

**GROTON PLANNING BOARD
JULY 24, 2008
MINUTES**

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

Members present: Perkins, Barringer, Burke, Capes, and Giger

Members absent: Hess and Wilson

ANR PLAN – HOPKINS, SMITH STREET

The Planning Board considered the “Approval Not Required” plan submitted by Sarah Hopkins to create one new lot on Smith Street. The plan is a duplicate of the ANR plan endorsed by the Planning Board on July 12, 2007 that was never recorded at the Registry of Deeds.

The motion was made by Barringer to endorse the plan entitled, “Plan of Land in Groton, Mass. Prepared for Sarah F. Hopkins,” prepared by David E. Ross Associates, dated July 18, 2008. *The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.*

POSSIBLE WARRANT ARTICLES FOR FALL TOWN MEETING

Sign By-law – The members of the Sign Committee were not available to attend the meeting so the discussion was postponed to a later date.

Member Giger asked what would happen to existing illegal signs if the sign by-law, now part of the General By-laws, is adopted as part of the Zoning By-law. Member Burke said all signs that pre-date the adoption of the zoning amendment would be grandfathered.

The Board will invite the Selectmen to attend the meeting with the Sign Committee to be sure they are aware of the Board’s concerns.

Building Numbering – The Board met with Steve Webber of the IT Committee to discuss proposed changes to Chapter 119 Building Numbering. There are problems and some confusion with the existing by-law, especially with the assignment of building numbers. In addition to the obvious public safety issues, the data must be consistent for the Town’s data bases. Mr. Webber said the Assessors’ data is the primary source and that properties should have four parts: map/parcel/building/unit.

Chairman Perkins asked what the Planning Board’s role should be. Mr. Webber said the street numbers should be assigned by the Planning Board and shown on the definitive or ANR plan.

Member Barringer said the by-law should determine how to number buildings that are on new roads that are not off Main Street.

Member Giger said there are several examples of road names that cause confusion. Mr. Webber said anecdotal place names must be located as well.

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Member Burke said he understands why building numbering is important for public safety and data base reasons. However, assigning numbers should not be dependent upon the Planning Board meeting. He suggested that the DPW or Board of Assessor assign the numbers.

Selectman Anna Eliot said the Building Inspector assigns numbers for new construction at the present time.

Mr. Webber suggested that the Planning Board authorize the Town Planner to assign numbers prior to endorsement of the plan by the Planning Board.

Member Capes said whatever way the by-law is executed, the assignment of building numbers should be done by one individual.

Members Burke and Giger will work with public safety officials and the Building Inspector to come up with a system.

Wind Towers – The Board reviewed several examples of wind tower by-laws from other communities.

Member Burke said he is involved with this issue professionally. He cautioned against over-regulation. One size does not fit all. Smaller, micro-turbines installed by homeowners should be treated differently than commercial wind towers.

Chairman Perkins agreed that the Board should consider private, non-commercial towers differently than commercial ones.

Member Giger said the Eastham by-law is a good model. This is an evolving field, and the Town must adopt regulations carefully so it does not discourage such facilities.

Chairman Perkins agreed and noted that Barnstable by-law is also a good example.

Steve Webber said he would like to see the Town take a positive approach to this issue. He said he is interested in installing towers on Brooks Orchard. He noted that the Groton Electric Light Department (GELD), along with Massachusetts Municipal Wholesale Electric Companies (MMWEC), invested in the Berkshire Wind Power project on Brodie Mountain where the transmission lines are eight miles away from the towers. Connecting to existing transmission lines can add significant cost to a project.

Member Giger said there is a good article on the topic of power sources and transmission systems in *Scientific American*.

The Board agreed to focus on the model by-law prepared by the Cape Cod Commission. Gary Hoglund offered to assist the Board with this project.

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Accessory Apartments - Selectman Anna Eliot requested that the Planning Board consider proposing an amendment to the Accessory Apartment by-law so the accessory apartment does not have to be attached to the principal dwelling and can be located in another structure such as a barn or garage. The Board said it would consider it.

ACADEMY HILL COMPLIANCE ISSUES

The Board met with Matt Goodfriend of Habitech, Inc. and NPDES Inspector Mary Trudeau to discuss compliance issues at the Academy Hill subdivision. The Board received a report dated July 22, 2008 from Nitsch Engineering with recommendations on remedial measures.

Mr. Goodfriend said they will complete all the measures recommended in the Nitsch report. The road shoulders have been repaired, the damaged pavement has been saw cut, and new binder will be installed on Friday, July 25, 2008.

Chairman Perkins noted that there is a sink hole at the top of the hill. Mr. Goodfriend said the sinkhole was created by a water main break. It will be repaired on Friday as well.

Member Giger said this has been a very frustrating situation. He noted the poor condition of the silt sacks in the catch basins that should be cleaned out. Ms. Trudeau said they agreed with the Board on the conditions at the site. Mr. Goodfriend said they will sweep the road and clean out the silt sacks every Friday. The top coat will be installed to Station 14+00 rather than to 5+00 as previously discussed with the Board. The sidewalks will be paved and the shoulders will be loamed and seeded.

Chairman Perkins asked about the vernal pool and the detention basin that is full of sediment. Ms. Trudeau said they are working with the Conservation Commission to repair damage to the vernal pool. The contractor is using the detention basin as a settling basin during construction to keep the sediment out of the stream. They will clean out the basin at a later date.

The motion was made by Burke to authorize the Town Planner to sign off on the building permit for Lot #8. ***The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.***

Meeting adjourned at 9:30 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle Collette
Town Planner