

**PLANNING BOARD  
FEBRUARY 9, 2012  
MINUTES**

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

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

Members absent: Barringer and Wilson

**PUBLIC FORUM – COMPLETE STREETS**

The Board sponsored a public forum on “Complete Streets” with Gary Hebert of Fay, Spofford & Thorndike, as part of Phase II of the Comprehensive Master Plan. Approximately 40 members of the public attended.

Mr. Hebert presented the attached power point slides entitled, “Complete Streets – A Strategy for Implementation, Groton Massachusetts. Phase II Master Plan Implementation,” dated February 9, 2012. He described how the Complete Streets concept is applicable to Groton. Measures include traffic calming, transit service establishments, safe routes to school, bicycle lanes, universal access (ADA compliant), pedestrian crossings, and environmental impacts.

Scott Harker asked if implementation of Complete Streets is a local or state decision. Mr. Hebert said Route 119 is a state road under the control of MassDOT, but all the other roads in Groton are local roads so the Town could decide what it wants to do. He added that the MassDOT and Center for Disease Control (CDC) both agree on the health benefits of improving pedestrian and bicycle access.

Mr. Hebert said there are five types of “Complete Streets”:

1. Streets with very wide rights-of-way and wide (32-46 ft) paved widths. It is important to include separate bicycle lanes in such streets.
2. Streets with wide rights-of-way and 28-30 ft paved width with shared accommodations for cars and bicycles.
3. Streets with narrow rights-of-way and sidewalks on only one side.
4. Streets with very narrow rights-of-way and pavements widths of 30 ft.
5. Very narrow streets with severe constraints and pavement widths of less than 30 ft.

Mr. Hebert said in Towns like Groton, the trail system should be ADA compliant and part of the Complete Street network.

John Kane asked if the residents should ask the state to make improvements to Route 119. Mr. Hebert said the Town should look at specific sections from the Town Center out and investigate what funding may be available. Chairman Burke added the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission prepares the Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP), there are various state grants such as MassWorks, the Town funds projects, and developers contribute through development impact fees.

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Paul Funch advocated for signs designating “bike routes”. Mr. Hebert agreed that such signs help motorists know they are sharing the road.

Richard Hewitt said the Nashua River Rail Trail is used for recreation and exercise now, but it could be used for transportation. He said adding a connection to the Middle School or a secure bicycle rack at the train station in Ayer would help. Member Giger said the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) controls the rail trail so any changes must be coordinated with the DCR.

Chairman Burke thanked everyone for attending and inviting people to participate in future events.

#### **TOWN CENTER OVERLAY DISTRICT GUIDELINES AGENDA**

The Board reviewed the draft agenda for the Town Center Overlay District workshop on February 18, 2012 and suggested several modifications to the format so there would be enough time to cover everything.

#### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Member Capes informed the Board that he would not be seeking re-election.

Member Parent said his schedule is making it difficult for him to continue to serve on the Prescott Reuse Committee.

Meeting adjourned at 9:30 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle Collette  
Land Use Director/Town Planner