

GROTON PLANNING BOARD
DECEMBER 11, 2003
MINUTES

Chairman Barringer called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM in the Town Hall
Members present: Barringer, Clements, Degen, Eliot, Lewis, and Perkins
Member absent: Wilson

PUBLIC HEARING (con't) –WEST THRONE MODIFICATION

(Member Degen stepped down.)

The Board held the continuation of the public hearing to consider the application submitted by the Groton Land Foundation (GLF) to modify a portion of the drainage system for the West Throne subdivision. GLF Directors Robert Pine, June Johnson and Marion Stoddart were present.

Mr. Pine reviewed the history of the 12-lot subdivision with 52 acres of open space located off Townsend Road. There was an error in the drainage calculations submitted with the original plan resulting in an over design of the drainage system. Runoff from the developed area flows into two drainage basins. The upper part drains into the open space area via a cross-country drain pipe. The lower part drains into an infiltration basin closer to Townsend Road. There are two retention basins located on the up-gradient side of an existing esker. The first basin drains into the second basin. The original design includes a third pipe to be installed through the esker with a discharge on the site. Mr. Pine said the third pipe is not necessary as demonstrated in the revised drainage calculations. The installation of the third pipe would require removing trees and cutting into the esker. The drainage system has been in place for several years and is functioning well. If an overflow occurs from the second basin, it will be directed toward the retention pond on the adjoining Bertozzi Farms subdivision. The runoff would end up in this location with or without the installation of the third pipe. The Board's engineer, John Schmid of Judith Nitsch Engineering, Inc. (JNEI), reviewed the proposed changes and agreed that the third pipe is not necessary. Mr. Pine requested that the Board approve the modification to the drainage system because the system is properly engineered without the third pipe and the modification results in less disturbance to the land.

Member Clements said the report dated December 3, 2003 from JNEI supports the proposed modification.

Member Eliot noted that the changes must be shown on the as-built plan as recommended in the JNEI report.

Member Perkins said the proposal seems straight-forward as long as JNEI's recommendations are followed.

Member Lewis asked about the dry well recommended by JNEI. Mr. Pine said it will be four feet deep and filled with crushed stone.

Member Lewis said he did not like directing runoff toward the abutting land. Mr. Pine said there will be no net increase in the rate or volume of runoff. JNEI reviewed the supporting drainage calculations. The water will end up in the same place with or without the third pipe.

Member Lewis asked if this runoff was considered in the drainage calculations for the Bertozzi Farms subdivision. Mr. Pine said, "yes," and referred to the JNEI report.

Chairman Barringer asked if the discharge at the property line results in a reduction of runoff. Mr. Pine said, "yes."

Planning Administrator Michelle Collette said the residents of the subdivision would like the pipes on the ground and other construction debris removed from the open space parcel. Mr. Pine agreed.

The Board voted unanimously to close the public hearing.

The motion was made by Lewis to approve the modification as shown on the plan submitted with the letter dated

September 2, 2003 from the Groton Land Foundation with the following conditions:

1. The applicant shall remove all construction debris including culverts and other material from the site within thirty (30) days of the filing of this decision with the Town Clerk.
2. The applicant shall install a dry well within each basin along the westerly edge as recommended in the report dated December 3, 2003 from Judith Nitsch Engineering, Inc. (JNEI). A sketch showing the construction details and dimensions of the dry well shall be submitted to the Planning Board and JNEI for approval prior to installation.
3. The applicant shall prepare and submit an as-built plan of both basins to ensure that the basins are constructed in compliance with the approved definitive plan and this modification.
4. All conditions of the Special Permit 98-03 and the definitive plan approval filed with the Town Clerk on June 3, 1998 remain in full force and effect.
5. The conditions of the modification of the definitive plan approval apply to any successor in interest or successor in control.

The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

WOODLAND PARK BOND REDUCTION

The Board received a report dated December 11, 2003 from JNEI recommending that the Board retain a balance of \$4200.00 in the performance bond for the Woodland Park subdivision. Member Degen recommended holding more to be sure all the street trees survive.

