

TOWN OF GROTON PLANNING BOARD

Virtual Meeting Thursday, June 25, 2020 Meeting Minutes

A virtual meeting of the Planning Board was held on Thursday, June 25, 2020, at 7:08 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
Mr. George Barringer, Board Member
Mr. Timothy M. Svarczkopf, Board Member
Mr. David Bonnett, Board Member
Ms. Lorayne Black, Board Member

Members not Present:

Mr. Scott Wilson, Vice Chair
Ms. Annika Nilsson Ripps, Clerk

Also Present:

Mr. Takashi Tada, Land Use Director/Town Planner

COVID-19 Updates

Mr. Tada announced the Groton Town Hall would re-open to the general public on June 29, 2020, however, he noted all previously documented safety protocols would remain in place. (Entrance on Station Avenue, temperature checks, and masks must be worn.)

Discussion – Housing Production Plan 2020 – Final Draft

Mr. Burke commented that the Planning Board and the Select Board needed to approve the draft Housing Production Plan prior to submittal by the Department of Housing and Community Development.

Ms. Karen Chapman, Planner, Montachusett's Regional Planning Commission, addressed the Planning Board and said the plan included a housing needs assessment, goals, and implementation strategies.

Ms. Chapman reviewed the Summary of Implementation Strategies as summarized below:

- A. Evaluate zoning bylaws and Board of Health Regulations for barriers to developing affordable housing, including but not limited to, accessory dwelling units, dimensional requirements for infill or non-conforming lots, multifamily development, flexible development, and subsurface sewage disposal regulations.
- B. Evaluate the feasibility of the six identified town owned parcels for affordable housing development and consider a Request for Proposal to attract a suitable developer.
- C. Revisit and assist Groton Housing Authority with developing Nashua Road parcel.
- D. Review active Chapter 61 parcels for potential purchase for town sponsored affordable housing and/or 40B development.
- E. Consider adopting a bylaw that provides density bonuses for including senior and/or handicap-accessible units.
- F. Continue existing and establish new regional housing partnerships with surrounding communities.
- G. Evaluate affordable housing potential near new sewer infrastructure in the Four Corners area of town.
- H. Develop an outreach program that includes the public in affordable housing topics and proposed projects.
- I. Consider purchasing vacant and abandoned existing housing and converting into affordable housing.
- J. Cultivate partnerships with non-profit housing developers.
- K. Identify and leverage funding for affordable housing development.
- L. Monitor and maintain affordability restrictions for existing affordable housing listed on the town's Subsidized Housing Inventory.

Ms. Fran Stanley, Housing Coordinator, said she was happy to see the inclusion of Implementation Strategy D, Review active Chapter 61 parcels for potential purchase for town sponsored affordable housing and/or 40B development.

Mr. John Sopka, 344 Boston Road, asked if the Town could purchase the rights of future development on other open land and restrict the use to affordable housing. Mr. Burke

replied the Town had the right to put restrictions on any land that it owned but they did not usually proffer it because it limited what they may be able to do with the property.

Mr. Svarczkopf made a motion to approve the Housing Production Plan with a recommendation that the Select Board consider an amendment that the Planning Board was agreeable to which would allow the Town to explore land acquisition opportunities similar to how it pursued open space, and if agreeable, be integrated into the implementation strategies. Mr. Svarczkopf added there should be a review of Chapter 61 parcels as well as other properties. Mr. Bonnett seconded the motion.

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

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

VOTE: 5 – 0 – 0
MOTION CARRIED

Discussion – Request for Bond Reduction
Red Pepper Lane (Reedy Meadow Estates)

Mr. Burke commented the Planning Board had multiple previous discussions regarding drainage issues that occurred on Olivia Way, the private condominium road in Reedy Meadow Estates. He further commented that the developer requested to have the surety bond reduced for the work that had already been completed on Red Pepper Lane.

Mr. Burke said that he asked Mr. Tada if any of the additional drainage mitigation work had been completed on Olivia Way and he indicated to date that no drainage work was completed. He said when the Planning Board originally set the bond amount on the subdivision they were not looking at the additional drainage mitigation work so he asked if Nitsch Engineering would prepare a cost estimate for the drainage work to mitigate the stormwater issues.

Mr. Tada stated that Nitsch Engineering was working on the estimated cost for the drainage mitigation but he had not yet received it. He further stated it would be a separate construction estimate and did not think it would be built into the original estimate for the Red Pepper Lane portion of the project. Mr. Tada indicated that he expected to receive the estimate within the next few days.

Mr. Burke asked what the amount of surety was being held. Mr. Tada replied it was approximately \$77,000 for Red Pepper Lane.

Mr. Burke suggested that the Planning Board defer any action until they received the estimate for the stormwater work and also suggested that they consider working the cost into their consideration of the bond request for the street and utilities and if necessary, make a modification to the subdivision plan to include the stormwater mitigation work.

