

**PLANNING BOARD
FEBRUARY 19, 2015
MINUTES**

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

Members present: Barringer, Burke, Giger, and Vega

Member absent: Perkins, Svarczkopf and Wilson

PRE-SUBMISSION REVIEW – GROTON CONSERVATION TRUST, GENERAL FIELD

The Board met with Bob Pine of the Groton Conservation Trust (GCT) to discuss the renovations to the entrance, improved parking, an accessible trail, kiosk, and sitting area at the General Field (aka Surrenden Farm) off Farmers Row. The GCT owns the 150-acre parcel that is used for agricultural purposes. The work will be done this spring. The parking spaces will be delineated on the existing paved area, but some pavement will be removed. The walking paths will lead to a sitting area with views of the west. The slope of the stonedust walking path will be under 5% and will be universally accessible. Plantings will be native grasses and wildflowers.

Member Burke asked whether the proposed improvements would interfere with the agricultural use of the property. Mr. Pine said the GCT is working closely with farmer John Smigelski to be sure there is no interference.

The motion was made by Burke, seconded by Giger, to waive Site Plan Review for the Groton Conservation Trust's proposed parking and other improvements to the General Field as described in the plan and letter dated February 17, 2015, because no new parking spaces will be created, and there will be no traffic or drainage impacts. The motion passed unanimously.

H & V NOISE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The Board reviewed the "Sound Impact Analysis," prepared by Epsilon Associates, dated February 9, 2015, submitted by Hollingsworth and Vose (H & V). The Planning Board required the analysis when it waived Site Plan Review on November 13, 2014. The Zoning Board of Appeals also required the sound impact analysis in its Special Permit Decision #13-14, filed with the Town Clerk on December 14, 2014. Steve Cook of H & V, Richard Lampeter of Epsilon Associates, and Robert Pine of Pine & Swallow Associates were present.

Mr. Lampeter said they measured sound to the southwest and northeast for one week. The sound to the southwest was 39dBA, and the sound to the northeast was 49 dBA. Sound modeling was done for the exhaust, ventilation, and gas compression systems. The Department of Environmental Protection limits the sound increase to 10 dBA. H & V agreed to a 6 dBA increase.

Member Giger said 6 dBA's is a reasonable increase and well under DEP thresholds. He asked if there would be any variation in equipment or other conditions after installation. He asked if H & V would measure sound levels 30 days after commencing operations so neighbors would have some recourse.

February 19, 2015

Page 2

Mr. Lampeter said the modeling takes equipment variation into account, but they planned to do follow-up measurements as stated in the February 9, 2015 letter.

Member Burke asked how the sound compares with ambient noise levels in the two areas that were tested. Mr. Lampeter said sound is measured logarithmically. If the sound is 49 dBA now, it will increase to 54.5 dBA after operations.

The motion was made by Burke, seconded by Giger, to accept the "Summary of Sound Level Impact Assessment for Combined Heat and Power (CHP) Project," prepared by Epsilon Associates, dated February 9, 2015, and to recommend that the Building Commissioner issue the building permit for the power plant. The Planning Board's recommendation requires the applicant to submit a follow up evaluation of the sound to determine compliance with mitigation measures within six (6) months of the power plant commencing operations. The motion passed unanimously.

COMMENTS TO ZBA

The Board discussed its comments to the Zoning Board of Appeals on two special permit applications.

H & V Temporary Construction Trailers, 219 Townsend Road – The motion was made by Burke, seconded by Vega, to recommend that the ZBA grant the special permit with the standard conditions. The motion passed unanimously.

Halloran Addition, 43 Pleasant Street – The motion was made by Burke, seconded by Vega, to recommend that the ZBA grant the special permit for the proposed addition to the non-conforming residential structure. The motion passed unanimously.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The motion was made by Giger, seconded by Burke, to enter executive session, pursuant to M.G.L. c.30A, Sec. 21(3) "To discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the public body and the chair so declares." The litigation is the Planning Board v. the Zoning Board of Appeals and Thomas Roche, and the Board would not return to open session. The motion passed by roll call vote with Burke- yes, Giger – yes, Vega – yes, and Barringer – yes.

The motion was made by Giger, seconded by Wilson, to end executive session and to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed by roll call vote with Burke- yes, Giger – yes, Vega – yes, and Barringer – yes.

Meeting adjourned at 8:30 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle Collette
Land Use Director/Town Planner