

**GROTON PLANNING BOARD
SEPTEMBER 7, 2006
MINUTES**

Chairman Wilson called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM in the Town Hall
Members present: Wilson, Barringer, Capes, Degen, Clements, and Eliot
Member absent: Perkins

PUBLIC HEARING – MONARCH PATH SPECIAL PERMIT

The Board continued the public hearing to consider the special permit applications submitted by Ebrahim Masalehdan to create 13 lots as shown on the Monarch Path subdivision plan. Applicant Ebrahim Masalehdan and design engineer David Buhlman were present.

Mr. Buhlman submitted a letter dated August 7, 2006 responding to the issues in the Judith Nitsch Engineering, Inc. (JNEI) report dated July 27, 2006.

The Board received a memorandum dated August 8, 2006 from the Police Chief regarding the police precinct station.

Member Degen asked about the notation #5 on the conventional plan stating that the units are “not affordable.” Mr. Buhlman said the two duplex units are moderately priced but will not meet income guidelines. Member Degen said at the hearing on July 27, 2006, the Board discussed allowing a duplex with two units that would comply with affordable housing guidelines. Mr. Masalehdan agreed.

Member Degen requested that the applicant place a restriction on the plan that public water could not be extended through lots 6 and 7 to serve the abutting property. Mr. Masalehdan agreed.

Member Eliot asked about architectural details for the duplex with the affordable units. Mr. Buhlman said they would be submitted.

Member Clements asked if the two units in the duplex would be affordable. Mr. Buhlman said, “yes.”

Member Clements said he did not have a strong preference for either the conventional or flexible plan. He said the flexible plan benefits the neighbors, but not the Town.

Chairman Wilson said the affordable units are a very important consideration. He asked if the applicant would be willing to investigate using Low Impact Development techniques for the drainage system. Mr. Buhlman said, “yes.” TF Moran has designed other LID drainage systems.

Abutter Valerie Spencer, 21 Old Carriage Path, said her lot is very close to the vernal pool. She said she submitted photographs and information to the Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program (NHESP) to request certification of the vernal pool. Mr. Buhlman said they submitted the proposed plan to NHESP.

Abutter Russell Broz said he has experienced serious drainage issues and water problems associated with the vernal pool in this area.

Chairman Wilson noted that the applicant cannot disturb the land within 100 ft of the vernal pool. This area is under the Conservation Commission's jurisdiction. In addition, the plan must meet the subdivision regulations and stormwater management requirements. The Planning Board will send the definitive plan to its engineer for review.

Member Degen said in light of the past history of drainage issues at this site, the Planning Board may also want to send the plan to a hydrogeologist for evaluation. Mr. Masalehdan said he plans to live here, too, and will not do anything detrimental. Chairman Wilson said the Board will review the plan very carefully at the definitive plan stage.

Mr. Broz said he had to correct the drainage problems on his lot created by the developer of the Stonebridge subdivision. He asked if the proposed road and drainage system could be constructed before the houses are built. Mr. Buhlman said the houses will not be constructed until the road and drainage system have been constructed.

Member Degen said he is very familiar with the previous drainage problems on this site. Mr. Buhlman said they have a hydrogeologist on staff and will work with the Board on this issue.

Member Eliot stated that duplexes could be constructed by-right on the conventional plan and the flexible plan is limited to single family. Member Degen suggested asking Town Counsel if the deed restriction offered by the applicant would ensure that only single-family houses be constructed. The Board agreed.

Valerie Spencer said the flexible development plan has more buffer between the development and the wetlands than the conventional plan. She said she prefers the plan that best minimizes water problems. Mr. Broz agreed that water problems should be taken into consideration. Abutter Joseph Rand, 79 Stonebridge Way, said he prefers the conventional plan.

Planning Administrator Michelle Collette asked if a clearing limitation could be added to the plan. Member Degen said existing vegetation is important to the maintenance of the drainage system.

Mr. Buhlman said the applicant would like to request a waiver to construct the road to "lane" rather than "minor street" standards. The Board agreed because it would result in less impervious surface. The type of curbing to be used will be decided when the drainage system is designed at the definitive plan stage.

Mr. Giger asked what would happen to the land if the police precinct station is not constructed. Member Degen said the Board would discuss it at the definitive plan stage.

Members Wilson, Clements, Degen and Capes said they preferred the conventional plan. Members Barringer and Eliot said they had no preference.

The Board voted unanimously to close the public hearing.

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PUBLIC HEARING – BROOKS ORCHARD SPECIAL EPRMIT

(Member Degen stepped down and did not participate.)

The Board held the continuation of the public hearing to consider the application submitted by the Groton Land Foundation for the Brooks Orchard Hammerhead Lots and Shared Driveway plans.

The motion was made by Barringer to accept the withdrawal of the application for hammerhead lots without prejudice. ***The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.***

The Board voted unanimously to continue the public hearing on the special permit for the shared driveway on September 28, 2006 at 7:30 PM.

SPECIAL TOWN MEETING ARTICLE

The motion was made by Eliot to submit an article for the Special Town Meeting to request funding for a master plan and study of the Station Avenue area. ***The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.***

GROTON DUNSTABLE MIDDLE SCHOOL LIGHTS

The Board discussed the proposed lights for the Youth Football League at the Groton Dunstable Middle School. The Board will ask the Building Inspector, as Zoning Enforcement Officer, to determine whether a site plan is required.

MINUTES

The Board voted to approve the minutes of the May 4, 2006; May 11, 2006; May 18, 2006; May 25, 2006; June 8, 2006; June 15, 2006; and June 29, 2006.

JOB TITLE

The motion was made by Degen to request that the job title “Planning Administrator” be changed to “Town Planner” because Planning Administrator Michelle Collette passed the exam and is certified by the American Institute of Certified Planners. The Board is not requesting any changes in the rate of pay or job description. ***The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.***

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle Collette
Planning Administrator