

**PLANNING BOARD  
NOVEMBER 20, 2014  
MINUTES**

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

Members present: Barringer, Burke, Giger, Perkins, Svarczkopf, Vega, and Wilson

**PUBLIC HEARING CONTINUATION – RENOVATION TO FORMER CENTER FIRE STATION**

The Planning Board held the continuation of the public hearing to consider the application submitted by Daniel and Lori McElroy for a Special Permit to utilize the provisions of Section 218-30.2 Town Center Overlay District for the rehabilitation of the former Fire Station as shown on the plan entitled, "Site Plan, 20 Station Avenue, Groton, Massachusetts," prepared by Ducharme & Dillis Civil Design Group, dated September 12, 2014. Applicants Dan and Lori McElroy, Attorney Robert Collins, and design engineer Stan Dillis were present at the hearing.

Attorney Collins said the applicant met with the Design Review Committee (DRC) on Monday, November 17, 2014. The revised façade includes new doors and windows on the front of the building and eliminates the awnings shown on the previous elevations. Signage has been added across the top of the windows. The area of the signs totals 20 square feet. A cornice will be installed along the top of the windows. Lighting will be recessed in the cornice. The trim will be painted off-white. The accessible parking space was moved to the right front entrance of the building. A bicycle rack and bench will be installed in the front patio area near the sidewalk. Pavers will be used to construct the walkway, and the accessible parking space will be poured concrete as required in 521 CMR Architectural Access Board Regulations which state:

*23.4.4 Surface: Spaces shall have a uniform, paved or hard packed smooth surface.*

Member Vega said he liked the new plan, but still liked the grass pavers as shown on the previous plan.

Member Wilson said the new façade looks great. He asked how the pedestrian space with tables and chairs would be used. Mr. Dillis said the seating area would be used seasonally.

Member Wilson asked if trees would be planted to provide shade. Mr. Dillis said they considered it, but the trees would be messy and require maintenance. They decided to leave the view of the façade open and use umbrellas at the tables for shade.

Member Giger said he was very pleased with the changes. He asked about the size of the letters. Attorney Collins said the letters would be 6-8 inches in height.

Member Burke said he, too, was very pleased with the revised plan because it fits well with the Town Center vision. He said he likes the signage, the cornice, and the site design.

Member Svarczkopf said he is reviewing the plan for the first time. It looks like what the Board hoped would happen in the Town Center.

Member Perkins asked about the bump out near the access road to the rear of the site. Mr. Dillis said it is for traffic calming in the area where vehicles exit from the parking lot. Attorney

Collins added that there would be granite curbing around the bump out with vegetation in the center.

Chairman Barringer said the applicant did a wonderful job with the plan. Attorney Collins said the credit all goes to Dan and Lori McElroy and the architect, Dan Quaille of Lincoln Architects.

Chairman Barringer read the following comments contained in an email dated November 20, 2014 from Dan Barton, Chairman of the Design Review Committee:

“On behalf of the DRC, I’m writing to update the Planning Board regarding our review of the proposed project at 20 Station Avenue. The DRC met with the Applicant and their design team for the second time this past Monday evening. We were very pleased with the design progress and improvements, as well as the responsiveness of the team towards addressing the DRC’s earlier comments. The DRC will schedule a follow-up meeting to formalize our recommendation, which we trust can be incorporated into the Board’s decision. We are also confident that any outstanding design-related concerns can easily be addressed as the construction documents are developed and during the construction process.

