

GROTON PLANNING BOARD

MAY 20, 2004

MINUTES

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

Members present: Barringer, Clements, Degen, Eliot, Lewis, Perkins and Wilson

SITE PLAN REVIEW – LAWRENCE ACADEMY

The Planning Board considered the site plan submitted by Lawrence Academy to regrade its athletic fields and construct a new parking area. Linda Deacy of Lawrence Academy and landscape contractor Peter Myette presented the plan.

Mr. Myette described the plans to level the existing baseball and soccer fields. The grade is 12 ft higher near Main Street than the grade closer to the wetlands. Material will be moved from the Main Street area to the rear of the site. A new parking area will be constructed with 34 parking spaces to eliminate on-street parking on Route 119. A 24' x 24' maintenance building will be constructed. The parking spaces near the house on Main Street will be eliminated as requested by the Historic Districts Commission.

Chairman Barringer read the comments from the Board of Health, Sewer Department and Water Department.

Member Clements asked if any new structures would be erected. Mr. Myette said only the maintenance building, which will contain a snack shop.

Member Eliot asked about irrigation and drainage. Mr. Myette said a 600 ft deep well would be drilled for the irrigation system.

Member Eliot asked about the sewer line. Mrs. Deacy said it runs under the soccer fields to the rail trail. Member Eliot said the location of all utilities should be shown on the plan.

Member Eliot asked if any restrooms would be installed. Mr. Myette said there would be one restroom for handicapped people. The restroom will either be connected to the sewer system or a chemical toilet will be used.

Member Perkins asked about the flagpole area. Mr. Myette said it would be a 1200 sq ft area constructed with red brick.

Member Lewis asked if the area is handicapped accessible from the public way. Mr. Myette said, "yes."

Member Perkins asked if the crosswalks would be painted for pedestrian access. Mr. Myette said it is up to the Historic Districts Commission.

Member Lewis suggested that the Board send a letter to the Sewer, Water, and Electric Light Departments regarding their underground utilities. Member Degen said this is not necessary because the contractor must notify Dig Safe about marking the utilities prior to construction.

Member Degen asked about erosion control. Mr. Myette said they have applied for permits with the Conservation Commission and Earth Removal Advisory Committee. Member Degen asked about the amount of disturbance. Mr. Myette said about 315,000 sq ft or 8000 cubic yards.

Member Degen asked if the parking lot would be gravel. Mr. Myette said, "yes," there would be a gravel base and no drainage structures. The parking spaces for the disabled and for buses will be paved.

Member Degen asked about curbing. Mr. Myette said 4 ft granite curbing would be installed.

Chairman Barringer asked if any earth material would be removed from the site. Mr. Myette said, “no.”

Chairman Barringer asked about lighting. Mr. Myette said new lights would not be installed as requested by the Historic Districts Commission.

Member Wilson asked if there would be any new curb cuts on Route 119. Mr. Myette said, “no,” they would use the existing access to the site.

The motion was made by Lewis to review the plan under Level I requirements. ***The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.***

The motion was made by Lewis to approve the Level I site plan entitled, “Lawrence Academy – Revised Site Layout Plan,” prepared by Kevin S. Hunt, dated March 30, 2004, for the construction of a new parking lot and maintenance building, and regrading of existing playing fields, with the following conditions:

1. All utility easements must be shown on the site plan.
2. As stated by the applicant, no new lighting shall be installed. There shall be no exterior lighting on the building unless the applicant submits a new site plan to the Planning Board pursuant to Groton Zoning By-law § 218-25B(2)(d).
3. As stated by the applicant, no dumpsters shall be installed.
4. All construction shall conform to the specifications of the Groton Electric Light Department, the Sewer Department, and the Water Department.
5. Parking for the disabled and access to the building shall comply with the requirements of the Architectural Access Board Regulations, 521 CMR, and the Americans with Disabilities Act.
6. The project must receive a Certificate of Appropriateness from the Historic Districts Commission.

The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

ACCESS ADEQUACY DETERMINATION – McCANN’S HILL ROAD

The Board continued its discussion of the adequacy of McCann’s Hill Road to provide access to one 28-acre lot. Applicant Lee Edmands was present.

Chairman Barringer read the comments from the Fire Chief and the Building Inspector.

Member Eliot said she shares the Fire Chief’s concerns about lack of a turnaround area and drainage issues. Member Lewis said he, too, shares the concerns of the Fire Chief.

Member Clements said he thinks the road is adequate to serve one or two lots, but not a subdivision. He said the road functions like a shared driveway. Ms. Edmands said the West Groton Water Supply District would like to use the road to access its water storage tank. She is working with WGWSO Superintendent Gordon Newell to create an access easement.

Member Perkins agreed that Ms. Edmands should work with the WGWSO to improve the road and access to the lot and the WGWSO tank.

