

**GROTON PLANNING BOARD  
MAY 26, 2005  
MINUTES**

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

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

Member absent: Lewis

**SITE PLAN REVIEW MODIFICATION – SEVEN HILLS FOUNDATION**

The Board continued its review of the proposed modification of the site plan submitted by Seven Hills Foundation to construct a 16 ft oxygen storage tank and generator at the Seven Hills Extended Care Facility on Hillside Avenue. Edward Doucette of Seven Hills and design engineer Robert Hitchcock of SVE Associates presented the plan.

Mr. Hitchcock said they researched alternative tanks as requested by the Planning Board, but smaller tanks are not available for oxygen. He presented a plan showing sight lines measured from nearby houses. They will plant American Ash and sweet gum trees to screen the storage tank. The yellow Caterpillar generator will be screened with 3 ft shrubs. Mr. Hitchcock said they will work with the neighborhood on the screening.

Mr. Doucette said the manufacturer will paint the tank any color, but the tank must be painted at the factory before it is delivered to the site.

Member Degen expressed concern about planting American Ash trees close to the road because salt may be a problem. He said he liked the sweet gum trees in this location. Mr. Hitchcock said the American Ash trees will grow to 18 ft, but the sweet gum trees are only 2/3 the height. Member Degen said he prefers conifers rather than deciduous trees. He suggested using Norway Spruce instead.

Member Perkins asked if snow storage would be an issue. Mr. Hitchcock said, “no,” because the snow will be trucked away from the site.

Member Clements asked if they could use a horizontal rather than vertical tank. Mr. Doucette said not for oxygen.

Member Degen asked when the tank would be constructed. Mr. Doucette said construction would take place in about one year.

Chairman Eliot asked if a wall would be constructed around the tank. Mr. Doucette said they would construct a reinforced concrete wall and guardrail around the tank as requested by the Fire Chief.

The motion was made by Barringer to approve the modification as shown on the site plan entitled, “Site Layout – West; Building Expansion Seven Hills,” prepared by SVE Associates, dated May 26, 2005, with the following conditions:

1. The applicant shall comply with Fire Chief’s requirements as stated in the Fire Chief’s memorandum dated May 5, 2005.
2. The applicant shall submit three copies of the final plan, stamped by the design engineer, to the Planning Board.
3. The logo on the oxygen storage tank shall face the rail trail, if possible. The tank shall be painted a non-intrusive color to be selected by the applicant.
4. The Board recommends that Sweet Gum trees with a caliper of 3½ - 4 inches be used to screen the tank.

***The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.***

**PUBLIC HEARING (con't) – ACADEMY HILL DEFINITIVE PLAN MODIFICATION**

The Board continued the public hearing to consider the Academy Hill definitive plan modification. Attorney Ray Lyons, representing the applicant, requested that the Board continue the hearing until all seven members of the Board are present.

The Board voted unanimously to continue the public hearing on June 9, 2005 at 8:30 PM.

**COMMENTS TO THE ZBA – SQUANNACOOK HILLS COMPREHENSIVE PERMIT**

The Board reviewed the draft memorandum to the Zoning Board of Appeals regarding the Squannacook Hills comprehensive permit application. The Planning Board received a memorandum dated May 23, 2005 from the Board of Health requesting the Planning Board's opinion on whether the Squannacook Hills project is located in a "nitrogen sensitive" area. Board of Health member Robert Hanninen was present for the discussion.

The motion was made by Barringer to send the following comments, as amended, to the ZBA:

As requested by the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) and Board of Health, the Planning Board reviewed the proposed Squannacook Hills comprehensive permit plan with respect to the §218-30 Water Resource Protection Districts. The Planning Board offers the following comments:

- At the 2003 Annual Town Meeting, voters approved an amendment to the Water Resource Protection Districts provisions and adopted a new map based upon DEP's Zones I, II, and III.
- §218-30E Use Regulations, Item (k) requires a special permit for the following use:

“(k) Any building, structure or use, except single family dwelling, to be served by on-site wastewater disposal system with a design capacity of greater than 10,000 gallons per day or design capacity of 110 gallons per day of wastewater per 10,000 sq. ft. of lot area as required by 310 CMR 15.00.”