- 1) Window boxes could be a good way to further soften the hardscape and enhance the pedestrian environment
- 2) Positive reaction to elimination of grass pavers
- 3) Relationship of the walkway(s), planters, and the residential door requires further study
- 4) Clearance and location of bike rack to be improved
- 5) Integration of paving materials and signage at accessible parking space to be studied and detailed
- 6) Positive reaction to the new location of accessible parking space
- 7) Address existing pole in street near driveway entrance
- 8) Emphasize doors to retail spaces, perhaps by adding frosted glass to the residential entry and extending glass on retail doors
- 9) Review plan in the context of Station Ave. streetscape improvements: e.g. bulb-outs, sidewalk, etc.
- 10) Further review of soffit and sign lighting: possible halo letters and down lights at entries
- 11) Trim and storefront color: off-white
- 12) Need enlarged site plan to view detail of plaza and walkway patterns, materials, and details
- 13) Granite plinth is a great addition to the design
- 14) Asked the Applicant to send a PDF of the current design materials---DONE

Chairman Barringer asked about the lighting and the lettering on the signs. Attorney Collins said the lettering would be metal or wooden with halo lighting. The Board requested that there be no LED or halo lights on the lettering of the signs.

The Board voted unanimously to close the public hearing. The Board will act on the special permit at its regular meeting on December 11, 2014.

**ANR PLAN – LEE EDMANDS, KEMP STREET**

The Board considered the Approval Not Required (ANR) plan submitted by Lee Edmands to create a 65,000 SF parcel to be conveyed to the West Groton Water Supply District (WGWS), owner of the adjacent parcel containing the existing water tower. Attorney Ray Lyons and surveyor Stan Dillis represented the applicant at the meeting. Ann Gagnon of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Fish and Game was also present.

Attorney Lyons said Ms. Edmands owns a 29-acre lot off Kemp Street and McCanns Hill Road. The remaining 27.1 acres will be conveyed to the Department of Fish and Game and will be protected in perpetuity. At the present time, the WGWS does not have clear access to its property. The ANR plan includes an access easement and a water line easement to be granted to the WGWS.

Member Burke asked how the WGWS would obtain a building permit for a water tank on a parcel that is not a building lot, as stated on the plan. Attorney Lyons said the deed to the WGWS states that the land is only for water tower purposes.

Attorney Lyons requested that the Board vote to endorse the ANR plan and to recommend that the Board of Selectmen release the land from Chapter 61 Classification and Taxation of Forest Lands.

The motion was made by Wilson, seconded by Svarczkopf, to endorse as Approval Not Required the plan entitled, "Plan of Land in Groton, Massachusetts, Owner: Lee Edmands," prepared by Ducharme & Dillis Civil Design Group, dated September 29, 2014. The motion passed unanimously.

The motion was made by Burke, seconded by Wilson to recommend that the Board of Selectmen waive the Town's right of first refusal under Chapter 61. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

**PUBLIC HEARING CONTINUATION – SITE PLAN REVIEW, MOBIL STATION, 6 BOSTON ROAD**

The Board held the continuation of the public hearing to consider the site plan for the proposed renovations to the Mobil Station located at 6 Boston Road. Attorney Robert Collins, David Jordan of Alliance Retail/Global Montello, design engineer Huseyin Sevincgill of MHF Design Consultants, the Board's consulting engineer Tim McGivern of Nitsch Engineering, and abutters were present.

Attorney Collins presented photographs comparing the before and after images of the proposed renovations to the Mobil Station. He said the applicant has addressed all the outstanding issues including:

- Lighting spill over onto the abutting property has been resolved by the elimination of the light pole near the Bishop's property.
- The sidewalk issue was addressed by an easement along the entire frontage on Route 119 so MassDOT may install a sidewalk in the future. However, calls to MassDOT indicate there are no immediate plans to construct such a sidewalk.

- The two "employee only" parking spaces closest to Route 119 have been eliminated so the drainage system could be augmented.
- The photographs depict the proposed changes to the building and canopy.

Member Burke asked if the paved area would be resurfaced. Attorney Collins said, "yes." Member Burke asked if the underground storage tanks would be replaced. Attorney Collins said they met with the Fire Chief to discuss the underground tanks. The current standards will be implemented to monitor the integrity of the tanks with information on problems transmitted electronically at the site, to the main office, and to an independent third party. The existing tanks do not have to be replaced for another five or six years. Chairman Barringer read the memorandum dated November 20, 2014 from the Fire Chief.

