

**GROTON PLANNING BOARD
MARCH 3, 2011
MINUTES**

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

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

Members absent: Barringer and Wilson

COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN GOALS

The Planning Board reviewed and edited the goals prepared by the Advisory Groups for submission to Community Opportunities Group. The revised goals are as follows:

Overall goals (for Planning Board)		
	Goal	Notes/Instructions to working group
PB1	Establish a dedicated funding source for implementing Master Plan transportation goals. (former TR4)	The Planning Board decided that this should not be a goal but should be considered as part of the implementation plan.
Economic Development		
	Goal	Advisory Group Comments
ED1	Make certain that Groton is, and is recognized as, a business-friendly town.	
ED2	Provide effective incentives to encourage new business development and to retain existing businesses.	Regarding the comments of “there should be more qualifications around the type of business Groton wants to retain and add”, the group felt that including such qualifications within a goal would lengthen the goal substantially. Conversely, placing more generic business concepts would not provide the qualifications necessary for the clarity being sought. Additionally, would providing qualifications regarding existing business mean that we should single out existing businesses that should not receive these incentives?
ED3	Explore and recommend regulatory changes that enable business growth within identified areas of Groton.	As Station Avenue was considered a “narrow” term and there seem to be some confusion regarding “Overlay District”, the goal has been reworded to reflect the intention of the original goal. Goal revised by PB.

ED4	Determine what economic development means for Groton residents and educate the community on the impact of economic development to Groton.	After further review, the group felt strongly that the initial goal was clear and provides more clarity than the 'corrected' version. Likewise, the forum also expressed an understanding of this goal and meaning as the difference of opinion seemed to come from the consultant and not the forum.
Historic and Cultural Resources		
HC1	Pursue adaptive reuse of Groton's historic properties. Objective: - Provide options for future conversion of existing homes to multiple dwelling units in a manner that fits within the physical landscape of Groton and complements the attributes of Groton's New England town character. (former HR3)	
HC2	Develop economic and education strategies based on Groton's historic and archaeological resources.	The PB decided to leave this goal in the HC section.
HC3		
HC4	Incorporate the findings of Groton's historical and archaeological studies in the development review process.	
HC5	Study the need for additional historic districts.	Revised by working group
Housing		
HR1	Encourage a diversity of housing types for a range of income levels and ages. Objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Require that a percentage of units be universally accessible (ADA compliant). • Provide housing that promotes racial, ethnic, and cultural diversity by complying with the Commonwealth's "Affirmative Fair Housing and Civil Rights Policy." • Enable more rental housing, both affordable and market rate, accessible to a broader range of people 	Contains LU5 Revised by working group & PB
HR2		
HR3		
HR4	Groton has a tradition as a welcoming, vibrant community. Encourage and promote new housing developments that create a sense of place, promote social interaction, and a sense of community.	Revised by working group & PB
HR5	Encourage a greater variety of architectural design and diversity of housing types Objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage construction of "green" energy efficient homes. 	Revised by working group & PB
Land Use		

LU1	Adopt land use provisions that promote sustainable land-use patterns and appropriate mix and intensity of uses that balance environmental, economic, and municipal service delivery needs.	Revised by working group
LU2		Combined with LU1.
LU3	Establish land use policies that encourage greater connectivity and promote alternative transportation modes and less reliance on single-occupancy automobile travel. Objective: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify existing and former railroad right-of-ways for acquisition and use for alternative modes of transportation. (formerly TR3) 	Revised by working group
LU4	Coordinate the Town’s capital improvements and land use planning.	
LU5		This was combined with HR1
LU6	Provide for commercial and multi-family development that is respectful of community context by formulating design guidelines that foster creative and thoughtful design.	Revised by working group
Transportation		
TR1	Adopt a “Complete Streets” philosophy, meaning that streets are designed and operated so they work for all users — pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and transit riders of all ages and abilities.	Revised by working group In Groton, for example, this could mean: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On main roads, allowing everyone to easily and safely reach stores, offices, and community focal points. Roads in agricultural areas may be “completed” by simply providing shoulders that allow safe bicycling and walking and provide connections to regional trail and public transportation networks. Low-speed roads with on-street parking, well-marked crossings, and sidewalks with accessible curb cuts lining one side of the street may best meet the needs of a residential street.
TR2	Create an alternative transportation network by connecting roads and sidewalks with trails and paths.	
TR3		Workshop decision: move as

