

**PLANNING BOARD  
FEBRUARY 16, 2012  
MINUTES**

Chairman Burke called the meeting to order at 7:15 PM at the Town Hall

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

Members absent: Wilson

**PUBLIC HEARING – SPECIAL PERMIT, SITE PLAN REVIEW, LUTH KARATE STUDIOS**

The Board continued the public hearing to consider the application submitted by Michael Luth for Site Plan Review to expand an existing building to create a martial arts and yoga studio as shown on the plan entitled, "Site Plan of Land in Groton, Massachusetts Prepared for Michael Luth," prepared by David E. Ross Associates, dated December 8, 2011. Applicant Michael Luth requested that the Board continue the public hearing because he and the Workers Credit Union had not resolved issues regarding the shared parking agreement.

The Board voted unanimously to continue the public hearing on February 23, 2012 at 8:30 PM.

**COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN**

The Board met with Judi Barrett of Community Opportunities Group (COG) to discuss Phase II – Implementation and COG's recommendations (attached). The Board determined which items were high, medium or low priorities.

**Energy** - The Board discussed the two renewable energy provisions – wind and solar. The provisions have two tiers, with by-right and special permit procedures depending upon the size of the project. The Board agreed that there is a process in place now that should not be amended at the present time.

**Demolition Delay** - The Board and others in attendance agreed that Historical Commission's Demolition Delays procedures should be strengthened.

Scott Harker said he has no problem with the Demolition Delay by-law but multiple layers and time frames should be considered.

Chairman Burke said the criteria should be different for structures in the Historic Districts.

Historical commission chairman Michael Roberts agreed that there are flaws in the present by-law that should be addressed.

Resident Bob Pine agreed that the Demolition Delay provisions will become more important as the Town continues to grow and change.

Steve Webber said there should be notice on the deed for properties in the Historic Districts so buyers know about the review process.

Real estate broker Jane Allen said the Demolition Delay process can take as long as six months. The Board and Historical Commission agreed that the process should be reviewed.

**Scenic Roads** - The Board discussed amending Scenic Roads provisions and agreed that an inventory should be done to provide the Board and Tree Warden with guidance in this area. Mr. Roberts noted that Scenic Roads also have historical value.

**Design Guidelines** – the Board and others present all agreed that working on Design Guidelines for the Town center and other village areas is a high priority. The Board will continue to work with Peter Flinker on the Town Center Design Guidelines.

**Schedule of Use Regulations & Site Plan Review** – The Board agreed that the Site Plan Review provisions should be revised, but it is a medium rather than high priority.

**Flexible Development** – The Board discussed the possibility of allowing cluster and flexible development provisions to be by-right rather than by special permit. The Board will investigate the alternatives as a high priority.

**Conversion of Large Houses** – the Board determined that provisions to convert large houses into more than three dwelling units should be reviewed as a medium priority..

**Large House Review** – The Board decided that establishing a procedure to review houses exceeding a certain threshold is low priority because it may be a property rights issue.

**Expedited Permitting** – The Board discussed the possibility of using the Expedited Permitting process throughout the Town and decided that it is not a priority. However, a review of the permitting process would be helpful.

Meeting adjourned at 10:30 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle Collette  
Land Use Director/Town Planner