Member Burke asked why the applicant would want to dig up the new pavement in six years. He suggested that the special permit include a condition that the entire site be repaved when the tanks are replaced to prevent a patch in the pavement. Attorney Collins said the applicant has no issues with such a condition. Mr. Jordan agreed.

Member Giger asked about the exterior lights. Attorney Collins said the light pole shown on the previous plan has been eliminated so there will be no spill over on the abutting property. (*See note on Sheet 3 of 7 which states, "Existing light pole to be removed."*)

Abutter George Bishop, 1B Main Street, said he is still concerned about lights glaring toward his house and upward toward the sky. Chairman Barringer said the Board shares these concerns and always requires that lights be pointed downward and there is no glare on abutting properties.

Member Wilson asked if the canopy would be refurbished and the building would be new. Attorney Collins said both will be refurbished.

Member Vega asked if the white canopy could have shingles or other treatment. Member Svarczkopf added that the canopy at the Groton Exchange is a good example. Attorney Collins said the shape of the Mobil Station canopy is a challenge. He suggested that the applicant could add a cornice with trim like the building. Members of the Board had mixed opinions on the cornice and trim on the canopy. Attorney Collins agreed to paint the canopy the same color as the building so it would not stand out. The Board agreed.

In response to earlier questions about lighting, Mr. Sevincgill said there are no new lights being installed under the canopy. There will be two new wall packs facing downward on the building.

Chairman Barringer requested that the lights be warm temperature lights of 3500 degrees or less. Mr. Jordan agreed.

Member Burke asked about the existing sign. Town Planner Michelle Collette said the Sign Committee granted a permit for Special and Unique Circumstances to allow the replacement sign on January 23, 2012.

Member Giger asked about the light post between the sign and Route 119. Attorney Collins said it would be eliminated. Mr. Sevincgill said this is only a service pole with no lights.

Member Burke asked if the utilities would be above or below ground. Mr. Sevincgill said the utilities would remain above ground. Attorney Collins said the Board could include a condition in the special permit to require that the utilities be installed below ground.

Member Wilson asked if the existing sign would be relocated. Mr. Sevincgill said, "No, the sign would remain where it is."

Tim McGivern of Nitsch Engineering, the Board's consulting engineer, reviewed his report dated November 6, 2014 and said there are no outstanding engineering issues.

Chairman Barringer reviewed the list of requested waivers in the letters dated September 25, 2014 and October 9, 2014 from Attorney Collins. Member Giger requested that the applicant submit one letter requesting all the waivers in response to the Nitsch Engineering report dated November 6, 2014.

Attorney Collins asked the Board to decide if the traffic flow should be one way as recommended by Nitsch Engineering and as shown on the revised plan or left as it is today with two way traffic.

Members of the Board discussed the traffic flow issue, and the consensus was in favor of two-way traffic. Members Barringer, Burke, Svarczkopf, Vega and Wilson were in favor of two-way traffic, and Members Giger and Perkins in favor of one way. Member Burke stated that changing to one-way traffic would require signage and lines painted on the pavement.

The Board voted unanimously to close the public record and to leave the record open for one letter requesting all the waivers and an updated drawing.

#### **CHAMBERLAINS MILL SURETY**

The Board received a report dated November 20, 2014 from Nitsch Engineering with a cost to complete estimate of \$170,010.99 for the Chamberlains Mill subdivision.

The motion was made by Burke, seconded by Wilson, to accept surety in the amount of \$170,010.99 for the Chamberlains Mill subdivision. The motion passed unanimously.

#### **MINUTES**

The Board voted to approve the minutes of the regular meetings held on October 16, 2014 and November 13, 2014.

#### **FY 2016 BUDGET REQUEST**

Land Use Director/Town Planner Michelle Collette said she plans to submit a request for a level funded budget for FY 2016. There will be no increase in the Planning Board's budget. The Board agreed.

Meeting adjourned 9:15 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle Collette  
Land Use Director/Town Planner