

**GROTON PLANNING BOARD  
JANUARY 17, 2008  
MINUTES**

Vice Chairman Wilson called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM in the Town Hall

Members present: Wilson, Capes, Eliot, Giger, Hess, and Perkins

Member absent: Barringer

**ACADEMY HILL AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

The Board received the revised letter dated January 7, 2008 from developer Bruce Wheeler of the Academy Hill Realty Trust regarding the phased construction of affordable units in the Academy Hill subdivision. The Board discussed the details of the letter at its meeting on January 3, 2008.

The motion was made by Perkins to accept the letter dated January 7, 2008 from the Academy Hill Trust. *The motion was seconded and passed with Members Capes, Eliot, Giger, Hess, Perkins in favor; Member Wilson abstaining.*

**SIGN COMMITTEE**

The Board met with Sign Committee member Michael McElroy to discuss revisions to the Sign By-law. Building Department and Historic Districts Commission administrator Paula Martin was also present.

Mr. McElroy said the Sign Committee spends approximately six hours a month on administration and enforcement of the existing by-law. The Committee meets once a month and spends about four hours on enforcement and two hours on permitting.

The Board reviewed sample by-laws from Wellesley, Stoneham, and Lexington. Mr. McElroy said he liked the Stoneham by-law because it is readable and easy to understand. Member Giger agreed and said he liked the format of the Stoneham by-law. Member Hess said he liked the statement of purpose in the Wellesley by-law.

Mr. McElroy said the Sign Committee's major concerns are temporary signs and village style, menu board signs.

Member Hess noted that the scale of signs is an important consideration.

Vice Chairman Wilson said the Sign By-law should not create an impasse for businesses.

Member Eliot suggested adopting a new by-law with separate design guidelines. Paula Martin noted that the Building Inspector should grant permits and deal with enforcement issues, but should not have design review authority.

Mr. McElroy said the Sign Committee still has a considerable amount of work to do on the proposed changes. The revisions to the by-law should be presented at a Special Town Meeting in the fall rather than at the Annual Town Meeting in April. The Board agreed.

January 17, 2008

Page 2

### **POSSIBLE ZONING AMENDMENTS**

The Board discussed possible zoning amendments to be presented at the Annual Town Meeting. Members agreed that the Board should work on changes to the Harmonious Development provisions and the revised by-law should be based upon the town-wide Design Guidelines.

### **LEED – NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT**

Member Hess reported on the LEED-ND conference that he and Town Planner Michelle Collette attended on January 11, 2008. He said the Congress for the New Urbanism is a valuable resource that the Board could utilize. He suggested incorporating the LEED-ND Standards into the design review process.

### **REVISED BUDGET**

The Selectmen and Finance Committee requested that the Board reduce its budget request for FY 2009 by cutting the legal and engineering line items in half. The motion was made by Perkins to reduce the legal line item from \$10,000 to \$5000 and to reduce the engineering line item from \$5000 to \$4000. *The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.*

### **MINUTES**

The Board voted unanimously to approve the January 3, 2008 minutes.

Meeting adjourned at 8:15 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle Collette  
Town Planner