

**PLANNING BOARD
JULY 9, 2015
MINUTES**

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

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

Members absent: Barringer and Svarczkopf

ANR PLAN – TASIFINI CORPORATION, HIDDEN VALLEY ROAD

The Board considered the Approval Not Required (ANR) plan submitted by Tasifini, Inc. to change a lot line between lots A-5 and A-6 at 16 and 24 Hidden Valley Road. The motion was made by Wilson, seconded by Vega, to endorse the plan entitled, "Plan of Land in Groton, Massachusetts, For: Tasifini, Inc.," prepared by Stamski and McNary, Inc.; dated June 11, 2015. The motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC HEARING – SPECIAL PERMIT/SITE PLAN REVIEW, STATION HOUSE 14-20 STATION AVENUE

In accordance with the provisions of Chapter 40A, §§ 9 and 11, M. G. L., the Groton Planning Board held a public hearing to consider the application submitted by Daniel and Lori McElroy to modify Special Permit #2014-14 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, "Grading Plan, 14-20 Station Avenue, Groton, Massachusetts," prepared Ducharme & Dillis Civil Design Group, dated September 12, 2014, with revisions through June 10, 2015. The proposed project is located at 20 Station Avenue on Assessors' Map 113, Parcel 59, on the northwesterly side of Station Avenue.

In accordance with the provisions of Chapter 40A, §§ 9 and 11, M. G. L., the Groton Planning Board held a public hearing to consider the application submitted by Daniel McElroy, Trustee; Groton Center Realty Trust, for a Special Permit to utilize the provisions of Section 218-30.2 Town Center Overlay District for the rehabilitation of an existing parking lot and construction of a 575 SF structure as shown on the plan entitled, "Grading Plan, 14-20 Station Avenue, Groton, Massachusetts," prepared Ducharme & Dillis Civil Design Group, dated September 12, 2014, with revisions through June 10, 2015. The proposed project is located at 14 Station Avenue on Assessors' Map 113, Parcel 60, on the northwesterly side of Station Avenue.

Chairman Perkins called the public hearings to order. Clerk Vega read the notices posted with the Town Clerk on June 17, 2015 and published in the June 19 and 26, 2015 issues of the Groton Herald.

Applicants Dan and Lori McElroy, Attorney Robert Collins, Design Engineer Stan Dillis of Ducharme and Dillis Civil Design Group, and Architect Dan Quaile of Lincoln Architects were present.

Attorney Collins said there are two separate applications before the Board. One application is to modify Special Permit 2014-14 for renovations to the former fire station. The other is for the parking lot located between the former fire station and Town Hall. Mr. McElroy purchased the adjacent lot for parking and to provide more space to add onto the side and rear of the fire station. The addition of the parking lot allows a redesign of the area in front of the building. Universally accessible parking spaces will be provided in the parking lot rather than in front of the building. Landscaping will be added to the parking area and there will be more on-street parking on Station Avenue. The total number of parking spaces will be 35 with 27 spaces in the parking lot and 8 on-street.

Member Burke asked where the mechanical equipment would be located. Mr. Quaile said the HVAC unit and refrigeration for the kitchen will be in the addition on the rear of the building rather than outside as shown on the previous plan.

Member Burke asked if 5% of the area in the interior of the parking lot would be landscaped with trees. Mr. Dillis said there are no trees there now. The landscaping will be around the perimeter of the parking lot. The parking spaces are 9' x 18' with 24' aisles as required in the Site Plan Review regulations. Member Burke said it is nice to have a landscaped buffer between this parking lot and the parking lot behind Town Hall. Mr. Dillis said the new parking lot will utilize the subsurface Storm-Tec drainage system installed by a previous owner. Member Burke said if two parking spaces are eliminated, there would be no need for interior plantings. He said he thinks this is a fine proposal.

Member Vega asked about the rear setbacks. Mr. Collins said the plan meets the Town Center Overlay District (TCOD) setback requirements of 15 ft from the perimeter of the District. Member Vega said he likes the new plan.

Member Wilson said he likes the new plan and agrees with the need for shade trees in the interior of the parking lot.

Member Giger said he is impressed with the new design and thinks it is very attractive. He asked if a lighting plan had been submitted. Mr. Collins said historic gas lights will be used as shown in the parking lot. Lighting soffits will be used on the front of the building as shown on the previously approved plan. Lanterns that match the gas lights will be used on the side of the building.

Chairman Perkins asked if a photometric plan was submitted. Mr. Collins said, "no," cut sheets were submitted. A photometric plan was not submitted because gas lights will be used. Chairman Perkins said the lights must be shielded and facing downward.

