

**GROTON PLANNING BOARD
DECEMBER 3, 2009
MINUTES**

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

Members present: Capes, Giger, Perkins, and Wilson

Members absent: Barringer, Burke, and Hess

COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN UPDATE

The Board met with Judi Barrett and Angela Insinger of Community Opportunities Group (COG) and members of the Board of Selectmen, Conservation Commission, Historical Commission, and Sustainability Commission to discuss the Comprehensive Master Plan project.

Chairman Capes stated that the Fall Town Meeting voted to appropriate \$70,000 to update the Comprehensive Master Plan with the condition that the Planning Board explore more cost effective methods. The Board met with other departments including the Conservation Commission, Historical Commission, Sustainability Commission, and Economic Development Committee to find ways to leverage other plans and studies.

Ms. Barrett submitted a revised Scope of Services dated December 3, 2009 for the Board's review. Three community-wide public participation meetings will be held in addition to the 15 or 16 monthly meetings with the Planning Board. The combined effort with updating the Conservation Commission's Open Space and Recreation Plan will result in substantial cost savings. The historical and cultural resources element has been scaled back because the Historical Commission has done several studies funded by the Community Preservation Act. There have been no changes to the economic development, housing, land use, community facilities or transportation elements.

Sustainability Commission member Steve Webber said he did not think three public participation meetings would be enough. Ms. Barrett said the monthly meetings with the Planning Board could be topic based.

Selectman Joshua Degen said the revisions to the scope are excellent and show an economy of scale. He suggested cutting back on the housing element based upon recent studies done by the Board of Selectmen.

Historical Commission member Michael Roberts said the archaeological study by UMass Amherst will soon be underway. He said the Planning Board and Historical Commission could combine resources and hold joint public forums. The Board agreed.

Chairman Capes reviewed the revised Price Proposal with a detailed breakdown of costs for the required elements. The Comprehensive Master Plan will cost a total of \$70,000 and the update to the Open Space and Recreation Plan will be a total of \$9000. Conservation Commission Chairman Bruce Easom reported that the Conservation Commission is in agreement with the combined approach.

The motion was made by Perkins, seconded by Wilson, that the Planning Board send a positive recommendation to the Town Manager for review and approval of the revised Scope of Services dated December 3, 2009, and Price Proposal, dated November 19, 2009, submitted by COG so the Board could move forward with negotiating the contract. The motion passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 8:45 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle Collette
Land Use Director/Town Planner

