

TOWN OF GROTON
173 Main Street
Groton, MA 01450
Historic Districts Commission
July 23, 2019
7:30 pm
Town Hall First Floor Meeting Room

Members Present:

Peter Benedict, Maureen Giattino, George Wheatley, Greg Premru, Elaine Chamberlain

Members Absent:

Laura Moore, Elena Beleno Carney

Others Present:

Michelle Collette, Vanessa Abraham, Jane Allen, David Zeiler, Bob Garside, Robert Gutmann, Atty. Bob Collins, Chris Friot, Virginia Wood, Other Interested Parties

Admin Assistant:

Maureen Adema

Meeting Called to Order 7:30pm by Chair Peter Benedict

ADA Signage in the Historic Districts – Michelle Collette

Ms. Collette was present to discuss the ADA Signage for the Town's Historic Districts. Town Meeting approved moving forward with compliance of ADA regulations in Groton. Ms. Collette addressed the need for way finding signage for Groton's public buildings in the districts, *Town Hall, Legion Hall and Groton Public Library*. She received approval from Town Manager, Mark Haddad to work with Janine LaValley Design for signs.

Ms. Collette provided mock-ups designed by Janine LaValley Design. The mock-ups consisted of a black background with gold letters, a black background with silver letters, and silver background with black letters. The signs are proposed to be 11 x 14 in size. The materials could be either metal or wood.

Depending on where a sign will be installed a post may be required. All the mock-ups have the universal handicap symbol, along with directions such as *Handicap Access at the rear entrance* or *Handicap Access* with a "pointing arrow". Ms. Collette would prefer to not use the word "handicap", on the signs stating that "handicap" is not an adjective. She will like the Town to use the universal symbol on the signs.

Ms. Collette provided photos of the signage used at the Temple and the Groton Country Club as examples of only using the universal symbol on signs. These photos also showed the standard blue background with white lettering most often used most for ADA signage.

HDC Comments and Questions

- Does having other colors, other than the blue with white meet regulations? *The only signs that are required to use the blue background and white lettering are for parking spaces.*
- Not using the standard blue and white signs, may not effectively direct individuals. The standard blue and white would be best.
- The black background with the dark gold letters is nice, and easy to read but agree the blue and white standard is more functional.
- Consistency is best, people look for and recognize the blue and white handicap signage.
- The signs will not be located/installed with the parking lot signs, so the colors could be different.
- The HDC normally approves black signs with white lettering. Might want to stay consist with the black and white.
- Would want to talk more about the install and posts at the Certificate of Appropriateness hearing. *Will talk to Tom Delaney about posts.*
- All members agree to move forward with the blue background and white lettering.

Ms. Collette will communicate to the Town Manager the conclusions from discussion and submit an application of Certificate of Appropriateness for the August 27, 2019 HDC meeting. She will also have a quote for the signs from Janine LaValley Design.

**7:45 pm Public Hearing –
Certificate of Appropriateness – Groton Public Library Roof Project
99 Main Street
Vanessa Abraham, Bob Garside**

Chair Peter Benedict read hearing notice into the record

In accordance with the provisions of Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 40C, the Groton Historic Districts Commission (GHDC) will hold a Public Hearing on **Tuesday, July 23, 2019 @ 7:45pm at Town Hall, 173 Main Street, Groton, MA 01450**, to consider the application submitted by Town of Groton for a Certificate of Appropriateness for work at the **Groton Public Library, 99 Main Street, Assessor Map 113-18** to remove and replace existing roof, skylight, gutters downspouts and snow guards on the library building. The intent is to replace with matching materials to the existing 1893 building. All new roofing material is to be natural slate that will match in size and color to existing roof. Gutters and downspouts to be red copper to match original 1893 design. Profiles and size are intended to match in size and color existing. The skylight will be removed and delivered to a historic restoration company, where a replicate will be manufactured in the same size and shaped along with replicate glass sections. **Property owner: Town of Groton, 173 Main Street, Groton, MA 01460**, for work at **Groton Public Library, 99 Main Street, Groton, MA 01450 Map 113-18**. Copies of the application and supporting materials are available for review by contacting the GHDC via the Land Use Dept., 2nd floor of Town Hall.

Groton Public Library Roof Project – Vanessa Abraham, Bob Garside, Robert Guttman

The Groton Public Library Roof Project representatives Ms. Abraham, Mr. Garside and Mr. Guttman reviewed the project with the HDC members. This meeting was a continuation of the June 26, 2019 meeting. The Commissioners received specs sheets and have material samples during the meeting for viewing and discussion.

