

**GROTON PLANNING BOARD
SEPTEMBER 22, 2005
MINUTES**

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

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

Member absent: Barringer

PUBLIC HEARING – REEDY MEADOW ESTATES

The Board received a request from design engineer Gary Shepard of David Ross Associates for an extension and continuation of the public hearing on the Reedy Meadow Estates definitive plan. Mr. Shepard said he needs more time to work out details with the Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program (NHESP).

The Board voted unanimously to extend the deadline to December 31, 2005.

The Board voted unanimously to continue the hearing on November 3, 2005 at 8:30 PM.

GROWTH MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Member Wilson, the Board's liaison to the Growth Management Advisory Committee (GMAC), said GMAC is working on issues related to commercial development and the Town's long-range financial planning. He said the town's tax revenues are primarily from residential development according to the Assessors. He said the Assessors believe rezoning land to non-residential use should be considered to address revenue issues. GMAC agreed to look at the Town's budget, financial planning and zoning issues. He said GMAC recommends that the Planning Board revisit the Comprehensive Master Plan section on Business Development as part of this process.

Other Board members expressed their opinions on the subject and agreed to meet with GMAC and invite other Town departments to participate in the discussion. The Board will hold the forum on October 27, 2005 and invite other Town Departments to participate.

SITE PLAN REVIEW – PETERBOROUGH OIL, BOSTON ROAD

The Board reviewed the site plan submitted by Peterborough Oil to renovate the existing structures at the gasoline station on Boston Road. Attorney Robert Collins represented the applicant at the meeting.

Mr. Collins said there would be no change to the existing footprint of the building. A planter will be installed at the edge of the Route 119 right-of-way to help define traffic flow. The applicant eliminated the proposed deli from the plan, but self-service coffee will still be available. Three sinks will be installed as required by Board of Health code. The total area of the building will be 1685 sq ft as it is today.

Member Degen asked if a second cashier station would be added. Mr. Collins said, "no."

Member Degen said adding a planter along Route 119 would not solve the traffic flow problems, but vertical granite curbing would.

Member Perkins asked if there would be any change to the building footprint. Mr. Collins said, "no." The plan will only reconfigure the existing building.

Member Perkins asked if there are nine parking spaces. Mr. Collins said, "yes, as required in the Zoning By-law."

Member Perkins asked where people would park when gasoline is being delivered. Mr. Collins said it is not an issue today.

Member Perkins noted that two of the parking spaces back into the street which is not allowed in the by-law. Mr. Collins said these spaces could be eliminated or reconfigured. Realistically, the nine parking spaces will not be used.

Member Perkins disagreed because the expanded convenience store will invite more people to park at the site. She said this is not a realistic parking layout. Member Wilson agreed that more traffic at the site would only exacerbate the problem.

Mr. Collins said the applicant would like to renovate the building to make the site look better. Most gasoline stations include convenience stores for their customers.

Member Eliot asked to see more detail on the treatment of the canopy. She asked if new shingles would be installed to improve the appearance. Mr. Collins said they have not prepared a plan showing the canopy. Planning Administrator Michelle Collette said if the applicant modifies the dimensions of the canopy, a variance may be required because it is a non-conforming structure. The applicant should check with the Building Inspector.

Member Eliot said if the applicant is proposing granite curbing, then the Board's engineer should review the site plan. Mr. Collins said installation of granite curbing may also require a permit from MassHighway.

Member Lewis said there is an existing dip in the pavement that should be corrected for safety reasons.

Abutter Edward Strachan said the gasoline station once sold automotive products and now it sells sundries. He asked if the proposed use is a change of use. He said, "if the property has problems and restrictions, it is not the Town's problem."

Arthur Blackman said he likes to buy gas and leave the site immediately. It is very annoying when cars are parked at the pumps blocking traffic while people run into the convenience store.

Member Degen asked if a traffic study had been done for the proposed project. He said this is a change in use that will generate more traffic. Mr. Collins said he would submit whatever information he has available from past submissions.

The Board voted unanimously to extend the deadline to October 31, 2005.

The Board requested additional information on the treatment of the canopy, a traffic study from a previous submission, and a plan showing traffic control and access to the site.

The Board voted unanimously to continue site plan review on October 20, 2005 at 9:00 PM.

ACADEMY HILL DEFINITIVE PLAN COVENANT

The motion was made by Lewis to accept the change in the name on the Academy Hill covenant from Academy Hill, LLC, to Academy Hill Trust. *The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.*

BATTEN WOODS STREET TREES

The Board received a letter dated September 20, 2005 from Verdant Arch requesting that they substitute required street trees in the right of way with 12 maple and three red oak trees to be planted near the Stonebridge playing fields as requested by the Tree Warden. There is considerable natural vegetation in the right of way, and the trees would enhance the view of the nearby playing field.

The motion was made by Lewis to accept the substitution of trees as directed by the Tree Warden and to waive the 18-month guarantee period. *The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.*

LONGLEY ROAD SHARED DRIVE

The Board received a letter dated from William Foley regarding the proposed paving of the shared driveway at 218 Longley Road. The motion was made by Lewis to respond that the matter of paving the driveway is under the jurisdiction of the Highway Surveyor and Conservation Commission, not the Planning Board.

BERTOZZI FARM

The motion was made by Lewis to send a letter to the developer of the Bertozzi Farm subdivision reminding him of the special permit condition requiring that the deed for the conservation land be recorded prior to the issuance of building permits. *The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.*

Meeting adjourned at 9:30 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle Collette
Planning Administrator