Member Degen said he agreed with other Board members that the road is not adequate at the present time. He asked if a special permit is required for the creation of a hammerhead lot. Planning Administrator Michelle Collette said the

Building Inspector determined that this is a legal non-conforming lot of record, so a special permit for a hammerhead lot is not required. However, a special permit is required for a shared driveway.

The motion was made by Degen that McCann's Hill Road is not adequate in its existing condition to serve Assessors' Lot 206-35. The road will be adequate if the following conditions are met:

1. The road must be constructed to a minimum width of 16 ft with an eight-inch gravel base.
2. The consent of the Board of Selectmen and Highway Surveyor must be granted for improvements to the public way.
3. The improvements must meet the requirements of the Town's public safety officials.

The motion was seconded and passed with Barringer, Degen, Eliot, Lewis, Perkins, and Wilson in favor; Clements opposed.

The motion was made by Lewis to notify the applicant that a special permit is required for a shared driveway. ***The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.***

The motion was made by Perkins to request that the Selectmen work with the applicant and the WGSWD on improvements to McCann's Hill Road. ***The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.***

ANR PLAN – ZOE ELEFThERIO, BREAKNECK ROAD

The Board considered the Approval Not Required (ANR) plan submitted by Zoe Eleftherio to create one new lot with 225 ft of frontage on Breakneck Road.

Member Degen questioned whether the new lot had 80,000 sq ft upland area required in the Zoning By-law. Member Perkins pointed out the surveyor's notation on the plan stating that the lots shown on the plan comply with §218-22G Computation of Lot Area.

The motion was made by Lewis to determine that Breakneck Road is adequate to serve the proposed lot. ***The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.***

The motion was made by Wilson to endorse the plan entitled, "Plan of Land in Groton, Mass. Prepared for/owned by: Zoe Eleftherio at 106 Common Street," prepared by GPR, Inc., dated May 17, 2004. ***The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.***

INFORMAL DISCUSSION – BLACK PROPERTY, BURNT MEADOW ROAD

The Board met with Bennett Black, Jr. and design engineer Dan Wolfe to discuss the development of the Black's 18.5-acre parcel on Burnt Meadow Road. Mr. Wolfe said three ANR lots can be created using the existing frontage on Burnt Meadow Road. He said he also investigated using the Residential Compound provisions, but the lots must contain 150% of the minimum required area. Mr. Wolfe said he would like to prepare a plan using the new Flexible Development provisions with access on a shared driveway rather than on a subdivision road.

Chairman Barringer noted that the applicant may request a waiver to allow use of the shared driveway when the special permit application is submitted.

Mr. Wolfe asked the Board if an application for Major Residential Development is required. The Board said, "no," not for only three lots.

PRELIMINARY PLAN – LONG MEADOW ESTATES

The Board considered the preliminary plan submitted by Paul and LeeAnne Gunderson showing three lots on Farmers Row. Applicant LeeAnne Gunderson and design engineer Lawrence Beals were present.

Mr. Beals stated that the plan is the same as the preliminary plan submitted a year ago and approved by the Planning Board. The Gundersons resubmitted the plan to maintain grandfathering from any zoning changes. Mr. Beals requested a waiver of the filing fee since the plan is a resubmission. Planning Administrator Michelle Collette reported that the Board is still holding \$3000.00 in the 593 account for this project.

Chairman Barringer read the comments from the Board of Health, the Highway Surveyor, the Water Department, the Sewer Department and the Police Chief.

Member Perkins said if any additional lots are created, an application for a special permit under Major Residential Development must be submitted. Mr. Beals agreed.

Member Clements asked if a definitive plan would be submitted. Mr. Beals said he did not know.

Member Degen asked about the length of the cul de sac. Mr. Beals said it is 900 ft.

Member Lewis requested that a temporary sedimentation basin be shown on the definitive plan. Mr. Beals agreed.

The motion was made by Lewis to waive the administrative filing fee. ***The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.***

The motion was made by Wilson to approve the preliminary plan entitled, "Preliminary Plan for the Subdivision of Land for Long Meadows", prepared by Beals Associates, dated April 24, 2004. The subdivision is on land owned by Paul and Lianne Gunderson, Assessors Lots 107-12 and 107-16, located on Farmers Row.

The Board approved the plan with the following waivers and conditions:

1. The Board granted a waiver of the \$800.00 administrative filing fee because the plan is a re-submission of a preliminary plan approved on June 5, 2003.
2. A sedimentation basin shall be constructed before runoff reaches the permanent retention basin. The design details of the basins shall be shown on the definitive plan.

