

**GROTON PLANNING BOARD
JANUARY 23, 2002
MINUTES**

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

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

Member absent: Lewis

PUBLIC HEARING – VOICESTREAM TELECOMMUNICATION TOWER

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 Omnipoint Holdings, Inc., a wholly owned subsidiary of Voicestream Wireless, for a special permit to utilize the provisions of Groton Zoning By-law Section 218-25.1 Personal Wireless Services Facility to co-locate antenna and required ground equipment on Sprint's approved 120-foot monopole style telecommunications tower on land owned by Elliot & Doris Blood, 94 West Main Street, Assessors Map 106, Parcel 15, on the southerly side of West Main Street.

Chairman Curtis called the public hearing to order by reading the notice published in the January 4 and 11, 2002 issues of *The Groton Herald*. Attorney Simon Brighenti represented VoiceStream at the public hearing. Landowners Elliot and Doris Blood were present.

Mr. Brighenti said VoiceStream is a licensed carrier in this area and would like to add its equipment to Sprint's tower on the Blood property. The Planning Board has approved the tower for Sprint in this location (see Special Permit #2001-10). VoiceStream would like to install its equipment at 110 ft on the 120 ft monopole tower. The ground equipment will be installed on a 5' x 7' pad. In addition, VoiceStream would like to add measurement function receivers (MFR) and a global positioning system (GPS) antennae at 90 ft as part of the E-911 system.

Radio frequency engineer Scott Hefferin described the coverage in this area including other towers in Pepperell, Townsend, Lunenburg, Devens, Lancaster, Leominster, and Westford. He said there is no coverage in Groton today.

Chairman Curtis read comments from the Conservation Commission, the Board of Health, and the Water Department.

Member Eliot asked if it is possible to flush-mount the antennae. Mr. Hefferin said flush mounting forces the carriers to take up more vertical space on the tower which limits space for other carriers. Flush mounting takes up 15 to 20 ft rather than 10 ft.

Member Eliot asked what the color of the tower will be. Mr. Brighenti said it will be a basic gray pole constructed of galvanized steel.

Member Degen said the color should be the same as Sprint's antennae. He asked if additional utilities will be run from the street. Mr. Hefferin said all the utilities to the tower come in on one lead. VoiceStream will attach its equipment to Sprint's utilities.

Member Degen asked if VoiceStream will need other towers in Groton to provide coverage. Mr. Hefferin said the proposed tower in Lunenburg will cover the Route 2A area. There is a tower on Devens, and they are looking for a site along Route 40 in the Westford area.

Member Degen asked the distance of the bandwidth. Mr. Hefferin said it is usually 1.5 to 2 miles. If the line of sight is good, the distance can be up to 3 or 4 miles.

Mr. Brighenti said VoiceStream prefers to locate its equipment in churches, existing structures or on other towers whenever possible.

Carrie Kneeland asked if the antennae cannot be flush-mounted, how far out will the platforms extend. Mr. Brighenti said the antennae are 4-5 ft from centerline to centerline. Mr. Hefferin said the sides of the triangles are 12 ft each.

Chairman Curtis said the Planning Board cannot shut out carriers, but can regulate towers and related facilities. The flush-mounted towers may look better, but more towers would be required if there is less space on the tower.

Member Clements asked about the width of the tower. Mr. Hefferin said it is 4 feet wide at the base and 18-24 inches wide at the top.

The Board voted unanimously to close the public hearing.

ANR PLAN – DARLING, OLD DUNSTABLE ROAD

The Planning Board considered the Approval Not Required (ANR) plan submitted by James Darling to create four new lots – two on the east side of Old Dunstable Road and two on the west side of Old Dunstable Road. Dan Wolfe of David E. Ross Associates presented the plan.

Member Perkins asked if there were any wetlands on the lots. Mr. Wolfe said, “no.”

Member Degen asked if Lot 14 has 225 ft frontage. Mr. Wolfe said “yes.”

Member Barringer asked about the right-of-way on Lot 11. Mr. Wolfe said it is an access easement dating back to a 1972 Land Court plan.

Member Eliot asked when the original lots on the plan were created. Mr. Wolfe said 1972.

The motion was made by Curtis to endorse as Approval Not Required the plan entitled, “Land in Groton, Mass. Surveyed for James E. Darling and Mary W. Darling,” prepared by David E. Ross Associates, dated January, 2002. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

PUBLIC HEARING (con’t) - ACADEMY HILL SPECIAL PERMIT/DEFINITIVE PLAN

The Planning Board continued the public hearings to consider the Academy Hill definitive plan and three special permit applications submitted by LandWest for land off Townsend Road.

The applicant requested a continuation of the public hearing because all Planning Board members were not present.

The Board will ask Town Counsel for an opinion on a member’s eligibility to vote on a special permit if that member was not present at all the public hearings.

The Board voted unanimously to continue the hearing on February 7, 2002 at 8:30 PM.

SITE PLAN REVIEW – IMPORT-DOMESTIC AUTO

The Planning Board reviewed the site plan submitted by Import-Domestic Auto for a change of use at the existing automotive repair shop located at 15 Elm Street. Applicant Scott Sanford was present.

Mr. Sanford said he and his partner are purchasing the Integrity Auto business and would like to sell three used cars in addition to the automotive repair business. The spaces for the three used cars were designated on the site plan.

Member Perkins expressed concern about vehicles backing out onto the street. Mr. Sanford said the used cars will be backed into their spaces.

Member Eliot asked if the repair business would continue. Mr. Sanford said, “yes.” The Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) granted a special permit for the repair business to Powell Automotive in 1981. Mr. Sanford said the repair business will continue as allowed in the 1981 special permit. The Class III used car license will limit the sale of used cars to three at any one time.

Chairman Curtis said the site plan is being submitted because the sale of used cars is a change of use. The Planning

Board deals with site plan review issues, and the ZBA deals with use issues. Mr. Sanford said they applied to the ZBA for a special permit to sell used cars.

Member Degen requested that the applicant add dimensions to the parking spaces shown on the plan. The Board requested that the applicant submit a written statement addressing § 218-25F Submission Requirements, Items (a) through ((k)).

Member Eliot reiterated that the only change is the addition of three cars for sale and that there will be no other changes to the site. Mr. Sanford said, “yes.”

The Board will continue its review on February 14, 2002 at 8:30 PM.

GMAC CONSULTANT

The Planning Board received a letter dated January 23, 2002 from the Growth Management Advisory Committee (GMAC) regarding the selection of a consultant to work on the phased growth by-law. GMAC Chairman Charles McKinney spoke with Ralph Willmer of MacGregor and Associates and Attorney Mark Bobrowski. GMAC would like to use Ralph Willmer because he is more available.

The Board voted unanimously to hire Ralph Willmer as planning consultant to work with GMAC on the phased growth by-law.

Member Perkins requested that Mr. Willmer provide the Board with a letter stating his rate per hour and the number of hours required to complete the project.

Meeting adjourned at 9:00 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle Collette
Planning Administrator