

TOWN OF GROTON PLANNING BOARD

March 14, 2019
Meeting Minutes

A meeting of the Planning Board was held on Thursday, March 14, 2019, at 7:00 p.m. in the second floor meeting room at Town Hall, 173 Main Street, Groton, MA 01450

Members Present:

Mr. George Barringer, Chair
Mr. Russell Burke, Vice Chair
Mr. Scott Wilson, Member
Ms. Carolyn Perkins, Member
Mr. Gus Widmayer, Member

Members not Present:

Mr. Timothy M. Svarczkopf, Clerk
Ms. Annika Nilsson Ripps, Member

Also Present:

Mr. Takashi Tada, Land Use Director/Town Planner

Public Hearing – Proposed Zoning Amendments (Housekeeping Items)

Mr. Widmayer opened the public hearing and read aloud from the Public Hearing Notice as summarized below:

§218-18 – Correction of typographical errors:

- The word “massive” was changed to the word “massing”
- The term “subsidized elderly housing” was changed to “age-restricted housing”

Mr. Barringer asked if there were members of the Board who had questions or comments.

Mr. Wilson commented he felt it was very clear cut.

Mr. Barringer asked if there were any members of the public who had questions or comments. There were none.

Mr. Wilson made a motion to close the public hearing. Ms. Perkins seconded the motion.

VOTE: 5 – 0
MOTION CARRIED

Mr. Wilson made a motion to recommend approval of the article as amended. Mr. Widmayer seconded the motion.

VOTE: 5 – 0

MOTION CARRIED

Discussion - Request for Release of Lots 1 – 7, Cherry Tree Lane Final Phase (Academy Hill Subdivision)

Mr. Michael Feldman, representing Habitech Communities, was present.

Ms. Perkins asked what the status of the affordable lots was. Mr. Tada replied there were two affordable units which still needed to be marketed. He further replied that applications were being accepted and a lottery would be held on Wednesday, April 17th at Town Hall.

Mr. Widmayer asked about the status of the Approval Not Required (ANR) Plan to reconfigure Lots 14 – 16. The Board endorsed the ANR Plan last fall. Mr. Feldman said they recorded the plan.

Mr. Burke asked if the form of surety was reviewed by Town Counsel. Mr. Tada replied it had not but indicated he would follow-up.

Mr. Burke made a motion to authorize the release of the covenant with the posting of a surety in the amount of \$368,731.37 pursuant to the Nitsch Engineering cost estimate and said release was subject to satisfactory review of the release of covenant and surety by Town Counsel. Mr. Wilson seconded the motion.

VOTE: 5 – 0

MOTION CARRIED

Mr. Barringer stated the agenda would be taken out of order.

General Business

- Reedy Meadow Estates – Update on Olivia Way

Mr. Barringer pointed out that the Board was expecting the development team to attend the meeting but they were not present. He said the developer had a deadline for a revised drainage plan with the Stormwater Committee of March 18, 2019. Also on March 18th, Town officials will be meeting with counterparts in Pepperell to discuss the project, and the Select Board will hold a public hearing on the Spring Town Meeting Warrant Articles which include the Citizens' Petition to allow a drainage easement on the conservation land abutting Reedy Meadow Estates.

Mr. Barringer asked if there were members of the public who had questions or comments.

Mr. Andy George, 13 Olivia Way, asked the Planning Board to send a letter of support to the Select Board which supported the request for an easement on conservation property for the purpose of a drainage easement. Mr. Burke pointed out they did not yet know if that was a viable solution.

Mr. George also mentioned the potential land swap requirement associated with placing a drainage easement on conservation land which is protected under Article 97 of the Massachusetts Constitution. The Board members indicated the land swap issue was outside of their jurisdiction.

Ms. Angela George, 13 Olivia Way, addressed the Board and asked what the Planning Board's role was in the situation. Mr. Burke replied the Planning Board approved the developer's plan in concert with the Earth Removal Stormwater Committee as well as the Conservation Commission.

Mr. Barringer stated the Planning Board's responsibility was to approve the infrastructure. Mr. Wilson added that the Town's engineering consultant reviewed the designs which were submitted by the applicant's engineer.

Mr. Barringer pointed out the Town's engineer reviewed the applicant's engineering documents and plans but did not perform the actual site work.

Mr. Burke commented they did not yet know how closely the developer followed the approved plans.

Discussion – Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP) – Letter of Support

Mr. Burke made a motion to authorize Mr. Tada to send the letter of support regarding the Open Space and Recreation Plan to the Conservation Commission. Mr. Wilson seconded the motion.

VOTE: 5 – 0

MOTION CARRIED

**Review Draft Major Site Plan Review Decision – DPW Facility Improvements
500 Cow Pond Brook Road**

Mr. Burke asked if the requested amendments to the site plan were made. Mr. Tada replied they were.

Mr. Barringer asked if the PB received a lighting plan. Mr. Tada replied yes.

Mr. Barringer asked if they had gone out to bid yet. Mr. Tada replied they were going out to bid early the following week.