It was pointed out that when the gutters are replaced, they will become a continuous gutter, without stops and starts like the present gutters. The glass that the skylight will have will be solar and the glass used will meet building code. The change in the glass is per architect recommendation. The metal materials used in the project, copper and brass will age to match the existing materials. The copper will be 16oz to 20oz. The slate has been ordered for the roof replacement

HDC Comments and Questions

Commissioners had no additional comments or questions

Chair Benedict asked if there were any abutters that wished to speak

There were none.

Chair Benedict closed the hearing

Greg Premru made a motion to grant a Certificate of Appropriateness for roof work at the Groton Public Library, 99 Main Street, Assessor Map 113-18 to remove and replace existing roof, skylight, gutters, downspouts and snow guards on the library building. The materials to match materials of the existing 1893 building. All new roofing material is to be natural slate in the color of Vermont

Gray that will match in size and color to existing roof. Snow guards, gutters and downspouts to be red copper to match original 1893 design. Profiles and size are to match in size and color existing. Gutters will be installed to be continuous. The skylight will be removed and delivered to a historic restoration company, where a replicate will be manufactured in the same size and shaped. The glass sections will be solar and meet building code. George Wheatley seconded the motion. The motion carried 5 to 0.

**7:55 pm Public Hearing –
Certificate of Appropriateness – Groton School Solar Project
182 Farmers Row
Atty. Bob Collins**

In accordance with the provisions of Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 40C, the Groton Historic Districts Commission (GHDC) will hold a Public Hearing on **Tuesday, July 23, 2019 at 7:55 pm at Town Hall**, 173 Main Street, Groton, to consider the application submitted by the **Groton School, Box 991, Groton, MA 01450** for a Certificate of Appropriateness for work at **182 Farmers Row, Assessor Map 107-18, 16** to install a solar voltaic field on the portion of the property adjacent to the home formerly known as Gunderson Home. The location is north of the home with minimal visibility from Farmers Row and adjacent properties. The solar field will be surrounded by a six-foot-high black chain link fence, the two structures housing the electrical components will be shielded by a row of evergreens planted within the fencing. Property owner: **Groton School Box 991, Groton, MA 01450**, for work at **182 Farmers Row, Assessors Map 107-18,16**. Copies of the application and supporting materials are available for review by contacting the GHDC via the Land Use Dept., 2nd floor of Town Hall.

Atty. Bob Collins was present seeking a Certificate of Appropriateness for the Groton School Solar Project that was discussed at last month's meeting.

The Groton School is investing in a Solar Voltaic Field, with no expense to the Town but with great benefit to the Town. The Solar Field will reduce the peak usage of electricity decreasing the rate for all GELD users. The Solar Field will be placed in between hedge rows that exist and not visible from public view. The three solar arrays are in length of 120 to 150 ft, 300ft and 90ft. A black chain fence would be installed around the field. Atty Collins submitted a plot plan indicating the location of the structures and the plantings to shield the solar equipment.

HDC Comments and Questions

- Would a 9ft fence be better? *No, the 6ft fence would not be seen because of the slope/dip in the property.*
- Is the fence required by Code? *Yes*
- Is there any lighting? *No, none. There are two telephone poles without lights that will be in the hedge row.*
- Can there be planting on the outside of the fence too? *Yes, if that's what the HDC would like, we would plant something the deer will not eat.*
- What is the material proposed for the access way? *Gravel*
- Would a curved access be better for screening? *Likely not to be beneficial, and added cost*
- Could a faux building, like a faux barn house the equipment? *No, the solar cannot be inside a building.*

- Why is the school doing the project? *Although, it would be many years, if ever that the Groton School would see their money back from install of the solar field, they too will benefit from the lower peak rate of electricity.*
- Will there be any noise generated? *No.*

Chair Peter Benedict asked if there were any abutters that wished to speak

Abutter Chris Friot, 59 Long Hill Road expressed a concern about seeing the structures from the back of his property. Atty Collins stated Mr. Friot would have to walk way out on to his property and cross the street and then look up Farmers Row to possibly see the solar structures. Atty. Collins confidently stated the work/solar field could not be seen from 59 Long Hill Road.

Michelle Collette expressed support for the project. The project will be significant in cutting the high usage rate during peak time to an affordable cost. The project will benefit all GELD users.

Groton Electric Manager Kevin Kelly sent a letter of support for the project. The letter was in the meeting packets.

