

TOWN OF GROTON PLANNING BOARD

May 17, 2018
Meeting Minutes

A meeting of the Planning Board was held on Thursday, May 17, 2018, at 7:00 p.m. in the second floor meeting room at Town Hall, 173 Main Street, Groton, MA 01450.

Members Present:

Mr. Scott Wilson, Chair
Mr. George Barringer, Clerk (Participated via Telephone)
Mr. Russell Burke, Member
Mr. John Giger, Member
Ms. Carolyn Perkins, Member

Members Not Present:

Mr. Timothy M. Svarczkopf, Vice Chair
Mr. Michael Vega, Member

Also Present:

Mr. Takashi Tada, Land Use Director/Town Planner

Note: Mr. Barringer participated via telephone and under the terms of the state law which allowed him to do that, any and all votes taken would require a roll call vote.

Hummingbird Lane (Age-Restricted Units), Rocky Hill Subdivision

Attorney Bob Collins, representing the applicant, addressed the Board and stated that the site had been in the making for 20 years. He said when the site was originally designed, it had a road but there was also a common septic system with all of the units in the back. He further said that the additional sewer allowed the applicant to spread the units out and would look better.

Attorney Collins stated that there were the two changes; the units had been spread out a little bit now and had a couple of additional units located where the common septic system was. He said the applicant also thought it would look nice to have a boulevard entrance with a landscaped island in between them. He further said that there was also a "cup handle" which was for the mailboxes because it was a private way.

Attorney Collins said that he and the Code Enforcement Officer had worked out a protocol which stated that the applicant could apply for a building permit but would not receive an occupancy permit until the entire roadway, all of the utilities, street trees and media landscaping were installed as well as submitting an "as-built" plan.

Mr. Burke asked if the street would be considered a private driveway. Attorney Collins replied that was correct.

Attorney Collins stated that he submitted the plan as an administrative site plan review application and they had already met with the Land/Use Committee. He also stated that the impervious surface on the roadway had not changed; a permit was issued by the Stormwater Committee.

Attorney Collins pointed out that the applicant signed an agreement which stated if he damaged the road, he would repair it to the satisfaction of the Highway Department.

Mr. Giger stated that the development was for people who were 55 years of age and older. He said he did not understand why they would put all of the mailboxes in one place which would force the “over 55 people” to have to walk in the snow or drive their car in the snow just to get their mail. Attorney Collins replied that the United States Postal Service would not deliver the mail to individual houses on a private drive.

Chairman Wilson asked if there would be a plowed sidewalk. Attorney Collins replied that was correct.

Mr. Giger asked who would maintain the sidewalk. Attorney Collins replied the condominium association would maintain the sidewalk as well as the lawns.

Ms. Perkins asked if there would be additional information regarding the landscape plan. Attorney Collins replied there would be more information regarding the landscaping on the “as-built” plan.

Ms. Perkins stated that she would like to see a more robust landscaping plan. Attorney Collins said that was why they agreed to bring in an “as-built plan” showing the landscaping and sidewalk, before an occupancy permit was issued.

Ms. Perkins commented that in that case the applicant would show the Planning Board a completed landscaping plan without any input of what their concerns might have been. Attorney Collins replied that was correct and said he was happy to bring the plan in ahead of time.

Ms. Perkins asked if there would be lighting in the development. Attorney Collins replied there would be individual post lamps at the end of each driveway. He noted that there would not be any streetlights.

Chairman Wilson commented that he did not feel there was anything in the plan that raised red flags.

Mr. Barringer asked if there would be a sidewalk around the entire perimeter of the private roadway which connected the sidewalk with the public roadway. Attorney Collins replied that was correct.

Mr. Giger asked what type of curbing there would be. Attorney Collins replied there would be Cape Cod curbing except for granite at the roundings.

Mr. Burke made a motion to approve a provisional endorsement for the revised plan with the stipulation that a landscaping plan be submitted to the Planning Board for approval prior to the installation. Ms. Perkins seconded the motion.

