

GROTON PLANNING BOARD
FEBRUARY 7, 2008
MINUTES

Chairman Barringer called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM in the Town Hall
Members present: Barringer, Capes, Eliot, Giger, Hess, Perkins, and Wilson

CHAPTER 43D UPDATES

Design Guidelines – Member Wilson said there was no new report from the Design Guidelines Committee.

Infrastructure Evaluation – Member Eliot reported that the Infrastructure Evaluation Committee met with Nitsch Engineering on Tuesday, January 29, 2008 to review the scope of services. The Committee met with the Parking and Traffic Calming Committee on Tuesday, February 5, 2008, to discuss mutual concerns about traffic flow including ingress and egress. The two Committees also discussed traffic calming measures on Admas Avenue, at the end of Court Street, and at Broadmeadow Road. The Committees believe there must be access for emergency vehicles from Adams Avenue. They were also concerned that Court Street and Station Avenue not be used as short cuts.

Parking and Traffic Calming – Member Giger reported that the Committee is not going to recommend the use of on-street parking for the commercial uses in the area. Shared parking should be encouraged with the understanding that parking spaces cannot be hoarded. The Committee is working with Gary Hebert of FST on a proposed parking amendment for the SAOD area.

The Committee researched the agreement between the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Environmental Management (now the Department of Conservation and Recreation) and the Town of Groton for the Nashua River Rail Trail (NRRT). It appears that there is no obligation for the Town to provide parking spaces for the NRRT at the end of Station Avenue. The Town did have an obligation to provide the parking spaces on Sand Hill Road, to maintain the trail, and to provide a water bubbler.

Marketing Studies – Member Capes reported that the Market Studies Committee will be visting other communities such as Concord, Massachusetts; Peterborough, New Hampshire, and town in western Massachusetts. The Committee is working on two surveys. The residents survey will be mailed with the GELD bills as soon as possible. The Committee will also survey business owners in writing and in person. The Committee will meet with staff from MassDevelopment on Wednesday, February 13, 2008.

Streamlined Permitting – Member Perkins reported that the Streamlined Permitting Committee met with the Land Use Departments' staff and John Hume of the MRPC. The group visited the Town of Framingham to view its permitting software.

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The Committee is writing the procedural guide on processing applications. The Land Use committee will review all applications to determine whether the application is complete. The Town will hold an initial public hearing where the applicant will present the plan to all Boards and Commissions. After the initial hearing, each department will hold its own hearings. A reporting system will be established to be sure every department completes the process within 180-days as required in Chapter 43D.

CHAPTER 43D CONTRACTS

Streamlined Permitting – The motion was made by Wilson to execute the contract with Kopelman and Paige for the Streamlined Permitting task. *The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.*

Design Guidelines – The motion was made by Wilson to execute the contract with Dodson Associates for the Design Guidelines task. *The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.*

Parking and Traffic Calming – The motion was made by Eliot to execute the contract with Fay, Spoffard & Thorndike for the Parking and Traffic Calming task. *The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.*

Infrastructure Evaluation – The motion was made by Wilson to execute the contract with Nitsch Engineering for the Infrastructure Evaluation task. *The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.*

FY 2009 BUDGET REDUCTIONS

The Selectmen and Finance Committee requested that the Planning Board reduce its legal budget request from \$10,000 to \$5000 and its engineering budget from \$5000 to \$2500. At its meeting on January 17, 2008, the Planning Board agreed to reduce its legal budget to \$5000 and its engineering budget to \$4000. The Board discussed making additional reductions to the engineering budget and decided that it would not be prudent to do so, especially with the expedited permitting process now in effect.

Meeting adjourned at 8:30 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle Collette
Town Planner