

**PLANNING BOARD  
MARCH 26, 2015  
MINUTES**

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

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

Member absent: Barringer

**REZONING PETITION, PETER NORTON, 152-158 BOSTON ROAD**

In accordance with the provisions of Chapter 40A, §§ 5 and 11, M. G. L., the Groton Planning Board held a public hearing to consider the following petition submitted by Peter Norton and others:

**ARTICLE:** To see if the Town will vote to amend the Town of Groton zoning map to rezone from General Business (GB) to Residential-Business (R-B) certain premises located at 152-158 Boston Road consisting of approximately 30,654 square feet, which premises is described in a deed recorded with the Middlesex County South Registry of Deeds in Book 21298, Page 3, being shown as Parcel 5 on Assessors Map 222, or take any action thereon.

Vice Chairman Perkins called the public hearing to order. Clerk Vega read the notice posted with the Town Clerk on March 2, 2015, and published in the March 6 & 13, 2015 issues of the *Groton Herald*.

Mr. Norton presented his petition to rezone his property to Residential Business. There is an existing, two-family house and a detached building with a commercial use on the first floor and an apartment on the second floor. The R-B zone is the appropriate district for the existing use. Mr. Norton said he is unable to obtain a residential-rate mortgage with the land zoned General Business.

Member Svarczkopf said he supports the idea of the R-B District, but said he is concerned if the owner wanted to convert to a commercial operation in the future. Town Planner Michelle Collette said the owner could petition Town Meeting to rezone the property to General Business at that time.

Member Burke said the lending institutions are basing the loan on zoning, not on existing use. He said the R-B District allows the three existing units and the business use subject to the grant of a special permit.

Member Giger said Mr. Norton has exhausted all possibilities and has discussed the matter with the Board at the workshop for business owners about a year ago.

Vice Chairman Perkins said it makes sense given the existing use of the property.

The Board voted unanimously to close the public hearing.

The motion was made by Giger, seconded by Vega, to recommend that Town meeting rezone the property located at 152-158 Boston Road to Residential Business. The motion passed unanimously.

**ANR PLAN – CHAMBERLAINS MILL**

*(Note: member Vega stepped down because he is an abutter.)*

The Board considered the Approval Not Required (ANR) plan submitted to Robert Kiley, Regulars Realty Trust, to change a lot line between Lots 2 and 3 in the Chamberlains Mill subdivision. Attorney Robert Collins presented the plan.

Attorney Collins said the lot line change is necessary for topographic reasons and because it will work better for the sewage disposal systems.

The motion was made by Wilson, seconded by Burke, to endorse the plan entitled, "Plan of Land in Groton, Massachusetts, Prepared for Regulas Realty Trust," prepared by Ducharme and Dillis civil Design Group, dated March 10, 2015. The motion passed unanimously.

## **20 STATION AVENUE REDEVELOPMENT**

The Board received a letter dated March 11, 2015 from Attorney Robert Collins asking for clarification of the Special Permit decision for the redevelopment of the Center Fire Station. He said the decision did not specify food service use as part of the proposed retail use of the premises.

The Special Permit decision and minutes of the public hearings include multiple references to letters submitted by Attorney Collins describing the proposed use of the premises for one residential unit on the second floor and a retail space on the first floor that may include sale of prepared foods such sandwiches, ice cream, coffee, etc. and a bicycle rental shop. The architectural elevations submitted by the applicant also depict such uses.

The Board members all agreed that they understood that food service would be included in the retail use and that food service is permitted under the Town Center Overlay District.

The motion was made by Burke, seconded by Wilson, to clarify that the intent of Special Permit 2014-12 includes food service and bicycle rental uses on the first floor as permitted by the special permit in accordance with the provisions of Section 218-30.2 Town Center Overlay District. The motion passed unanimously.

Attorney Collins presented possible changes to the architectural elevation showing the front façade and entrance from Station Avenue. The door to the second floor was removed and entrance to the apartment will be on the side of the building rather than from the front.

Member Giger noted that the front door must be wide enough to accommodate a person and a bicycle.

Board members said they preferred the elevations approved with the special permit.

## **ROCKY HILL STARTER HOMES**

The Board received a letter dated March 23, 2015 from Attorney Robert Collins requesting a change to the starter homes in the Rocky Hill subdivision. He said the proposed starter homes were approved as single-family condominiums on Exclusive Use Areas (EUA). He suggested that the homes could be on individual lots now that Title Five regulations on community sewage disposal systems have changed. He also suggested that there be five or six starter homes and two market rate units instead of 12 starter homes shown on the approved plan.

Vice Chairman Perkins said she liked the range of housing options included in the original plan. Clustering the starter homes together would create a neighborhood for families as envisioned in the original special permit. She said smaller homes are more affordable for people just starting a family.

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Member Burke suggested that Attorney Collins visit Riverwalk in Concord to see an example of a pocket neighborhood with a sense of place. He said the houses can be for new families or older people downsizing. This is an opportunity to be creative.

Member Svarczkopf agreed that a neighborhood of growing families is a great way for people to get into homeownership. Smaller homes for people with children would be welcome. However, he liked the idea of fee simple ownership instead of EUA's.

Member Giger said this area could be a hybrid with a range of housing styles as long as they are affordable for homeowners. He, too, preferred lot ownership rather than EUA's.

Attorney Collins asked what the Board thought about six duplex units. Member Burke said it depends upon design.

Vice Chairman Perkins said it would be helpful to see a plan. Attorney Collins said he would discuss the Board's suggestions with developer David Moulton and return to the Board with a proposed plan.

#### **REEDY MEADOW ESTATES WAIVER REQUEST**

The Board received a request for a waiver dated February 18, 2015 from Peter Cricones, new owner of the Reedy Meadow Estates subdivision approved in 2006. Mr. Cricones and his attorney Carla Page were present.

Attorney Page said the developer is requesting a waiver to install slope granite curbing rather than vertical granite. The portion of the subdivision in Pepperell will have sloped granite, and the Groton Conservation Commission recommended sloped granite to accommodate wildlife passage.

Member Burke said he prefers no curbing and Low Impact Development drainage systems.

The motion was made by Giger, seconded by Wilson, to grant the waiver to allow sloped granite curbing as a field change. The motion passed with Perkins, Giger, Svarczkopf, Vega, and Wilson in favor; Burke present.

#### **MINUTES**

The Board voted to approve the minutes of March 5, 2015.

Meeting adjourned at 9:00 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle Collette  
Land Use Director/Town Planner