

**GROTON PLANNING BOARD
FEBRUARY 2, 2006
MINUTES**

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

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

SITE PLAN REVIEW – VERIZON CENTRAL OFFICE

The Board continued its review of the site plan submitted by Verizon to install an HVAC unit on a concrete pad outside the switching station facility on Hollis Street. Architect Jacques Fateaux presented the plan.

Mr. Fateaux said the 20-ton Liebert HVAC unit includes three fans that will not all run at the same time except during very hot weather. He submitted information to the Board regarding decibel levels of the pumps and fans. The noise will be about 40dB at the property line. Glycol coolant will be used in the system. If the Building Inspector determines the concrete pad requires a set back variance, Verizon will use crushed stone rather than construct a concrete pad.

Member Lewis said he is concerned about the Liebert unit transferring noise into the concrete pad and creating a nuisance.

Resident John Giger asked about the emergency generator. Mr. Fateaux said they would upgrade the electrical service but there would be no change to the existing generator. The generator was installed in 1990 with appropriate noise controls. Member Lewis noted that HVAC units are not usually connected to emergency generators.

Member Barringer expressed concern that construction in the middle of the night would disturb the neighbors. Mr. Fateaux made note of this concern.

Chairman Clements asked if the Historic Districts Commission had approved the installation of the HVAC unit and the fence. Mr. Fateaux said, "yes."

Chairman Clements read the comments from the Sewer Department.

The motion was made by Barringer to approve the Level I site plan entitled, "Site Plan – HVAC Upgrade for FTTP, Verizon Central Office, Groton, Massachusetts," submitted by Verizon Communication to construct a new exterior enclosure, concrete pad, and fence for an HVAC condensing unit. The Board approved the plan with the following conditions:

1. The Planning Board will review the noise levels from the pump system one year after the installation.
2. The Building Inspector must determine if a variance is required for the concrete pad set back.

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

REQUEST FOR EXTENSION – LACOMBE ANR PLAN

The Board received a letter dated February 1, 2006 from Attorney Robert Collins requesting an extension of the deadline for the Board to act on the ANR plan submitted by Dennis Lacombe.

The Board voted unanimously to extend the deadline to February 28, 2006 as requested by the applicant.

CAMPBELL LAND STEERING COMMITTEE

The Board received a request from the Selectmen for a Planning Board representative to serve on the Steering

Committee for the Trust for Public Lands – Campbell Trusts properties. The committee will meet every Monday morning at 7:30 AM until the Annual Town Meeting.

Members Degen and Wilson both expressed an interest in serving on the committee. The Board agreed that it would be helpful to have two representatives in the event one of the members could not attend a meeting.

The motion was made by Lewis to recommend that the Selectmen appoint Members Degen and Wilson to the Steering Committee.

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

SITE PLAN REVIEW – CROSSROADS PLAZA

The Board continued its review of the Crossroads Plaza site plan. Design engineer Bruce Ringwall of GPR represented the applicant at the meeting.

Mr. Ringwall said GPR is the new engineer of record on this project. He said they filed a Request for Determination with the Conservation Commission. The Commission issued a negative determination under the State Wetlands Protection Act and a positive determination under the local Wetlands Protection By-law. He said they will be applying for a special permit because the site is located in a Water Resource Protection District – Zone III. He requested an extension of the deadline to March 24, 2006.

Member Degen asked if Mr. Ringwall had reviewed the previous engineering reports. Mr. Ringwall said, “yes,” they reviewed the entire record including all minutes and engineering reports.

Member Perkins asked where the wetland is located. Mr. Ringwall said in a depression in the rear corner of the lot as shown on the plan.

Member Lewis said he objected to granting too many extensions and suggested that they ask for an extension to the end of April. Mr. Ringwall agreed.

Member Degen noted that the presence of wetlands may alter how storm water is treated on the site. He said the applicant should work with the terrain and provide underground infiltration if possible.

Planning Administrator Michelle Collette said the applicant’s team may want to work with the Board’s landscape architect on the new design concept.

Leslie Lathrop of the Four Corners Neighborhood Association said the neighborhood would like to be involved in the discussions.

John Giger said the previous design had too much content in too little space. He said the previous design presumed the right to waivers. The best plan is somewhere in the middle.

The Board voted unanimously to extend the deadline to April 30, 2006 as requested by the applicant.

The Board voted unanimously to continue the site plan review on March 23, 2006 at 7:30 PM.

(Member Perkins left the meeting.)

DESIGN GUIDELINES

The Board met with Peter Flinker of Dodson Associates to continue its discussion about design guidelines and possible changes to the site plan review provisions. The Board discussed possible amendments to the Site Plan Review by-law including the criteria for Level I and Level II.

Mr. Flinker provided the Board with the Attorney General’s model by-law and examples of other by-laws from the

Town of Franklin. Member Barringer noted that Franklin, located on Route 495, has had a massive amount of commercial development.

Mr. Flinker said the Board must determine what is appropriate for each area of Town. He suggested holding charrettes for key areas of Town.

The Board will continue its discussion about design guidelines on February 23, 2006.

MILL RUN PLAZA

(Member Wilson left the meeting.)

The Board discussed the status of Mill Run Plaza and the drainage problems at the site. The Board received a letter dated February 1, 2006 from the Building Inspector.

Member Lewis said the site plan review by-law requires that there be no net increase in runoff from the site. Basin #3 failed in a storm event that was less than a 100-year storm; therefore, this is a violation of the site plan approval.

The motion was made by Barringer to send a letter to the Building Inspector asking him for clarification on why he determined that the drainage problem associated with Basin #3 at Mill Run Plaza is not a zoning violation. ***The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.***

The motion was made by Degen to file an appeal with the Zoning Board of Appeals on the Building Inspector's determination, dated February 1, 2006, that the drainage problem at Mill Run Plaza is not a zoning violation. ***The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.***

The motion was made by Degen to request that the Board of Selectmen permit the Planning Board to use special legal counsel at the Zoning Board of Appeals hearing if Town Counsel cannot represent the Planning Board in this matter. ***The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.***

Member Eliot suggested that the Board ask to meet with the Selectmen and discuss the matter. The Board agreed. The joint meeting with the Board of Selectmen, Planning Board and Town Counsel will be held on February 5, 2006, if possible.

Meeting adjourned at 10:00 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle Collette
Planning Administrator