		objective for LU3
TR4		Remitted to PB – see page 1
TR5	Explore and promote energy efficient multi-passenger modes of transportation for Groton residents.	Revised by working group & PB This would include exploring options such as transit and carpooling.
Open Space and Recreation		
OSR1	Ensure that Groton’s wildlife habitat, greenways/ waterways, scenic vistas, agricultural, forested, and recreational open spaces are protected, enhanced, and expanded for present and future generations. Objective: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create and maintain a database to identify resources 	Revised by working group & PB
OSR2	Promote use of best management practices for management and maintenance of open space and recreation parcels. Objective: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use stewardship and parcel specific plans to achieve the most efficient and effective use for each piece of land 	Revised by working group & PB
OSR3		
OSR4	Invest in the expansion and revitalization of parks, athletic fields, greenways, and waterways. Objective: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve access, encourage use, and enhance environmental quality. (originally CSF5) 	Revised by working group & PB Suggested objectives from working group: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Appoint a Recreation Manager; investigate sharing resources with a neighboring town. 2. Develop a plan that inventories and integrates all of Groton’s recreational activities. 3. Expand the offering of the Groton Pool and Golf Center to include recreational activities for all age groups. Promote this resource and central location to the community. 4. Create a plan for the Groton Fairgrounds.

Natural Resources, Water, and Energy		
NRWE1	<p>Ensure that the Town’s natural, water, and energy resource systems adapt to natural stress and changing form while remaining sustainable.</p> <p>Objective:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake science-based analyses to identify lands that are critical to ecological functions. 	Goal added by the OSR working group & objective added by PB
NRWE2		Combined as objective with OSR2
NRWE3		Combined as objective with OSR2
	<p>Ensure that Groton’s groundwater and surface water resources are preserved beyond what is required by state-level regulations and as indicated by best management practices.</p> <p>Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyze the hydrologic function of Groton’s natural water systems, especially the relationship between groundwater, wetlands, and surface water features, to determine safe groundwater removal quantities (former NRWE4) Continue to protect water quality by adopting and enforcing appropriate land use regulations. (former NRWE5) 	Revised by OSR working group & PB
NRWE6	Minimize Groton’s carbon footprint	Revised by OSR working group & PB
NRWE7		Deleted by PB
NRWE8	Encourage measures so the local agricultural community will be able to produce enough affordable, high-quality food to meet a greater percentage of the town’s future needs.	<p>Revised by OSR working group</p> <p>COG comment: Include non-food producing agriculture – timber, hay, tree farms? Economic development opportunities?</p>
NRWE9	<p>Identify and protect prime farmlands to support the continuation and expansion of agriculture operation in Groton.</p> <p>Objective:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop policies and programs that will knit together the local agricultural community as a network of career farmers, restaurants, schools, and individual gardeners. 	<p>Revised by PB</p> <p>COG comment: Re-work the first part of this goal and work with Economic Development working group to transfer second part of goal.</p>
NRWE10		<p>Moved by PB to NRWE9 as an objective</p> <p>COG comment: Work with Economic Development working group to transfer goal</p>

Community Services and Facilities		
CSF1	Annually assess the need for Library and Citizen Services, such as recreation, health, transportation, and senior services, and tailor Town resources to address local needs.	Revised by working group
CSF2	Improve Groton's municipal facilities and infrastructure by considering energy conservation, technology, universal accessibility (ADA compliant), and usability for the intended purposes.	Revised by working group
CSF2A	Provide public safety facilities and resources to meet desired readiness and response times.	Added by working group
CSF2B	Ensure that the Town's plans for drinking water, waste water management, and electric power are positioned to meet current and future needs.	Added by working group
CSF3	Extend the current five-year capital improvements plan out to 15 years and ensure that it includes all foreseeable capital needs.	Revised by working group
CSF4	Consider regionalization to meet certain municipal needs	
CSF5		Moved to OSR

FY 2012 BUDGET

Board members will attend the Finance Committee meeting on Tuesday, March 8, 2011, to discuss the request for \$25,000 for Phase II of the Comprehensive Master Plan.

SOLAR PANELS

The Board received an inquiry from Steve Webber regarding its willingness to sponsor a zoning amendment for Large-Scale Ground-Mounted Solar Photovoltaic Facilities. The Board said it did not have enough time to research the topic and recommended that Mr. Webber submit the proposed amendment as a citizens' petition.

Meeting adjourned at 10:30 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle Collette
Land Use Director/Town Planner