

**GROTON PLANNING BOARD  
JANUARY 11, 2001  
MINUTES**

Chairman Curtis called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM in the Town Hall

Members present: Curtis, Barringer, Clements, Degen, Lewis and Perkins

Member absent: Eliot

**PUBLIC HEARING – SPECIAL PERMIT BERTOZZI FARMS**

In accordance with the provisions of Chapter 40A, Sections 9 and 11, the Groton Planning Board held a public hearing to consider the application submitted by Ralph Bertozzi and Pauline Grady to utilize the provisions of Groton Zoning By-law Section 218-26 Open Space Residential Development to create eight (8) lots shown as shown on the plan entitled, “Bertozzi Farms Estates – Flexible Development Plan in Groton, Mass.; Prepared for Ralph Bertozzi and Pauline Grady” prepared by Hannigan Engineering, dated December 14, 2000. The proposed subdivision is located Assessors Lots H-13J and H-13L on the easterly side of Townsend Road.

Chairman Curtis called the hearing to order. Clerk Lewis read the notice published in the December 22, 2000 and January 5, 2001 issues of *The Groton Herald*. Ralph Bertozzi, design engineer John Roseberry of Hannigan Engineering, and several abutters were present.

Chairman Curtis read the comments from the Conservation Commission and the Board of Health. The Board also received a report dated January 8, 2000 from John Schmid of Judith Nitsch Engineering, Inc. (JNEI).

Mr. Roseberry responded to the points in the JNEI report. The applicant will request a waiver or a variance of the need to submit a hydrogeological study at the definitive plan stage. There was some discussion of showing the “trees to be saved” on the definitive plan. Mr. Roseberry said the Erosion Control Plan will show the limits of disturbance so labeling trees to be saved may not be necessary. The Board responded that it would like to see the specimen trees delineated on the definitive plan as required in the Subdivision Regulations.

Member Perkins asked if there are any wetlands on the site. Mr. Roseberry said, “no.” Member Perkins expressed appreciation for the better design as shown on the flexible development plan.

Abutter Thomas Callahan said he spoke with Mr. Bertozzi about purchasing a small parcel of land along his property line. He asked if the open space shown on the Flexible Development plan meets the requirements of the by-law. Chairman Curtis said 25% must be set aside as open space. Chairman Curtis stated that the negotiations to convey a small parcel must be between the two landowners and is not a matter for the Planning Board.

The Board voted unanimously to close the public hearing.

The motion was made by Perkins to approve the preliminary plan entitled, “Bertozzi Farms Estates – Flexible Development Plan in Groton, Mass.; Prepared for Ralph Bertozzi and Pauline Grady” prepared by Hannigan Engineering, dated December 14, 2000, with the following condition:

1. All the issues in the report dated January 8, 2001 from Judith Nitsch Engineering, Inc. (JNEI) must be addressed to the satisfaction of the Board.

The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

The motion was made by Perkins to grant a special permit to Ralph Bertozzi and Pauline Grady under the provision of Section 218-26.1 Major Residential Development to create eight lots as shown on the plan entitled, “Bertozzi Farms Estates – Flexible Development Plan in Groton, Mass.; Prepared for Ralph Bertozzi and Pauline Grady” prepared by Hannigan Engineering, dated December 14, 2000, based upon the following findings and with the following conditions:

## Findings:

1. **Social, economic and community needs:** The proposed special permit plan serves social and community needs by providing open space contiguous with the open space located to the north in the adjacent West Throne subdivision. This parcel adds to the large block of open land in the Throne Hill area.
2. **Traffic flow and safety:** There are adequate sight distances at this location, and the road cut will have better sight distances than the road shown on the conventional grid plan.
3. **Adequacy of utilities:** There are adequate public utilities at this location. The applicant offered to grant an easement to the West Groton Water Supply district to close the loop with Candace Lane.
4. **Neighborhood character:** The proposed development will blend into the visual environment because the proposed houses will be less visible from Townsend Road than the houses shown on the conventional grid plan.
5. **Impacts on the environment:** Given the small scale of the proposed development and the careful siting of homes, the environmental impacts will be minimal; the proposed open space parcel will have a positive impact on the environment.
6. **Fiscal impact on the Town:** The proposed development will have less potential fiscal impact on the Town than a conventional plan because the Flexible Development plan is limited to single-family houses and duplexes can be constructed on lots on a conventional plan.
7. **Major Residential Development:** The Board determined that the above-referenced Flexible Development plan is more beneficial to the town than the conventional grid plan because the Flexible Development plan better meets the goals and objectives of the Comprehensive Master Plan by setting aside open space contiguous with other parcels of open space in the Throne Hill area.

The motion was seconded.

Mr. Bertozzi stated that he did not offer to grant an easement to the West Groton Water Supply district to close the loop with Candace Lane because the Lavalley's on Candace Lane did not agree to do so.

After some discussion about the verbal recommendation of the West Groton Water Supply District regarding closing the loop, the Board recommended that Mr. Bertozzi and his engineer meet with the WGWS District Commissioners to discuss the details.

Chairman Curtis said the Board must confirm that the WGWS District is able to supply water to the subdivision if the loop is not closed. The Board will ask the WGWS District to make a written recommendation.

Member Degen said if public water is not used, the Board must ask the Fire Chief for his recommendations on the fire cistern or other means of fire protection.