Mr. Svarczkopf made a motion to defer any action by Planning Board until the estimate for the stormwater work was received as well as to work the cost of stormwater mitigation work into bond request. Ms. Black seconded the motion.

Discussion:

Mr. Peter Cricones, the developer, addressed the Board and said he had done everything he could to get the drainage issue straightened out. He said the bond amount was for items that were completed on Red Pepper Lane and the Board was discussing a private roadway, Olivia Way, that had nothing to do with the money that he was asking for. He said it was for pavement of the top coat and whatever other items that were specifically on the checklist for Red Pepper Lane.

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

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

VOTE: 5 – 0 – 0

MOTION CARRIED

Ms. Michelle Collette stated that the Earth Removal Stormwater Committee would be meeting on Tuesday, July 7th at 7:00 p.m. to discuss the matter and the expectation was that Mr. Cricones would be in attendance to provide a progress report and a schedule as to when the additional stormwater work would be done.

Mr. Tada explained there were two trailers located on Reedy Meadows Estates. He said he thought one was a construction trailer, but he could not find any record of a temporary trailer permit. He further said the Building Inspector provided Mr. Cricones with a letter asking him to either remove the trailer or submit the minor site plan application to allow the temporary trailer.

Mr. Tada stated the second trailer was for the landscaping crew that was working on the common areas in the development. He further said the trailer was removed or would be removed by the contractor who was hired to do the landscaping.

Mr. Burke asked if there were any residents from Red Pepper Lane who wished to speak.

Mr. Gary McNabb, 5 Olivia Way, stated his frustration was that the developer was very slow to respond to requests. He further stated there was a construction trailer on the property when there was no construction being done, there was a truck on the property for a long period of time, there was construction material at the beginning of Olivia Way, and on Red Pepper Lane there were two heavy steel spools.

MVP (Municipal Vulnerability Plan) HMP Hazard Mitigation Plan Update

Mr. Tada stated they currently had a complete draft of the MVP/HMP report and the draft chapters had been sent to the core team members for comments. He said after the comments were received Weston & Sampson would submit the revised draft to the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs and the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency for review. He also said there would be additional opportunities for public comment periods and the initial draft would be submitted the following Tuesday.

Mr. Tada said the Action Grant funding was submitted to the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs for the proposed flood assessment and flooding mitigation project along Broadmeadow Road. He added that he anticipated to hear soon if they were approved for the funding of the project or if they had to re-evaluate.

Discussion – Potential Subdivision Project on Parcel 226-2 Longley Road/Sand Hill Road

Mr. Burke stated he and Mr. Tada had met earlier in the week with the development team for the project, noting it was still in the preliminary stages. He further stated Mr. Larry Smith, the developer, was present at the meeting.

Mr. Smith stated they were under agreement with the owner of the site, the McGovern Family, which encompasses 45 acres. He said their goal for Longley and Sand Hill Roads was to build a 28-unit development using the conventional subdivision bylaw, but making it as close to the flexible development bylaw as possible. He added each unit in the 55-and-older community would consist of 2 bedrooms with 2 ½ bathrooms and would have a significant amount of open space. Mr. Smith said the proposed units would be duplexes with some side-entry driveways and some direct driveways.

Mr. Smith said the development would produce an estimated amount of \$420,000 in annual tax revenue for the Town of Groton, mostly because there would be no children attending

the schools and the condominium association would own the roadway and therefore, would be responsible for maintaining it. He added they would also be willing to bring in a water line about ¾ of a mile down Longley Road that would go into the site.

Ms. Black excused herself from the meeting at approximately 8:38 p.m.

Committee Updates

- Complete Streets Committee

Mr. Tada commented they had received revised construction estimates from Nitsch Engineering for the four proposed projects.

- Community Preservation Committee

Mr. Svarczkopf commented the Housing Coordinator position and the fire sprinkler at the Prescott School were approved at the Spring Town Meeting.

Consideration of Annual Reorganization and Appointments

Mr. Burke commented the Planning Board would consider the Annual Reorganization and Appointments at a later date when the entire Board is present.

General Business

- ZBA Updates

There were no updates.

- Approval of Meeting Minutes from the June 11, 2020 meeting.

Mr. Svarczkopf made a motion to approve the minutes from the June 11, 2020 meeting as presented. Mr. Barringer seconded the motion.

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

Yea:	Mr. Bonnett, Mr. Svarczkopf, Mr. Barringer, and Mr. Burke	4
Nay:		0

VOTE: 4 – 0 – 0
MOTION CARRIED

Planning Board Meeting Schedule

- July 9, 2020

Adjournment

Mr. Bonnett made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Svarczkopf seconded the motion.

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

Yea:	Mr. Bonnett, Mr. Svarczkopf, Mr. Barringer, and Mr. Burke	4
Nay:		0

VOTE: 4 – 0 – 0

MOTION CARRIED

The meeting was adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Trish Gedziun
Recording Secretary

Approved 7/23/2020