The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

SITE PLAN REVIEW – GDRHS STORAGE SHED

The Board considered the site plan submitted by the Groton Dunstable Regional School District (GDRSD) to construct a maintenance shed at the new high school site. GDRSD Facilities Director Steven Burnham and design engineer Andrew Baum of David E. Ross Associates were present.

Mr. Baum presented the plan to construct a storage and maintenance building accessed by a gravel road. The structure will be an open lean-to style building with no water and no sewer. Roof drainage will be discharged to a leaching trench. The existing vegetation buffer will provide screening for the building.

Chairman Barringer read the comments from the Police Chief and Sewer Department.

Member Eliot asked about elevation changes. Mr. Baum said there would be minor grade changes in the rear of the building.

Member Clements asked how close the building is to the wetlands. Mr. Baum said it is more than 500 ft away.

Member Degen asked about lighting. Mr. Baum said there would not be any lighting.

Member Degen asked if fertilizers or other chemicals would be stored in the building. Mr. Burnham said, "no."

Member Lewis expressed concern about erosion and sedimentation, especially with the problems from construction of the new high school. Mr. Baum said a drainage swale will direct runoff to the existing swale. Member Lewis requested that the contractor install a temporary sedimentation basin to control erosion. Mr. Baum agreed to add it to the plan.

Member Degen asked about the amount of impervious surface. Mr. Baum said the building will be 2400 sq ft with 300 sq ft of pavement near the building. The access road will be gravel with a crushed stone swale along the side of the road.

Member Perkins noted for the record that she is not an abutter to the site. She asked if any chemicals would be stored in the building. Mr. Burnham said, "no."

The motion was made by Degen to approve the Level I site plan entitled, "Site Plan of Land in Groton, MA, Prepared for Groton Dunstable Regional School District," prepared by David E. Ross Associates, Inc., dated May, 2004, for construction of a 2400 sq ft storage and maintenance barn, with the following conditions:

1. Any external lighting installed on the building shall be shielded so the glare is focused downward. There shall be no light shining above the horizon. The lights on the building are for security purposes only, as stated by the applicant.
2. The applicant shall construct a sedimentation basin on the westerly side of the driveway so that runoff will enter the basin before it reaches the drainage swale along the main access road.
3. The details of the drainage system shall be added to the site plan prior to endorsement by the Planning Board.
4. There shall be minimal storage of gasoline and fuel oil in the maintenance building. A hazardous materials response kit shall be kept in the building.

The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

PUBLIC HEARING (con't) – SAMANTHA REALTY SPECIAL PERMIT & SITE PLAN

The Planning Board continued the public hearing to consider the application submitted by Samantha Realty Trust to renovate an existing building and construct a new building at 785 Boston Road, located in a Zone III Water Resource Protection District. Applicant Steven Catalano, Attorney Thomas Gibbons, design engineer Bruce Ringwall of GPR, Inc.; and many abutters were present.

Mr. Ringwall said the applicant met with the Highway Surveyor at the site to discuss sight distances on Forge Village Road. The Highway Surveyor cleared vegetation to improve sight distance to the east. Chairman Barringer read the letter dated May 7, 2004 from the Highway Surveyor confirming that vegetation had been cleared to improve sight distances.

Mr. Ringwall said they are discussing options with abutter Matthew Harkins regarding the possible installation of a stockade fence on his lot line.

Mr. Ringwall said they received the JNEI report dated May 19, 2004 and the letter dated May 14, 2004 from FST. The applicant's traffic engineer, Conley Associates, will address the concerns about the timing of the signal raised in the FST report. He said they approached MassHighway about re-striping the intersection, but MassHighway will not make any changes to the intersection design plan unless the site plan is approved and the Town requests such a change.

Chairman Barringer noted that the Board received a report dated May 19, 2004 from JNEI, a letter dated May 14, 2004 from FST, and a letter from Sarah Campbell. He read the comments from the Board of Health and the Water Department.

Mr. Ringwall said he submitted the MSDS sheets for the deicing chemicals to the Planning Board.

Member Wilson said the FST report confirms his fears about the problem with siting a Dunkin Donuts in this location. Access is so close to the intersection, and traffic blocking access to the site is an important safety issue. The problem will only get worse over time.

Member Eliot asked about lighting details. Mr. Ringwall said they were submitted to conform to the Historic District Commission guidelines. *(Note for the record: This site is not located in the Historic District.)*

Member Perkins said she agreed with the FST report. She said this is not an acceptable location for a Dunkin Donuts with the access so close to the intersection. She said she did not see how the applicant would be able to solve this problem.

Member Lewis said he agreed with other members about the traffic and safety issues.

Attorney Thomas Gibbons said the Highway Surveyor cleared vegetation to improve the sight distances. They have made at least four visits to the Board to address traffic concerns.

Member Degen said this is an excellent plan with good building design and nice landscaping. However, he said his only concern is the Dunkin Donuts use in this location. He said he agreed with the findings in the FST report.