The Board did not vote on the motion.

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## Findings:

1. **Social, economic and community needs:** The proposed special permit plan serves social and community needs by providing open space contiguous with the open space located to the north in the adjacent West Throne subdivision. This parcel adds to the large block of open land in the Throne Hill area.
2. **Traffic flow and safety:** There are adequate sight distances at this location, and the road cut will have better sight distances than the road shown on the conventional grid plan.
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5. **Impacts on the environment:** Given the small scale of the proposed development and the careful siting of homes, the environmental impacts will be minimal; the proposed open space parcel will have a positive impact on the environment.
6. **Fiscal impact on the Town:** The proposed development will have less potential fiscal impact on the Town than a conventional plan because the Flexible Development plan is limited to single-family houses and duplexes can be constructed on lots on a conventional plan.

**Conditions:**

1. The specimen trees and clearing limitation must be shown on the definitive plan.
2. An Erosion and Sedimentation Control plan must be submitted with the definitive plan as required in the Subdivision Regulations.

The motion was seconded.

The Board will vote on the special permit decisions at its meeting on February 1, 2000 at 8:45 PM.

The Board voted unanimously to extend the deadline on the Major Residential Development decision until February 16, 2001 as requested by the applicant.

**INFORMAL DISCUSSION – GROTON DUNSTABLE BUILDING COMMITTEE**

*(Member Perkins stepped down and did not participate.)*

The Board met with Steven Prendergast and Christopher Deluca of the Groton Dunstable School Building Committee to review conceptual plans of the new 1200-student high school to be located on the Casella property (subject to the approval of Town Meeting).

Mr. Prendergast described the site located on Chicopee Row at the Groton-Dunstable townline with 179 acres in Groton and seven acres in Dunstable. The design of the new high school is the same as the design submitted when the school was going to be built on the Walker property. A 400 space parking lot and athletic fields will be constructed. Access will be over a 24 ft wide road from Chicopee Row. A secondary emergency vehicle access road, 18 ft wide with an 8" gravel base, will be constructed to North Street. The emergency vehicle access road will be gravel with no curbs or drainage because there is a species of special concern in the vicinity. Water will be provided by an on-site well. The sewerage system will be extended to the site from the Town of Pepperell.

Chairman Curtis said it is helpful to have such a pre-submission review prior to the submission of the Level II site plan. He stated that access and parking are important considerations that must be discussed with the public safety officials.

Member Lewis expressed his preference for a paved secondary access rather than a gravel road. He added that parking

should be located near the playing fields especially for handicapped people who would like to attend athletic events.

Member Degen recommended investigating a turning lane on Chicopee Row if possible. He, too, prefers a paved secondary access road rather than gravel. Member Degen asked if 400 spaces will be sufficient for 1200 students. Mr. Deluca said, “yes, there will be one space for every three students.

Member Clements noted that lighting should not be intrusive on abutting properties. Member Lewis suggested looking at the lighting installed at the NEBS facility on North Main Street because it is an excellent light plan with no impact on the neighborhood.

Member Clements asked if there is enough room on the site for an elementary school. Mr. Prendergast said perhaps in the future.

Member Barringer asked if there is enough upland area to accommodate all the facilities. Mr. Prendergast said, “yes.”

Member Lewis asked what the distance is between the school building and the fields. Mr. Deluca said about 1000 to 1500 feet.

Carolyn Perkins, speaking as an abutter, said the board should look carefully at the proposed access which will be located between two existing houses. A secondary access road would help divert some of the traffic from Chicopee Row. She added that the site is within the Secondary Water Resource District and it is important to protect the aquifer.

Member Barringer asked the length of the emergency vehicle access road. Mr. Prendergast said it is about one-half mile.

Mr. Deluca invited the Board to attend the School Committee’s public hearing on January 17<sup>th</sup>.

Member Lewis noted that the Board received a copy of the letter from Steven and Nancy Webber offering land at Brooks Orchard to the schools.

*(Member Degen stepped down from the Board.)*

Mr. Prendergast said he just found out about the letter at last night’s meeting. Chairman Curtis said the letter from the Webbers is not part of the informal discussion and thanked the members of the building committee for their presentation.

### **COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN UPDATE**

The Board discussed the recent material forwarded by planning consultant Ken Kreutziger regarding completion of the Comprehensive Master Plan.

Chairman Curtis suggested asking the team to attend a meeting to discuss the proposed zoning amendments in more detail so that the Board could prioritize which amendments to bring to the Annual Town Meeting on April 30, 2001.

Member Degen stressed the need to hold a forum and to keep the public involved in the process.

The Board will ask the consultants to attend the meeting on January 25, 2001 and will hold an open forum on February 8, 2001.

There was some discussion about whether the updated master plan will be a “stand-alone” document or a revision of the 1990 plan. Chairman Curtis said the Board should discuss this point with the consultants on January 25<sup>th</sup>. He added that no master plan will ever “stand alone” – this plan relies on the 1990 Master Plan, and the 1990 plan is based upon the 1963 Eliot plan.

**CABLE TV COVERAGE**

Since this meeting was broadcast live on Cable TV, Member Degen asked members of the public to contact the Cable Committee if they would like all Planning Board meetings broadcast live on cable television.

Meeting adjourned 9:15 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle Collette  
Planning Administrator