good time to observe the pools because the wood frogs are croaking/quacking.

Commissioners agreed to obtain quotes for brush hogging and grading Crosswinds to follow up on the forestry work. The bidders should be aware that the Commission intends to mow the site regularly in the future.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara V. Ganem
Conservation Assistant

Approved as draft April 11, 2006