The motion was made by Degen to reduce the amount held in the performance bond for the Woodland Park subdivision to \$10,000.00 to cover the items contained in the report dated December 11, 2003 from Judith Nitsch Engineering, Inc. (JNEI) and to cover the replacement of the street trees, if necessary. *The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.*

COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS

The Board received a memorandum from the Selectmen requesting a representative from the Planning Board to serve on the Hydrant Fee Task Force. Members of the Board did not see the need for the Planning Board to have a representative on this Committee. However, Chairman Barringer said he would be available to meet with the Committee if it has any questions relative to Planning Board matters. The Board will send a memorandum responding to the Selectmen.

SURRENDEN FARMS UPDATE

Member Degen reported that as the Board's liaison to the Board of Health, he walked the Surrenden Farms site with toxicologist Susan Sundstrom to discuss soil remediation. The developer repaired the bridge in Ayer. Lot 8, the site of the 55 and older housing, has been clear cut and the soil has been stripped. Condition #29 of the definitive plan approval states:

“Recording. This decision, Special Permits #2003-02 and 2003-05, and covenants restrictions shall be recorded at the Registry of Deeds at the same time as the definitive plan. The Applicant shall reserve the fee in all easements to be conveyed to the Town upon acceptance of the roads as public ways by the Town. No construction or site alteration shall commence until the Applicant submits evidence of such recording to the Planning Board.”

The motion was made by Degen to inform the developer that all construction activity must cease until the Planning Board endorses the definitive plan and it is recorded at the Registry of Deeds as required in the conditions of the

definitive plan approval. *The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.*

PRE-SUBMISSION REVIEW – SAMANTHA REALTY

The Board met with Steven Catalino of Samantha Realty and design engineer Brian Connor of Goldsmith, Prest and Ringwall (GPR) to discuss a mixed use development at the Four Corners intersection. Mr. Connor said there is an existing office building with a total of 6300 sq ft gross floor area on two stories. The owner would like to add a new 7000 sq ft building at the rear of the site. A restaurant may be located in the new building. The 1.75 acre site has ample room for parking and the drainage system. The site is located in the Water Resource Protection District, which affects the design of the sewage disposal system.

Member Eliot expressed concern about the proposed egress on Route 119, very close to the Four Corners intersection. Mr. Connor said they are working with MassHighway on the proposed curb cut.

Member Eliot asked if the existing building is on the National Register of Historic Places since it is one of the oldest buildings in the Town. Mr. Catalino said they do not plan to change the outside of the historic building.

Member Lewis expressed concern about the relationship of the proposed development with the Four Corners intersection. He said the applicant must be very cautious in the design of the access and egress near this intersection.

Member Perkins asked about the sewage disposal system. Mr. Connor said the limit is 110 gallons per day per 10,000 sq ft lot area. The current residential use of the existing building exceeds that number. The new business use will produce less volume, but the flow will still be greater than 800 gallons per day.

Member Perkins noted the importance of landscaping and screening for abutters. She said any dumpsters must also be screened. A photometric diagram showing proposed lighting must be submitted with the site plan. Headlight glare might be an issue as well.

Member Degen reiterated the concern about access onto Route 119 so close to the intersection. He said if a restaurant is proposed, it will affect the number of parking spaces required as well as the amount of sewage flow.

Chairman Barringer said the applicant must carefully review the requirements of §218-30 Water Resource Protection Districts. A special permit may be required for the process waste water from the proposed restaurant.

Member Lewis said he did not want the Town to lose the rental units in the existing building.

SITE PLAN REVIEW – BULLDOG REALTY TRUST, 14 STATON AVENUE

The Board continued its review of the site plan submitted by Bulldog Realty Trust to convert five apartment units to condominiums at 14 Station Avenue. Applicant Robert Bushnell, Attorney Aleta Manugian and design engineer Bertrand Hamil were present.

Mr. Hamil submitted a revised plan with a drainage system in the parking lot area. There will be a net reduction of 60 to 70% runoff from the site as a result of installing the new drainage system. The revised plan meets all Stormwater Management Requirements.