Mr. Barringer commented that condition #3 would be eliminated from the draft site plan and noted all of the Board members were in agreement with that change.

Mr. Barringer stated that he would like to amend condition #2, relative to Dark Sky compliance, to say "all lights at the facility, including the wall pack lights."

Mr. Barringer asked if the Board had any other amendments to the site plan. There were none.

Ms. Perkins asked if there were any concerns about light interference with the abutting MIT research facility. Mr. Barringer clarified that MIT's concern is with radio interference.

Mr. Widmayer noted an error in the spelling of “Massachusetts” in the table on page 5.

Mr. Burke made a motion to approve the site plan as amended and corrected. Mr. Widmayer seconded the motion.

VOTE: 5 – 0

MOTION CARRIED

Discussion – Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Grant

Mr. Burke stated that they needed to designate certain Boards or departments to take the lead. He said he and Mr. Tada thought the Planning Board, the Fire Department, and the Conservation Commission were the three most appropriate Boards. He would also reach out to the Sustainability Commission and the Light Department. He further said they would need to get an endorsement from the Select Board.

Mr. Tada commented that he had mentioned the grant to Town Manager Mark Haddad, who was supported the effort.

Mr. Burke said the first step was to submit an application and then the Town would get funding of about \$15,000 to \$25,000 to hire a consultant who would do community engagement to identify what the issues were in terms of resiliency. He said one of the things that should happen was to look at a GIS map that would show flood levels, not only for the FEMA 100-year floods but what might be anticipated with climate change over the next thirty or forty years. He said at that point they would come up with some strategies to address the issues.

Mr. Burke commented that it also incorporated disaster preparedness and it was much like the environmental outgrowth of civil defense. He also commented that he and Mr. Tada felt GELD should be involved because so many people depended on electricity for their well water and life support systems.

Ms. Perkins asked if the Sustainability Committee had done any work on the grant. Mr. Burke replied it could tie into the Sustainability Committee.

Mr. Burke stated that he would be happy to work with Mr. Tada on the grant and present the Board with a draft application. The Board collectively agreed.

Mr. Burke made a motion that the Planning Board authorize Mr. Tada, with the assistance of Planning Board members, to pursue the preparation of an application for submittal under the Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Program. Mr. Widmayer seconded the motion.

VOTE: 5 – 0

MOTION CARRIED

Committee Updates

- Community Preservation Committee

Ms. Perkins stated the committee would review applications for projects on March 25th and would make their recommendations at Town Meeting. She said there were some very significant requests, noting among them were a new roof at the library, an upgrade to the athletic fields at the high school, and repairs to the Fitch's Bridge abutments. Ms. Perkins pointed out there would not be enough money to fully fund every project.

Mr. Wilson asked how much the roof at the library was going to cost. Ms. Perkins replied the library had asked for \$395,000 but the total for all of the requested repairs was approximately \$1 million.

- Complete Streets Committee

Mr. Barringer stated that the committee was still in the process of organizing a meeting.

- Master Plan Implementation Committee

Ms. Perkins commented the committee was in the process of reviewing goals and deciding whether or not those goals had been met.

- Zoning Board of Appeals

Mr. Barringer noted the Zoning Board of Appeals approved a request for an accessory apartment on 29 Reedy Meadow Road, with the stipulation that it meet Title 5 septic requirements,

General Business (Continued)

- Bertozzi Farm Estates – Update on Amelia Way

Mr. Barringer said the applicant's engineer had indicated there was still some groundwater flow into the drainage system. He further said the Town's engineer reviewed it and agreed there was still some groundwater inflow into the drainage system but it was not sufficient enough to cause immediate concern.

Mr. Tada stated that he had received verbal feedback from Mr. Tom Delaney, Director of Public Works, and his preference was that the groundwater be allowed to make its way into the drainage system. He said if the intrusion was sealed the groundwater would have to go somewhere else and would likely pop out somewhere else unexpectedly.

Mr. Widmayer asked if the developer wanted the Planning Board to act on the matter. Mr. Tada replied the developer was asking the Planning Board to provide some sort of indication as to whether or not they agreed with his engineers' assessments and if not, to provide him with some direction on what to do.

Mr. Burke asked for confirmation that the catch basin had the capacity to handle the additional flow.

- Approval of Meeting Minutes – February 21, 2019

Mr. Widmayer made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of the February 21, 2019, meeting. Ms. Perkins seconded the motion.

VOTE: 5 – 0

MOTION CARRIED

Discussion – Regulation of Small Wireless Facilities (5G Wireless Network)

Mr. Barringer stated there were no updates as of yet. Mr. Tada mentioned they were waiting for a set of model by-laws that the Massachusetts Municipal Lawyers Association was compiling.

Planning Board Meeting Schedule

2nd & 4th Thursday of the Month:

- March 28th
- April 11th
- April 25th

Adjournment

Mr. Wilson made a motion to adjourn. Ms. Perkins seconded the motion. The meeting was declared adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Trish Gedziun
Recording Secretary

Approved 3/28/2019