Elaine Chamberlain made a motion to grant a Certificate of Appropriateness to the Groton School 182 Farmers Row to install a Solar Voltaic Field at 182 Farmers Row, Assessor Map 107-18, 16 on the portion of the property adjacent to the home formerly known as Gunderson Home. The solar field will be surrounded by a six-foot-high black chain link fence, the two structures housing the electrical components will be shielded by plantings as shown in the plan submitted and dated July 18, 2019. The evergreen plantings are to be both inside and outside the fencing. George Wheatley seconded the motion. The motion carried 5 to 0.

Prescott Building – Business Signs Discussion – Virginia Wood

Ms. Wood representing the Prescott Building at the request of Dr. Jennings was present to discuss a proposed panel business sign at 145 Main Street, the Prescott Building. The HDC approved a 6-month temporary side walk/sandwich board sign for advertising short- and long-term business leases. Ms. Wood showed the Commissioners examples of a panel business signs on Main Street that would achieve what the Friends of Prescott is seeking for the property.

Ms. Wood also provided the Commission with a mock-up of a two-sided sign, with 4x6 plastic wood look panels, six in total, 4 feet off the ground in a wood structure with header of *Prescott Community Center* and *Welcome Center* bottom framing the three right and three left panels. The sign colors are Essex green and white.

HDC Comments and Questions:

- How many businesses are proposed? *Six to Eight, the number will depend on the use of the second floor*
- Is the property still a Community Center? *Yes, there is a plan to have a Welcome Center in front. There are many classes. Ms. Wood stated that she does pottery, she will be providing classes in the basement of the building.*
- Where do you propose the sign to be installed? *One thought is where the flag pole is.*
- When working with a sign maker be sure to consider the height and lighting. Both will need HDC approval.
- The Building needs a bit of “love” landscaping and enhancing the front to make more inviting.

Ms. Wood asked if the sandwich board can be changed without coming to the HDC approval?

The sandwich, currently outside 145 Main Street should not be changed without speaking to the HDC. The sign was approved for six months, with the intent of the Friends of Prescott reporting back to the HDC regarding its viability. Ms. Wood stated the sign has generated a lot of interest for rentals/leases, so much so in fact that there is a plan to hire a real estate company to handle the business of leasing. There is a desire to work on some trees in front of the building. Tom Delaney, Tree Warden should be contacted about the trees.

Maureen A. provide Ms. Wood with an HDC sign application and Certificate of Appropriateness application, along with the deadline commitments for upcoming meetings. Chair Peter Benedict stated at the hearing for Certificate of Appropriateness size, colors, lettering style, location and material choice will be review, samples of colors and materials are required for the meeting. Ms. Wood would like to be heard at the August 27, 2019 meeting.

Board Re-organization

Postponed

Commissioner input and updates

Elaine Chamberlain asked Michelle Collette if she would be willing to meet with the HDC to review/assist in making clear the HDC function, charge, authority, polices, procedures and HDC By-laws. Michelle said she would be happy to. Michelle suggested to also have Atty. Bob Collins in attendance at the meeting because Bob looked at updating the HDC by-laws a few years back. Maureen A. will coordinate the meeting. The Commissioners suggested to schedule an additional meeting if there is not “light” agenda at near future meeting.

Admin. Updates

- **Lawrence Academy – Temporary Shed at Playground**
The meeting packets contained the email chain regarding notification of a temporary shed at the Lawrence Academy Playground. *No discussion*
- **Treehouse 5 Legion Road –**
Owner of 5 Legion Road submitted a building permit application for a treehouse. The Commissioners reviewed the building permit application for details such as size and location of the proposed treehouse. It was determined that it would be best to have the owner speak to the Commission about the size, location and time period the treehouse would be used. Maureen A. will contact the owner tomorrow asking for his attendance at a HDC meeting. Maureen A. will confirm with the Ed Cataldo, Building Commissioner that a building permit will not be issued because treehouses are not regulated by MGL, Building Codes.
- **Mailbox – 134 Main Street**
A building permit application was submitted in June for a proposed mailbox at 134 Main Street. The applicant has been notified that HDC approval is required if the mailbox is visible from the street/districts. The applicant has not responded.
- The meeting packets contained the memo from the Town Manager on the Town Meeting dates. Town Meeting is scheduled for Monday, October 21, 2019.

George Wheatley made a motion to accept the minutes of June 18, 2019 and June 26, 2019. Greg Premru seconded the motion. The motion passed 5 to 0.

Peter Benedict made a motion to adjourn at 8:57pm. Greg Premru seconded the motion. The motion passed 5 to 0.

Next Meetings: Aug, 27, 2019, Sept. 24, 2019, Nov. 19, 2019