A Roll Call vote was taken, which resulted as follows:

Yea: Mr. Barringer, Ms. Perkins, Mr. Giger, Mr. Burke, 5
Mr. Wilson

Nay: 0

MOTION CARRIED

Attorney Collins commented, as a housekeeping item, that the Board had approved the “T turnaround” on Oriole Drive but had requested that he bring in an engineered plan which showed the two changes that Fire Chief Steele McCurdy requested. He said the first change was that the arms of the “T” went to the edge of the cul-de-sac and that it be broadened to accommodate the fire trucks. He further said that Russ Wilson had produced the plan and it was delivered to Mr. Tada.

Occupancy Permits, 788 Boston Road

Mr. Tada stated that the Board had a copy of an e-mail that he received, after hours, from Mr. Bruce Ringwall of GPR, Inc. stating the medical building located at Four Corners was basically done and had hoped to get an occupancy permit on May 1st. He further stated that Steward Medical Group had run into an issue on the inside of the building which caused a delay. He said they would be coming in soon to request an occupancy permit for that building and he had asked the engineer for the site owner to provide an update for the Planning Board. He further said that the applicant wanted some indication from the Planning Board as to whether they would allow an occupancy permit to be granted for the medical building, or if there were any reason they might be opposed to it.

Mr. Tada said he would have to sign off on the permit on behalf of the Planning Board but it depended on what the Board’s comfort level was. Mr. Tada commented that the special permit indicated that the applicant has to submit an “as-built plan” for each building and provide an engineer’s report on what had been done and what remained to be done.

Mr. Burke pointed out that the Board had half of what was required. Mr. Tada replied that was correct. He said the plan was forthcoming but the Board had the report from the engineer. He asked if the Board felt that was sufficient or if they wanted to see more.

Mr. Burke commented that he felt the site work had been exemplary and other than getting an “as-built” plan as required, he did not see any problems. Chairman Wilson stated that he was in agreement with that statement.

Mr. Giger said that the entire construction fence, which would be erected around the work, was not yet in place. He further said that he felt the entire fence had to be in place prior to the building being occupied. Mr. Tada stated that he agreed.

Mr. Giger stated that he did not see anything with regard to traffic signs and he felt they had to be in place. He said that each opening had an entrance as well as an exit; one on Sandy Pond Road and one on Route 119.

Chairman Wilson asked what the HP signs were. Mr. Burke replied it stood for handicapped parking.

Mr. Giger suggested that the traffic signs be added.

Chairman Wilson said the landscaping, lighting, guardrails and dumpster enclosure were all installed. He further said that the applicant needed to complete the fence and get the traffic control signs in place.

Mr. Burke commented that the landscaping that was installed was what was pertinent to that building. Mr. Tada replied that was correct.

Mr. Giger asked if the Building Inspector was comfortable with the plan. Mr. Tada replied that Mr. Cataldo was comfortable with the plan. He further said that since Mr. Cataldo was comfortable with the previous plan that he would be more comfortable now that some of the “finishing touches” had been done.

Mr. Burke made a motion that the Planning Board had no objections to the issuance of an occupancy permit based on the engineer’s emailed report dated May 17, 2018, with the stipulation that the construction fence around the proposed front two buildings be completed and the traffic signage at the ingress and egress be put in place. Mr. Giger seconded the motion.

A Roll Call vote was taken, which resulted as follows:

Yea: Ms. Perkins, Mr. Giger, Mr. Burke, Mr. Wilson	4
Mr. Wilson	
Nay:	0
Abstain:	1

VOTE: 4 – 0 – 1 (Barringer Abstained)

MOTION CARRIED

Marijuana Zoning Amendments

Mr. Tada stated that the Town Clerk, Mr. Mike Bouchard, was working on the submittal of the Marijuana Zoning Amendments to the Attorney General’s Office and he wanted to make sure that the Planning Board did not have any objections to what he had put together. He said the reason that Mr. Bouchard had some concerns was that the way Warrant Article #21 was written (the proposed marijuana zoning), it was presented as a complete repeal of the existing medical marijuana zoning and replacing it with what was proposed. He said the Warrant Article did not specifically state to delete a couple of references with regard to medical marijuana facilities in the Table of Use Regulations. Mr. Tada stated

that what Mr. Bouchard would submit to the Attorney General would not include the two references even though it was not explicitly stated in the motion as written.

