

**PLANNING BOARD  
APRIL 19, 2012  
MINUTES**

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

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

Members absent: Barringer

**ANR PLAN – LAWRENCE HOMESTEAD TRUST, FARMERS ROW**

The Board considered the Approval Not Required (ANR) plan submitted by the Town of Groton and the Lawrence Homestead Trust (LHT) to create four new building lots on Farmers Row. Town Manager Mark Haddad and Building Committee Chairman Jack Petropoulos were present.

Mr. Haddad presented the conceptual plan for the division of land on Farmers Row. The Town will purchase Lot 4 with 3.26 acres for the new Center Fire Station.

Member Parent said he thought the Town would purchase the lot closest to the existing public safety building. Mr. Haddad said Lot 1, near the Public Safety Building, has wetlands and high water table which would limit the location of the Fire Station. The Trustees of the LHT did not want the Fire Station in the middle of the field, so the Town will purchase Lot 4 on the southerly end of the property.

Member Parent said the property is in agricultural use today. Mr. Haddad said, "yes," and the LHT will keep Lot 1, 2 and 3 in Chapter 61A as agricultural land.

Mr. Haddad asked about the 25% lot coverage limit in Section 218-20 Schedule of Intensity Regulations. Chairman Burke responded that the coverage only "Includes principal and accessory buildings," as stated in Section 218-20, Footnote #3.

The Board cautioned the Building Committee not to limit itself on how the lot would be developed and to leave options open for the future.

Chairman Burke said endorsement of the ANR plan only considers frontage. The Board will consider endorsement of the plan at its meeting on April 26, 2012 because the surveyor had not stamped and signed the plan.

Mr. Petropoulos asked the Board to support Articles 12 and 13 at the Spring Town Meeting. He described the Building Committee's site selection process and the needs of the Fire Department. He said the Fire Department's "wish list" resulted in a building with 21,000 SF. The smallest size building with an optimal program is 18,500 SF. The LHT site is the least expensive and best operational site. Prescott School is second choice and the GELD property is the third. In addition, there are other redevelopment opportunities for the Prescott School as determined by the Prescott School Reuse Committee.

Mr. Haddad added that the development of the Fire Station on the Lot 4 at LHT site will cost about \$1 million less than the other two sites.

The Board asked if the sewer system would be extended to the LHT site. Mr. Haddad said "yes," the sewer system serves the Public Safety building today.

Member Wilson asked about architectural elevations. Mr. Petropoulos said they do not have the elevations from architects Dore and Whittier. The building will be designed to integrate into the area.

Chairman Burke asked about the total cost of the project. Mr. Haddad said around \$7 to 7.5 million.

Scott Harker commended the Building Committee for its hard work and due diligence.

The motion was made by Giger, seconded by Parent, to support Articles 12 & 13 for the acquisition of land and design services for the Center Fire Station. The motion passed unanimously.

#### **BERTOZZI FARM SUBDIVISION**

The Board met with David Vaccaro to discuss the Bertozzi Farm subdivision that was approved in 2001. The road was constructed to base pavement in 2003. The original developer posted surety in the form of a passbook with a remaining balance of \$109,000 held by the Town Treasurer. In the fall of 2011, Nitsch Engineering updated the cost-to-complete estimate to \$230,244.21 to reflect current prices and the removal and replacement of the base pavement.

Mr. Vaccaro said he would like to purchase the subdivision but did not agree that the base pavement needed replacing. He said he asked his pavement contractor to look at the condition of the pavement and he will hire a testing lab to analyze the subbase.

Chairman Burke said the Board relies upon Nitsch Engineering for its technical review and to provide cost estimates based upon Means Catalog and prevailing wage. The Board will schedule a site walk with Nitsch Engineering, DPW Director Tom Delany, and West Groton Water Supply District Superintendent Gordon Newell to view the condition of the pavement.

#### **COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN**

The Board discussed the Comprehensive Master Plan and whether to produce an addendum with edits. Chairman Burke prepared an outline of issues to be discussed.

Member Parent said the Board had a very active public participation process and there will always be different interpretations.

Member Giger said the major controversy seems to be around the Town Center and the concept plan approval process. Chairman Burke said he has concerns about the legality of requiring concept plan approval based upon recent case law. He said the Board should not propose removing concept plan approval by Town Meeting at this time, but should be prepared to do so at a later date. Any zoning amendment requires a 2/3 vote of Town Meeting in any event.

Member Giger said housing diversity is an important goal of the Master Plan that has been somewhat controversial. He said the Town should continue to work with programs for first time homebuyers and people over 55 years of age. He agreed that the Board had a very active public participation process and that the Master Plan represents countless hours of work by many volunteers.

Chairman Burke agreed that the Board should not change course now. Sustainability has been referenced though out all the elements. He said he did not believe an addendum is necessary.

Member Capes noted that economic development and sustainability were both emphasized in the Request for Proposals (RFP) for consultants.

Board members all agreed that an addendum is not necessary.

Meeting adjourned at 9:30 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle Collette  
Land Use Director/Town Planner