Member Giger asked about the number of seats in the restaurant and number of parking spaces. Mr. Collins said the interior space is still a work in progress. They have not found an end user yet so the type of food service is to be determined. The addition is for a kitchen, restrooms, and a utility area. The bike shop will not be in the building because it is incompatible with food service. However, a bike shop may be added in another building in the future.

Member Giger said the by-law requires that one parking space must be provided for every two seats. Mr. Collins said they would request a waiver of the required number of parking spaces. Mr. Dillis said there are on-street parking spaces available. Member Giger noted that on-street spaces on Station Avenue cannot be used in the calculation. He asked the applicant to clarify the number of seats and number of parking spaces.

Member Giger asked about access for the tenant in the residential unit on the second floor. Mr. Collins said there is a sidewalk on the side of the building to parking spaces on the street or in the parking lot. Member Giger asked about a second means of egress from the apartment. Mr. Quaile said from the window onto the roof on the side of the building.

Member Burke said he is not as concerned about the number of parking spaces as the mix of day-time and evening uses. Mr. Collins said the applicant intends to apply for a liquor license so there will be evening use. He added that the Board already approved the reuse of the former fire station. This plan adds the parking lot and improves the situation. Member Giger noted that the previous plan did not show a 73-seat restaurant. Mr. Collins said the plan shows what is possible, not what is proposed. There will be a collection of uses as discussed with the previous plan.

Chairman Perkins asked if a fence would be installed in the rear of the site. Mr. Dillis said a small retaining wall will be used. She asked if the dumpster would be enclosed. Mr. Dillis said, "yes." She asked if any new trees would be planted. Mr. Dillis said there are trees and other vegetation there now including on the berm between the new parking lot and the Town Hall parking area.

Member Burke asked about a bicycle rack. Mr. Collins said it is shown on the plan.

Land Use Director/Town Planner Michelle Collette said the Design Review Committee has not reviewed the plan yet as required in Section 218-30.2 Town Center Overlay District. She said she is working with the Committee to schedule a meeting.

The Board voted unanimously to continue the public hearing on August 6, 2015 at 7:30 PM.

CRYSTAL SPRINGS ESTATES FIELD CHANGE

Attorney Collins and Design Engineer Stan Dillis met with the Board to discuss a minor field change at Crystal Springs Lane. Mr. Dillis said he walked the site with the Board's engineer, Tim McGivern of Nitsch Engineering. The road has an open drainage system, but runoff from the road is not reaching the swale because it hits the gutters and grass. He suggested cutting into the swale in locations to direct runoff from the road to the swale. Filter fabric and riprap will be installed to prevent erosion. Mr. McGivern agrees with the proposed solution. The details will be shown on the as-built plan.

The motion was made by Wilson, seconded by Giger, to approve the changes to the swale at Crystal Springs Lane as a field change. The motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC HEARING – SITE PLAN REVIEW, TARBELL SCHOOL RENOVATIONS

The Board held the continuation of the public hearing to consider the proposed conversion of the Tarbell School to three residential condominium units. Applicant Kevin McGoniagle and several abutters were present.

Chairman Perkins said the outstanding issues are drainage, landscaping, and lighting. Mr. McGoniagle submitted a list of plantings and cut sheets for the proposed light fixtures. He said he did not have any drainage calculations. He submitted photographs of the Hale Village residential units and garages located at 56-58 West Main Street.

Chairman Perkins asked if Mr. McGoniagle would like to pursue Plan B with the six-car garage. Mr. McGoniagle said, "yes."

Member Giger said he is still struggling with the proposed garage and the impact on the sledding area on the property. The playground equipment could be moved, and the garage could be moved closer to

the school building to allow more area for the playground and sledding. Mr. McGoniagle said he would look into moving the garage, if he has enough room to do so. Chairman Perkins said she agreed with Member Giger that moving the garage would leave more room for the playground area.

Member Burke noted that there are lots of parking spaces per unit.

Abutter Alison Manugian said she appreciates the Board's understanding the neighbors' concerns. She said Mr. McGoniagle has made no motion to change the plans. The playground and sledding area are the neighbors' primary concerns. She said six units with six garages on 1.5 acres is too intense.

Abutter Steve St. Pierre expressed concerns about headlight glare on his houses from the access drive on St. James Avenue. Chairman Perkins said perhaps plantings can be used to eliminate glare. Mr. McGoniagle agreed that there are ways to mitigate headlight glare. Mr. St. Pierre asked that the access drive be pointed to the wooded area of his lot.