The proposed development contains 24 two-bedroom units (48 bedrooms) with a total of 5280 gallons per day. Under § 218-30, Water Resource Protection Districts, and 310 CMR 15.00, Sanitary Sewage-Subsurface Disposal Requirements, 12 acres are required for a 48 bedroom development. According to the attached memo dated May 6, 2005 from Board of Health Agent Benjamin Cutone, the site contains approximately 3.5 acres so only 15 bedrooms would be allowed (110 GPD per 10,000 square feet lot area). If innovative or alternative treatment is provided, then 19 bedrooms could be allowed (137.5 GPD per 10,000 square feet lot area).

- The West Groton Water Supply District is in the process of developing two new well fields, one in the Town Forest and one on the Blood property. Both areas are located in downgradient areas along the Squannacook River. The Zone II areas for these new wells have not been delineated yet and are not shown on the WRPD map. As soon as the Zone II areas have been delineated, the map must be amended by a vote of Town Meeting to meet DEP requirements.
- The attached ENF Certificate, issued by the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs on January 21, 2005, states that approximately 1/3 of the withdrawal from the Town Forest well will come from the Squannacook River. The Squannacook River is designated an Outstanding Water Resource (OWR). Therefore, it is imperative that the water quality of the Squannacook River be protected.
- §218-30G Special Permit Criteria states:

“Special permits shall be granted only if the SPGA determines, after reviewing the recommendations of the reviewing parties delineated herein, that surface and groundwater quality resulting from on-site wastewater disposal or other operations on-site shall not fall below the more restrictive of federal or state standards for drinking water, or, if existing surface or groundwater quality is already below those standards, on-site disposal or operations

shall result in no further deterioration.”

For the reasons stated above, the Planning Board voted unanimously to recommend that area to be developed shown on the Squannacook Hill plan be considered a potential “nitrogen sensitive” area as defined in 310 CMR 15.215 and Zoning By-law §218-30, particularly because the development of this site may impact water quality of the Squannacook River and the West Groton Water Supply District’s new well will draw 1/3 of its water from the Squannacook River.

*The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.*

#### **PUBLIC HEARING – REEDY MEADOW ESTATES DEFINITIVE PLAN**

The Board continued the public hearing to consider the Reedy Meadow Estates definitive plan. The applicant’s engineer, Gary Shepherd of David Ross Associates, sent a letter to the Board requesting an extension of the deadline and continuation of the public hearing because the applicant needs more time to work with the Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program (NHESP) on the design of the plan.

The Board voted unanimously to extend the deadline to July 31, 2005 as requested by the applicant.

The Board voted unanimously to continue the public hearing on July 14, 2005 at 7:30 PM.

#### **DRAFT COMMUNITY PRESERVATION PLAN**

The Board reviewed the draft copy of the Community Preservation Plan. Member Perkins, the Planning Board’s representative on the Community Preservation Committee, said the Committee will meet on June 6, 2005 and any comments should be sent to the Committee by that date.

#### **DINNER WITH JNEI**

Planning Administrator Michelle Collette said she called the State Ethics Commission regarding the proposed dinner with JNEI to celebrate the twentieth anniversary of working together. The State Ethics Commission advised the Board that the amount spent per person cannot exceed \$50.00 and recommended that the Board file a disclosure with the Town Clerk. The Board will file a disclosure with the Town Clerk.

#### **SAMANTHA REALTY TRUST SITE PLAN**

The Board received applications from Samantha Realty Trust to amend the special permit and site plan for the commercial development located at 785 Boston Road. The Board will hold a public hearing on June 9, 2005. The Board will ask the applicant to reimburse the Board for review of the site plan by Dodson Associates.

#### **SANDY POND ROAD AFFORDABLE UNITS**

The Board received comments from the Police Chief and Fire Chief on the nine affordable units on Sandy Pond Road to be constructed by Fox Meadow Realty Corporation. The motion was made by Degen to forward the comments to the Building Inspector to see if the site plan should be modified. *The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.*

Meeting adjourned at 8:45 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle Collette  
Planning Administrator

