

**GROTON PLANNING BOARD
JANUARY 19, 2006
MINUTES**

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

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

Members absent: Wilson

SITE PLAN REVIEW – VERIZON CENTRAL OFFICE

The Board considered the site plan submitted by Verizon for construction of a new exterior enclosure, concrete pad, and fence for an HVAC condensing unit. Architect Jacques Fauteux presented the plan.

Mr. Fauteux said Verizon must have new equipment to keep its facility running. The acoustical fence will be installed to mitigate noise from the HVAC unit. The Historic Districts Commission (HDC) approved the plan and issued a Certificate of Appropriateness.

Member Lewis asked if a glycol system would be used. Mr. Fauteux said, “yes.” Member Lewis asked if there would be a box around the pumps. Mr. Fauteux said, “yes.”

Member Degen asked if a variance is needed for the concrete pad setback. Planning Administrator Michelle Collette said, “The Building Inspector must make that determination.”

Member Perkins said her greatest concern is the level of noise from the unit. Mr. Fauteux said there would be acoustical panels installed inside the fence.

Member Lewis asked where similar units have been installed. Mr. Fauteux said there is one in Upton.

Member Degen said he would like to hear from the neighbors before acting on the site plan.

Member Barringer asked about the time of installation. Mr. Fauteux said the unit would be installed during the “safe” time, which is between 11 PM and 7 AM, so Verizon could keep the telephone system running during the day.

The Board voted unanimously to continue the site plan review on February 2, 2006 at 8:30 PM.

GAMLIN PRELIMINARY PLAN EXTENSION

The Board received a letter dated January 18, 2006 from Ducharme & Dillis requesting an extension of the deadline on the Gamlin preliminary plan to March 30, 2006. The Board voted unanimously to extend the deadline as requested by the applicant.

PROPOSED ZONING AMENDMENTS

Water Resource Protection Districts - The Board reviewed and approved the draft amendment to § 218-30 Water Resource Protection Districts.

Site Plan Review – The Board discussed possible amendments to § 218-25 Site Plan Review, especially whether site plans should be subject to a special permit rather than by-right.

The motion was made by Lewis to propose an amendment requiring special permits for site plans. The motion was seconded.

The motion was made by Degen to amend the motion so that Level II site plans are by-right and Level II site plans are by special permit. The motion was seconded.

Member Degen stated that the special permit provisions would allow the Board to collect fees in advance. The funds

would be put in an escrow account to pay engineering bills. In addition, the appeal of a special permit decision would be directly to Court.

Member Eliot expressed concern that the Board not make the process for business development more onerous and will require five votes to grant a special permit rather than a simple majority. Member Degen said requiring special permits will bring a higher level of scrutiny to the process.

The motion to amend the main motion was seconded and passed with Barringer, Clements, Degen, Lewis, Perkins in favor; Eliot abstaining. The main motion was defeated with Degen, Barringer and Lewis in favor; Clements, Eliot, and Perkins opposed.

Member Perkins said she could support the special permit requirements if there are specific thresholds.

The motion was made by Degen to reconsider the motion. The motion to reconsider was seconded and passed unanimously.

Members Degen and Lewis will draft Level I and Level II thresholds for the Board's consideration at the next meeting.

The motion was made by Degen to proposed an amendment so that Level I site plans are by-right and Level II site plans are by special permit. ***The motion was seconded and passed with Barringer, Clements, Degen, Lewis, and Perkins in favor; Eliot opposed.***

Member Lewis stated that the Board should require soil logs with site plan submissions and require that all drainage be contained on the site. In addition, better pavement specifications are needed.

Member Degen stated that the Board should be sure all engineering issues are resolved prior to approving a site plan.

MILL RUN PLAZA

The Board will request that John Schmid of Judith Nitsch Engineering, Inc. (JNEI) attend the January 26, 2006 meeting to discuss Mill Run Plaza.

Member Degen suggested that the Board ask Town Counsel if it is within the Board's purview to discuss Basin #3 and whether there is a two foot separation between the bottom of the basin and high groundwater. He referred to the soil logs that the applicant recently submitted to the Zoning Board of Appeals.

Member Eliot said the Planning Board should be working with the ZBA to resolve the drainage issues. She said the Board should require a joint review of the matter with the ZBA. The Board must be sure that the drainage system is fixed and that it has a performance bond as required in the site plan review modification.

Member Perkins said there are many other issues including parking, landscaping, curbing and sidewalks that must be addressed.

Member Lewis moved to authorize Chairman Clements and Planning Administrator Michelle Collette to participate in the conference call with Town Counsel on Tuesday, January 24, 2006. ***The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.***

Meeting adjourned at 10:30 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle Collette
Planning Administrator