Ms. Manugian suggested using the existing access on Pepperell Road rather than the proposed access on St. James Avenue.

Member Wilson asked how far the garage could be moved. Mr. McGoniagle said about 5-10 feet but he had to leave at least a car length to get into the garage.

Member Burke suggested rotating the garage by 90° so the garages face the rear of the school building. Mr. McGoniagle said that would make snow removal too difficult. Additionally, it would block the view of the open area from the units. The view from the units is an important consideration. Mr. McGoniagle said there must be some degree of compromise since he is willing to share the privately-owned site with the public. Two-car garages are more desirable for marketability. Both sides need to compromise.

Member Vega said he would like to see the land preserved for the benefit of the community. He agreed that rotating the garages 90° might work. Mr. McGoniagle said cars driving too close to the residential units would have a negative impact on the unit owners.

Member Burke suggested using the existing access from Pepperell Road. Mr. McGoniagle said he is not comfortable with that change. Even with the garages in the rear of the site, there is still a significant amount of space for the playground.

Ms. Manugian said three units on less than two acres is a significant compromise. She suggested putting the garages under the decks. Mr. McGoniagle said it would exaggerate the height issues and is not architecturally feasible.

Mr. St. Pierre said even if the garages are rotated, there is still an issue with headlight glare.

Member Burke suggested either closing the public hearing and voting this evening, or keeping the hearing open and voting at a later date.

Chairman Perkins said there are still outstanding issues with lighting and drainage so she favored leaving the hearing open. Mr. McGoniagle said he would look into changing the orientation of the garage.

The motion was made by Burke, seconded by Vega, to continue the public hearing for the submission of an alternative plan with the garages rotated 90°. The hearing will be continued on July 23, 2015 at 8:30 PM. The motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC HEARING – SPECIAL PERMITS, NAM HANG, LLC, 788 BOSTON ROAD

At the request of the applicant, the Board voted unanimously to continue the public hearings for Site Plan Review and Water Resource Protection Districts for Nam Hang, LLC, 788 Boston Road, on July 23, 2015 at 8 PM.

BOYNTON MEADOWS

The Board received a letter dated June 30, 2015 from Robert France, Mount Laurel Development, requesting a change in the Special Permit conditions for Boynton Meadows to allow issuance of occupancy permits for Units 21A and 27 Blacksmith Row prior to the completion of the affordable unit at 25B Blacksmith Row. Mr. France noted the time involved in conducting lotteries and processing applications through the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD).

The motion was made by Wilson, seconded by Vega, to waive Condition #3 and allow the issuance of occupancy permits for Units 21A and 27 Blacksmith Row prior to completion of the second affordable unit located at 25B Blacksmith Row and that the affordable unit be prepared for the lottery to go forward as soon as possible. The motion passed unanimously.

COMMENTS TO THE ZBA – DEBEAUCOURT, 48 BOSTON ROAD

The Board reviewed the application submitted by Suzanne Debeaucourt to put an addition on her non-conforming commercial building located at 48 Boston Road.

The Board agreed that Ms. Debeaucourt had done a very good job with the hairdressing business on property zoned Residential-Agricultural. The motion was made by Burke, seconded by Wilson, to comment to the ZBA that there should be no increase in the number of hairdressing chairs. The motion passed unanimously.

REEDY MEADOW ESTATES STREET NAME

The Board reviewed the three street names suggested by developer Peter Cricones for the access road serving the townhouses in the Reedy Meadow Estates subdivision. The motion was made by Burke, seconded by Wilson to approve the names Alice Lane, Olivia Way, or Benjamin Franklin Drive, subject to the approval of the Enhanced 9-1-1 Liaison. The motion passed unanimously. *(Note: 9-1-1 Liaison April Moulton subsequently approved "Olivia Way.")*

MONTACHUSETT JOINT TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

The Board learned that David Manugian is still interested in continuing as the Town's representative to the Montachusett Joint Transportation Commission (MJTC). Planning Board member Russ Burke agreed to serve as the alternate, rather than the representative.

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The Board voted unanimously to appoint David Manugian as its representative to the MJTC and to recommend that the Board of Selectmen appoint Planning Board member Russ Burke as the alternate.

TOWN CENTER OVERLAY DISTRICT DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE

The Board voted unanimously to reappoint Fay Raynor as a member and Maureen Giattino and Jason Parent as alternate members of the TCOD Design Review Committee.

MINUTES

The Board voted unanimously to approve the minutes of May 28, 2015 and June 11, 2015.

Meeting adjourned at 10:15 PM

Very truly yours,

Michelle Collette, AICP
Land Use Director/Town Planner