Mr. Ringwall said both the applicant's and the Board's traffic consultants were present at the last meeting and both agreed on the Level of Service at that time.

Member Degen said if he had evidence that the applicant's redesign was acceptable to FST and to MassHighway, he would reconsider his position.

Member Wilson stated that this is the wrong side of Route 119 for the Dunkin Donuts.

Member Clements asked if Conley Associates could redesign the plan to address the concerns in the FST letter. Mr. Ringwall said, "yes," by re-timing the traffic signal and re-striping the intersection.

Member Clements referred to the letter from Sarah Campbell regarding the Four Corners area. Mr. Ringwall responded that this is an allowed use in a district zoned B-1 and commercial use in this area is supported by the Master Plan.

Mr. Ringwall requested an extension of the Board's deadline and continuation of the site plan review to a time when both traffic engineers could be present.

David Martin of Shelters Road asked whether a portion of the site would be allowed to open prior to the installation of the traffic signal. Mr. Ringwall requested that the Board allow the use of the existing building, which will be used for offices, and not for the convenience store or Dunkin Donuts until the traffic light is operational.

Mr. Martin asked what the Level of Service would be during construction of the intersection. He noted that school bus traffic should be considered in the traffic analysis because school buses create queues beyond Shelters Road.

Abutter Matthew Harkins asked if he can continue to trim the existing tree at the property line. He asked when the fence would be installed.

Mr. Catalano said the tree can be trimmed to its pre-construction stage. Mr. Ringwall said a six-foot stockade fence would be installed as shown on the plan. Any additional expense would have to be picked up by Mr. Harkins.

Mr. Harkins said the four trees at the entrance of the site provide a buffer. He asked if construction would impact the survival of these trees. Mr. Ringwall said there are four spruce trees there today. Two will be kept and maintained, and two will be moved farther back on the site.

Barbara Seeber-Wagner expressed concern about the lack of overall planning for this area, especially the site of the Four Corners Restaurant.

Chairman Barringer said the Four Corners intersection was discussed at length during the Master Plan process. The land is zoned B-1 and the landowners have a right to use their property for business use as permitted in the Zoning By-law. Member Lewis added that the area close to the intersection is zoned B-1, but the surrounding area is zoned R-A. Member Degen said if the use complies with zoning, the Board must approve the site plan.

Linda DeCiccio said she appreciated the points in the letter from Sarah Campbell. She said Shaw's is not open yet so the Town does not know what the impact will be. She asked why Dunkin Donuts could not be located in the Boston Road Marketplace.

Chairman Barringer noted that 96% of the Town is zoned R-A and only 4% is zoned for non-residential use.

Abutter Douglas Palmisano said the MassHighway intersection plan is not designed to accommodate specific types of businesses. There is really a traffic problem in this location, and the traffic light is only a short-term solution.

The motion was made by Lewis to extend the site plan review deadline to June 25, 2004 as requested by the applicant. ***The motion was seconded and passed with Barringer, Clements, Eliot, Lewis, Perkins, and Wilson in favor; Degen abstaining.***

The motion was made by Lewis to continue the public hearing on June 10, 2004 at 8:00 PM. ***The motion was seconded and passed with Barringer, Clements, , Eliot, Lewis, Perkins, and Wilson in favor; Degen abstaining.***

PLANNING BOARD REORGANIZATION

The Planning Board voted unanimously to elect the following officers:

Chairman	Anna Eliot
Vice Chairman	George Barringer
Clerk	Joshua Degen

The Planning Board voted unanimously to appoint the following representatives:

Earth Removal Advisory Committee	Joshua Degen
Growth Management Advisory Committee	Scott Wilson
Montachusett Regional Planning Commission	Joshua Degen
Montachusett Joint Transportation	Joshua Degen

The Planning Board voted unanimously to appoint the following liaisons to other Town Departments and Committees:

ACEC Stewardship Committee	Bruce Clements
Board of Appeals	Carolyn Perkins
Board of Health	Joshua Degen
Board of Selectmen	Anna Eliot
Conservation Commission	Bruce Clements
Fire Chief	Robert Lewis
Groton Dunstable School District	Joshua Degen
Groton Electric Light Department	George Barringer
Highway Surveyor	Robert Lewis
Historic Districts Commission	Scott Wilson
Historical Commission	Scott Wilson

Housing Authority
Housing Partnership
Housing Task Force
Police Chief
Sewer Department
Water Department
Weed Management Committee
West Groton Water Supply District

Carolyn Perkins
Carolyn Perkins
Carolyn Perkins
Robert Lewis
George Barringer
George Barringer
Robert Lewis
George Barringer

Meeting adjourned at 11:00 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle Collette
Planning Administrator