

**GROTON PLANNING BOARD
JANUARY 22, 2009
MINUTES**

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

Members present: Barringer, Burke, Capes, Giger, Hess and Wilson

Member absent: Perkins

TOWN MEETING WARRANT ARTICLES

Wind Energy Conversion Facilities

The Planning Board discussed the articles to be submitted for consideration at the Spring Town Meeting. The Board will sponsor a Wind Energy Facilities Conversion By-law similar to the by-law proposed in the Fall of 2008. Member Burke reported on the recommendations of the working group including:

- Small facilities (under 65 ft) should be allowed by-right without Site Plan Review;
- Large facilities (over 65 ft) should be subject to a special permit granted by the Planning Board;
- Setbacks should be 1.5 times the overall height of the structure;
- The Planning Board can grant waivers of items as specified in the draft amendment;
- Meteorological towers should be by-right but not in place for more than 18 months;
- Guy wires must conform to building setback requirements.

Member Barringer suggested including more detail on the guy wires and other supporting structures. He said he met with the GELD Commissioners to discuss connections to the electric grid. He said the GELD Commissioners agreed with the revised language. Member Barringer said he would meet with GELD again prior to the Spring Town Meeting.

Gary Hoglund, member of the working group, said the Planning Board must decide whether or not to require Level I Site Plan Review for Small Scale Energy Conversion Facilities. The present draft of the amendment allows small scale facilities by right without Site Plan Review.

Member Burke suggested adding a requirement that the applicant place a visible notice at the property prior to the issuance of a building permit so abutters will know in advance.

The Planning Board agreed that small scale facilities should be by-right without Site Plan Review since no Site Plan Review issues like parking and access are involved.

The Board discussed the proposed language for the height of Large Scale Wind Energy Facilities. Mr. Hoglund said a 200 ft limit is not workable because the wind is not sufficient at that height. He suggested that the Board based the height on the economic feasibility of the project as determined during the special permit process.

After some discussion, the Board agreed on the following language:

(1) Height.

Large Scale Wind Energy Conversion facilities shall not be higher than required to make the project economically feasible. The Planning Board must determine that the height of the facility will not derogate from the intent of this chapter or be detrimental or injurious to the public.

Board members all agreed that the proposed by-law should reference DEP noise standards for both small-scale and large-scale facilities.

The Board discussed provisions for meteorological towers. Mr. Hoglund said the Federal Aviation Administration says “met” towers cannot exceed 60 meters. The setback will be 1.5 times the height of the tower.

Member Giger offered to prepare a power point slide show on the proposed zoning amendment.

Accessory Apartments

The Board will propose an amendment to the Accessory Apartment provisions to allow accessory apartments in buildings such as barns or garages. The language will be the same as the amendment proposed at the Special Town Meeting in the Fall of 2008.

The Board will also propose an amendment to the Schedule of Use Regulations to change the word “detached” to “attached” in the following entry:

	R-A	R-B	B-1	M-1	C	O	P
2-family detached <i>attached</i> dwelling, provided that its external appearance is not significantly different from a single-family dwelling	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N	N

Flexible Development

The Board discussed amending the Flexible Development provisions to discourage sprawl and encourage the creation of neighborhoods. The current Flexible Development provisions allow increased density for public benefit. However, isolated, high-density developments can be located away from public infrastructure. The Board should designate areas suitable for high density growth and protect natural resources in other areas.

The Board will work on building public consensus before proposing an amendment to Flexible Development. This effort will be incorporated in the Comprehensive Master Plan process.

GROTON LAND FOUNDATION SPECIAL PERMIT

The Board discussed the special permit granted to the Groton Land Foundation in January 2007 and whether or not the special permit would lapse on February 8, 2009 (two years from the effective date of the special permit).

The motion was made by Barringer, seconded by Burke, that the recording of the Approval Not Required (ANR) plan and Special Permit 2007-01 for the Brooks Orchard flexible development constitutes substantial use as stated in Condition #7 of the Special Permit. ***The motion passed unanimously.***

Meeting adjourned at 9:30 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle Collette
Town Planner