Town of Groton

**173 Main Street**

**Groton, MA 01450**

**Historic Districts Commission**

**November 15, 2022**

**7:30 pm**

**2nd Floor Meeting Room**

**Members Present:** Peter Benedict, Brian Cartier, Maureen Giattino and George Wheatley

**Others Present**: Attorney Robert Collins, Jennifer Rand, Judy Anderson

**Administrative Assistant**: Amanda Urmann

**Meeting Called to Order at 7:30 pm by Chair Peter Benedict and announced this meeting is being recorded.**

**274 Main Street – Permanent Sign Permit Applications**

Applicants: Alice Lenhart & Linda Maguire

This sign is to be added on to a currently existing sign.

Member Giattino made a motion to approve the sign for Linda Maguire and Alice Lenhart (Permit #2022-19 and Permit #2022-18) for Anchor Point, per the attached in the colors of black and white. The motion was seconded by Member Cartier. The vote was carried 4-0.

**Sturgis House – Discussion**

Attorney Collins was present to discuss this topic. Mr. Collins explained what would and would not change at Sturgis House. At a previous meeting, there was a proposal brought to the board that included renovations on Sturgis house, which included renovations and a new two car garage. This was also brought to the Conservation Commission and they did not like the location of the garage on the original plan. Because of this, a proposal has been made to change the orientation of this, where it used to have the back of the garage facing the Farmers Row and the doors facing the house to the change having the doors facing the road that goes towards Ayer. This also opens up the back patio, where residents can enjoy the public view. This also brings up Attorney Collins’ proposal to include a couple of sections of cedar fencing. Mr. Collins is asking for approval for the re-orientation of the garage and the addition of the couple of sections of cedar fencing.

Member Cartier mentioned that it would appear that, according to the site plan, the fence would not be very visible, if at all.

Member Cartier motioned to approve the application for the changes to the Sturgis House at Groton School concerning the relocation of the garage on the site plan and the addition of a small cedar stockade fence to screen the view. Member Giattino seconded the motion and the vote was carried 4-0.

**Groton School, Varsity Soccer Field Changes – Discussion**

Attorney Collins was present to discuss this topic as well. Mr. Collins goes on to say that the opposite side of the street from Sturgis House is Brooks House that has a driveway that brings you into the Athletic Center, which includes two soccer fields. Groton wants to repurpose this field and convert it to a running track that runs around one single soccer field, making this also a turf field. There will be only one scoreboard, rather than two, which will be situated where the further one back currently is at the tree line. There will also be re-stripping of the spaces in front of the Athletic Center to make an accessible space in a better location. In addition, on Farmers Row side, there will be a retaining wall that won’t be visible from Farmers Row. There will be an actual stone wall that provides a space where people can sit and view the surrounding area. This will be intended to be used as a multipurpose space, which will include many different activities/sports, including but not limited to, a soccer field, a running track, shotput, long jump, short jump, discus throwing, and javelin throwing. There will be four permanent lights, instead of the current ten temporary ones. Attorney Collins believes that the stone wall will eliminate the temporary bleachers that are brought out when needed. Mr. Collins noted that the only thing that will be different is the track itself and the permanent lights. Mr. Collins asked if the Commission would like him to submit a formal application/proposal for this for the December meeting.

Member Giattino asked what kind of lights were going to be installed. Attorney Collins said that they are typical athletic field lighting (galvanized). They will be taller than the temporary lights, but there will be less than the current ones that are there. Ms. Giattino also asked about the Planning Board being included in the planning and Mr. Collins mentioned that the Planning Board did not need to be included because it doesn’t affect the site plan.

Member Cartier mentioned that the change of the diesel generators (for the current temporary lights) would be more energy efficient and quieter. Mr. Cartier also asked the height of the new permanent lights, and Mr. Collins believes that they will be 40 feet tall. It was also asked if there would be a time limit to these lights and it was clarified that these lights would only be on when there would be an evening events where these lights are needed for those events.

Jennifer Rand mentioned that the track would be on the west field, and that there would be two fields for soccer and how the track field would be the closest to the athletic field. Attorney Collins clarified this will be where both soccer fields currently are, making only one single soccer field in the middle. Ms. Rand brought up how this would significantly change the appearance of this area. Mr. Collins agreed with this, but mentioned how that this design would be less cluttered than the current layout, with the most significant difference being the track and the one soccer field.

It was agreed upon the Commission that there should be a formal proposal/application with a public hearing for surrounding neighbors because of the difference and this being in the district. Attorney Collins to submit a plan early the next week to be included in the meeting for December and to be published in the newspaper to notify the public.

**8-10 Hollis St – Discussion**

Attorney Collins was present to discuss this topic as well. Mr. Collins explains how 8-10 Hollis St has gone through a few different renovations. He goes on to explain that this building does not look “original” and the way surrounding buildings and houses look. The owners would like to build a carriage house close to the current addition there and eliminate the parking, and considering putting in two or three small residential units. This would be designed so that this would block that building that doesn’t seem to fit the rest of the area and to match the Cape that is in the front there. They have hired Dan Quaille to be the designer. Attorney Collins wanted to bring this to the Commission to get a rough idea on their ideas about this before it was officially proposed.

The Commission agreed it was best to get concepts and drawings to discuss this further in a future meeting.

**Commissioner Updates - None**

**Approval of Minutes** – Previous minutes to be sent out by Amanda Urmann to the HDC members and they will be approved next meeting after review.

**Vacancy Interview –** Jennifer Rand

Jennifer Rand explained to the Commission that she has lived in the Groton Historic District for 24 years and she herself has had to go through the HDC to get approvals for some of her own renovations and restorations and explained how she would like to make sure that Groton stays as it originally is, while also making sure that there are those much-needed updates. Ms. Rand understands the struggles that occur with residents who would like to update but she is interested in helping as much as she can with ensuring Groton stays as Groton should.

Member, and Chair, Benedict mentioned that the Commission is looking for those who care and that they would welcome her and her expertise, whatever that may be.

Member Giattino motioned to accept Jennifer Rand, of 31 Hollis Street, to the Historic District Commission. Member Wheatley seconded this motion and the vote was carried 4-0.

**Member Wheatley made a motion to adjourn. Member, and Chair, Benedict seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously 4-0.**

**Meeting Adjourned: 8:23 PM**

Respectfully Submitted By: Amanda Urmann