Member Degen said the proposed Cape Cod berm may be difficult for snow plows. He said the curbing should be the monolithic style, attached to the sub-base pavement. He expressed concerns about waiving the off-site topography requirements because the Board must be sure there is no runoff from the site onto abutting properties.

Mr. Hamil responded that the catch basin on site will control runoff. There will be less runoff leaving the site than there is today. Member Degen said there is a 200 ft riparian zone along the rear of the site that slopes toward the abutting land. Mr. Hamil said vertical granite curbing will be installed to prevent runoff from flowing in this direction.

Member Degen asked if any affordable or handicapped accessible units will be constructed. Mr. Hamil said, "no." Mr. Bushnell said such units are not economically feasible.

Member Eliot asked about landscaping. Mr. Hamil said a tree will be planted in the front of the building and screening will be provided along the property line between the site and Town Hall.

Member Eliot asked about the building setback. Mr. Hamil said the ZBA granted a variance.

Member Perkins asked about the depth and side slopes of the retention pond. Mr. Hamil said it will be from 18 to 24" deep with 4:1 side slopes.

Member Perkins asked who will maintain the drainage system. Mr. Hamil said the condominium association will be responsible for all maintenance.

Member Perkins expressed concern about backing out of the proposed garages. Mr. Hamil said it is not optimal, but it is the best they could design. Each unit will have one garage space and one parking space.

Member Degen noted that no invasive species should be planted. The Norway maple shown on the plan is invasive. Mr. Hamil said he would change the species of the tree.

Member Lewis said any snow piles about three feet should be removed. Chairman Barringer said the applicant must be careful not to plow snow onto abutting properties since the parking lot is only four feet from the lot line.

Members of the Board said they did not care for the style of lighting shown on the plan and encourage the applicant to find a better design that would not shine toward the sky. The Board said JNEI should review the photometric plan.

Member Lewis stressed that the HVAC cabinet should be kept locked for public safety reasons.

The Board discussed the requested waivers. Member Degen said he would like to see topography of the area within 200 ft of the rear property line to protect abutting parcels, but he would accept 100 ft.

The motion was made by Lewis to APPROVE the Level II site plan entitled, "ZBA Plan, 14 Station Avenue, Groton, MA, Prepared for Bulldog Realty Trust," prepared by H-Star Engineering, Inc., dated November 19, 2003, with the following waivers and conditions:

Waivers:

1. §218-25G(2)(b) - to allow submission of a locus map at a scale of 1"=200';
2. §218-25K.1.1 - to waive submission of a USGS map at a scale of 1"+100'.
3. §218-25K.1.7 - to waive the requirement to show topography within 200 ft of the site except that the topography of the area within 50 ft of the rear property line shall be shown on the site plan.
4. §218-25K.1.14 - to accept the submission of the site plans at a scale of 1"=20' rather than 1"=40".
5. §218-25K.2.4.5 - to allow a driveway width of 16 ft rather than 24 ft.
6. §218-25K.2.4.5 & 7 - to waive the requirement for vertical granite curbing only in the snow removal area shown on the plan.

Conditions:

1. The applicant shall submit a photometric diagram and revised lighting design details to the Planning Board for its review and approval.

2. The applicant shall submit a snowplowing plan to the Board for its review and approval.
3. The topography within 50 ft of the rear property line shall be shown on the site plan.
4. The Norway Maple shall be changed to another species. No invasive species shall be planted.
5. A detail of the monolithic curbing to be installed in the snow storage area shall be added to the plan.
6. There shall be no net increase in the rate or volume of storm water runoff from the site as required in Section 218-25G(1)(c). Stormwater shall be directed to the new drainage system.
7. There shall be no ponding of water on the site or at the intersections at the entrance/exits of the site on Route 119.
8. Snow banks and stockpiles shall not exceed a height of three (3) feet at any time. Snow shall be moved to the snow storage area shown on the plan or removed from the site.
9. The condominium association shall be responsible for maintenance of the stormwater management system.
10. Three copies of the final site plan with the above changes approved by the Planning Board shall be submitted to the Board for endorsement as required in Section 218-25G(3).

The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 9:45 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle Collette
Planning Administrator

