

## **TOWN OF GROTON PLANNING BOARD**

### **Virtual Meeting Thursday, 11, 2020 Meeting Minutes**

A virtual meeting of the Planning Board was held on Thursday, June 11, 2020, at 7:00 p.m.

The meeting was broadcasted via Zoom and was available to view on the Groton Channel pursuant to the Governor's Executive Order Concerning the Open Meeting Law.

#### **Members Present:**

Mr. Russell Burke, Chair  
Ms. Annika Nilsson Ripps, Clerk  
Mr. Timothy M. Svarczkopf, Board Member  
Mr. David Bonnett, Board Member  
Ms. Lorayne Black, Board Member

#### **Members not Present:**

Mr. Scott Wilson, Vice Chair  
Mr. George Barringer, Board Member

#### **Also Present:**

Mr. Takashi Tada, Land Use Director/Town Planner

#### **COVID-19 Updates**

Mr. Tada stated that Town Hall would open the following week and employees would start returning to work with protocols in place. He further stated the public continued to have access to the building by appointment only (wearing a mask) and beginning July 1<sup>st</sup> Town Hall would re-open to the general public without the requirement of having an appointment. Mr. Tada said masks would continue to be required and there would be a temperature-taking station at the rear entrance off Station Avenue, noting that would be the only entrance available.

Mr. Tada shared that the Park Commission had opened some of the areas with green space and would have portable toilets available. He added that organized sports would continue to be prohibited, the playgrounds & courts, and Sargisson Beach would remain closed.

Additionally, Mr. Tada said the Country Club was open for golf under the state protocols; the pool remained closed but its status would be reconsidered at the next Select Board meeting.

#### **Confirmatory Lot Release – 365 Riverbend Drive Lot #76, Partridgeberry Woods Subdivision**

Mr. Burke stated that Lot #76 was not included in the release of covenant when the road was built and utilities were put in place. He further said the parcel sat in between two lots that had already been released and was an apparent oversight in the original release of covenant.

Mr. Svarczkopf made a motion to approve the release of covenant for Lot #76 on 365 Riverbend Drive. Ms. Nilsson-Ripps seconded the motion.

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

Yea:	Ms. Black, Mr. Bonnett, Mr. Svarczkopf, Ms. Nilsson Ripps, and Mr. Burke	5
Nay:		0

**VOTE: 5 – 0 – 0**  
**MOTION CARRIED**

**Discussion – Spring Town Meeting Updates & Report**

Mr. Burke commented that the Spring Town Meeting would be held the following Saturday at 10:00 a.m. (June 13<sup>th</sup>) on the field located behind the middle school. He further commented the zoning recodification would be the only article brought forth at the Town Meeting from the Planning Board.

Mr. Burke stated that he would attend the meeting and make a motion to approve the recodification and he would also issue a report.

Mr. Tada commented the Planning Board would likely also be expected to provide a report on the acceptance of Amelia Way as a public way.

**Discussion – Consideration of Outdoor Dining**

Mr. Burke said he felt the Planning Board should have a more relaxed interpretation regarding parking spaces while considering outdoor dining. He also said there were some other questions that were not under the Planning Board’s purview such as the use of public property, etc.

Mr. Tada stated that he had guidelines from the state’s Alcoholic Beverages Control Commission.

Ms. Black commented that the Massachusetts Department of Transportation announced they had a \$5 million grant program which would encourage shared streets, spaces, outdoor dining, and commerce between June 22<sup>nd</sup> and June 29<sup>th</sup>.

Ms. Nilsson Ripps said she had some safety concerns about expanding seating areas near roads. It will require better enforcement of speed limits and other traffic calming measures. She also suggested the Prescott School lawn could be used for outdoor retail/dining.

Mr. John Sopka, 344 Boston Road, asked about restroom facilities and seating capacity in outdoor dining areas. The Planning Board acknowledged that were many factors to be considered.

Mr. Svarczkopf made a motion for the Planning Board to send a communication to the Select Board stating that they were open to considering the expansion of outdoor dining space on a temporary basis, within certain limitations such as a timeframe and occupancy. Ms. Black seconded the motion.

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

Yea:	Ms. Black, Mr. Bonnett, Mr. Svarczkopf, Ms. Nilsson Ripps, and Mr. Burke	5
Nay:		0

**VOTE: 5 – 0 – 0**

**MOTION CARRIED**

#### **MVP (Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness) Update**

Mr. Tada stated the MVP Action Grant deadline is June 22<sup>nd</sup> and Groton's application will be for a proposed flood hazard assessment as well as flood mitigation in the vicinity of Broadmeadow Road and James Brook and enhancement of the brook and ecosystem.

#### **Committee Updates**

- Complete Streets Committee

There was no update.

- Community Preservation Committee

Mr. Burke commented there were a few items on the Town Meeting agenda from the Community Preservation Committee that included the Prescott School sprinkler, and the Housing Coordinator position.

#### **Consideration of Annual Reorganization and Appointments**

Mr. Burke suggested the Planning Board address the reorganization at the next month's meeting.

### **General Business**

- ZBA Updates  
There were no updates.

- Approval of Meeting Minutes from the May 14, 2020 meeting.

Mr. Svarczkopf made a motion to approve the minutes from the May 14, 2020 meeting as presented. Ms. Black seconded the motion.

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

Yea:	Ms. Black, Mr. Bonnett, Mr. Svarczkopf, Ms. Nilsson Ripps, and Mr. Burke	5
Nay:		0

**VOTE: 5 – 0 – 0**  
**MOTION CARRIED**

### **Planning Board Meeting Schedule**

- June 13, 2020 – Spring Town Meeting
- June 25, 2020

### **Adjournment**

Ms. Nilsson Ripps made a motion to adjourn. Ms. Black seconded the motion.

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

Yea:	Ms. Black, Mr. Bonnett, Mr. Svarczkopf, Ms. Nilsson Ripps, and Mr. Burke	5
Nay:		0

**VOTE: 5 – 0 – 0**  
**MOTION CARRIED**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:11 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Trish Gedziun  
Recording Secretary

*Approved 6/25/2020*