Mr. Burke commented that he thought they should just leave them in place because technically, they did not specify to delete them, and they could pick it up at the Fall Town Meeting.

Committee Updates

- Complete Streets Committee

Mr. Barringer said that the Complete Streets Committee had prepared a submission for the next round of funding with regard to the next set of projects which they envisioned for the Town. He commended all of the work that Ms. Michelle Collette had done. He said although they got the submission in on time they learned that they were rejected for the May 1st deadline because, according to the fine print, the previous projects from the previous award had to be entirely completed and approved before they could submit the next submission. Mr. Barringer noted that they would have a prepared submission to send on September 1st.

Mr. Burke asked Mr. Barringer if there were anything in the Complete Streets Program that would provide a sidewalk to connect Lowell Road with the Groton Inn. Mr. Barringer replied that was one of the projects identified in the prioritization plan.

Mr. Tada commented that it was his understanding that the sidewalk on Route 40 was not included in the last attempted submission, which was rejected. He said the last Complete Streets Committee vote on which projects should be proposed in round two included the West Street Bridge and not the sidewalk on Route 40.

- Master Plan Implementation Committee

Ms. Perkins stated that the MPIC was not doing so well. She said part of the problem is that the members are interested and excited about it but did not have any real knowledge of the Master Plan or what the elements of it were. She said the first part of their project, which was to address who to talk to, was a little bit boring. She further said it was difficult to inspire an interest level. Ms. Perkins commented that she felt they needed to have people on the MPIC who understood and had an investment in the Master Plan. She said the people that she was thinking of were members of the Selectmen, the Conservation Commission or the Historic Commission. Ms. Perkins commented that she felt they needed to reconfigure the MPIC to consist of people who had a little bit more of an investment in the Master Plan. She also pointed out that the Conservation Commission was beginning the process of updating the Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP). Ms. Perkins said that Anna Eliot, who was on the MPIC, was going to become a member of the Park Commission and had volunteered to participate on the OSRP working group. The Board collectively agreed it was a great idea. Ms. Perkins said that she would work with Mr. Tada on composing a letter which thanked people for their interest but they would be moving in a different direction.

Approval of Meeting Minutes – April 26, 2018

Page 3, “Mullen” was changed to “Mullin” - Burke

Pages 4 & 5, the vote was corrected to “5-0-1” - Giger

Mr. Burke made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of the April 26, 2018, meeting, as amended. Mr. Giger seconded the motion.

A Roll Call vote was taken, which resulted as follows:

Yea: Mr. Barringer, Ms. Perkins, Mr. Giger, Mr. Burke, Mr. Wilson	5
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Nay:	0
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VOTE: 5 – 0

MOTION CARRIED

Planning Board Meeting Schedule

2nd & 4th Thursday of the Month:

- May 31st
- June 14th
- June 28th
- July 12th
- July 26th
- August 9th
- August 23rd

Mr. Burke commented that it was likely Mr. Giger’s last meeting and made a motion that the Board express their appreciation of Mr. Giger’s distinguished service on the Board. Ms. Perkins seconded the motion.

A Roll Call vote was taken, which resulted as follows:

Yea: Mr. Barringer, Ms. Perkins, Mr. Burke, Mr. Wilson	4
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Nay:	0
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VOTE: 4 – 0 – 1 (Giger Abstained)

MOTION CARRIED

Adjournment

Mr. Giger made a motion to adjourn. Ms. Perkins seconded the motion.

A Roll Call vote was taken, which resulted as follows:

Yea: Mr. Barringer, Ms. Perkins, Mr. Giger, Mr. Burke Mr. Wilson	5
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Nay:	0
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VOTE: 5 – 0

The meeting was declared adjourned at 8:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Trish Gedziun
Recording Secretary