

**TOWN OF GROTON PLANNING BOARD**  
**Virtual Meeting**  
**Thursday, October 8, 2020**  
**Meeting Minutes**

A virtual meeting of the Planning Board was held on Thursday, October 8, 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  
Mr. Scott Wilson  
Mr. George Barringer, Board Member  
Ms. Annika Nilsson Ripps, Clerk  
Mr. David Bonnett, Board Member  
Ms. Lorayne Black, Board Member

Members not Present:

Mr. Timothy M. Svarczkopf, Vice Chair

Also Present:

Mr. Takashi Tada, Land Use Director/Town Planner

***Public Hearing***

***Major Site Plan Review – Dental Office***

***489 Main Street, Mill Run Plaza (Main Street Bank)***

Mr. John Amaral of Omni Properties introduced the team of applicants. Ellen Dorian, Donna Morel, and Roland Paquette were representing Main Street Bank. Greg Roy of Ducharme & Dillis Civil Design Group is the project engineer. Dr. Ilya Garibyan and Dr. Tiffany Kuang are the oral surgeons who will be opening the dental/medical practice in the approximately 3,200 square-foot unit within the existing Main Street Bank building.

Mr. Roy addressed the Planning Board and stated the proposed sidewalk met the ADA and Massachusetts Architectural Access Board requirements. He said they were proposing a 5' wide bituminous walkway with a cross slope of 1.5%. Waivers of the following submission requirements in §218-2.5G(2) are requested:

- (a) and (b): The sidewalk improvement plan was prepared by Mr. Roy, P.E., and shows the area of the sidewalk, but it does not show Mill Run Plaza in its entirety.
- (c): Calculation of storm drainage. Mr. Roy stated a sidewalk in this location was already factored into the original stormwater design.

- (e): Traffic impact assessment. Mr. Amaral stated traffic impact of the proposed use as a dental/medical office is consistent with the previous use (bank operations center).
- (f): Landscaping plan. The plaza is already landscaped, and they will re-plant any shrubs displaced by the sidewalk installation.
- (g): Location, size, and type of parking, loading, storage, service areas, and snow storage. These areas are already in place for Mill Run Plaza.
- (h): Photometric lighting plan. No changes to existing site lighting are proposed, except for safety lighting on the building entrance served by the new sidewalk.
- (i): Development impact report.
- (k): Floor plans and architectural elevations. A floor plan is provided. No changes are proposed on the exterior of the building. The applicant would work with the existing access and egress doors and the applicant was in negotiations with a professional architectural firm as well as a general contractor who specializes in medical/dental practices.
- (l): Analysis of the consequences of the proposed developments in the four areas which were natural environment, public services, economics, and visual environment. Mr. Amaral said there were no proposed changes to natural environment, public services, or the visual environment but the economics would generate additional tax revenue for the Town of Groton and there would be personal property with some amazing medical equipment along with other proposed improvements.

The Sewer Commission approved the applicant's request for the additional sewer capacity for the medical space (3,200 square feet). Mr. Amaral acknowledged they would have to appear before the Planning Board and the Sewer Commissioner again after they find a third tenant to occupy the remaining middle unit which consists of approximately 3,600 square feet.

- (m): Physical or digital three-dimensional site model.

Mr. Bonnett asked about the existing 4" pipe shown on the sidewalk plan. Mr. Roy said the pipe is for the existing perimeter drain.

Ms. Black asked about the stone trench, and about relocation of shrubs in the work area. Mr. Roy said the trench is for stormwater runoff, and also said they would look to replant any shrubs that are displaced by the sidewalk.

Mr. Barringer asked about lighting specifications and signage. He requested any lighting new lighting fixtures utilize warm color temperatures in the range of 3,000 K. Mr. Amaral said they would provide cut sheets for any new lighting, and confirmed that they would apply for a Sign Permit to install two wall signs on the building.

Ms. Nilsson Ripps agreed that warm lighting is preferable, but also added that any new lights should be consistent with the existing site lighting.

Mr. Burke asked if the Planning Board or the Sign Committee would have jurisdiction over the Sign Permit. Mr. Tada said he would consult with the Town Manager about this.

Dr. Garibyan described the type of practice that he and Dr. Kuang will operate. They specialize in oral surgery and are affiliated with local hospitals.

Mr. Amaral explained how the parking requirements for the dental/medical practice are consistent with the existing parking lot in Mill Run Plaza.

Mr. Burke mentioned the Planning Board received a letter from the Building Inspector and the ADA Coordinator that stated the project complied with the requirements of the Architectural Access Board.

Mr. Burke asked if there were members of the public (via Zoom) who had questions or comments. There were none.

Mr. Barringer made a motion to close the public hearing. Ms. Black seconded the motion.

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

Yea:	Ms. Nilsson Ripps, Mr. Bonnett, Ms. Black, Mr. Barringer, Mr. Wilson, & Mr. Burke	6
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Nay:		0
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**VOTE: 6 – 0 – 0**  
**MOTION CARRIED**

Mr. Barringer made a motion to request Mr. Tada to write a site plan approval to be reviewed at the next Planning Board meeting to include the incorporation of comments made at the Land/Use Committee meeting, the intentions with regard to lighting, and to name a specific type of replacement planting. He added Mr. Tada should clarify any sign issues with the Sign Committee as opposed to the Planning Board and they would have to vote on the requested waivers at the time they looked at the site plan review.

**ANR (Approval Not Required) Plan**  
**121 Robin Hill Road (Lot A-19) and Hummingbird Lane (Lot 1C – 5C)**  
**Rocky Hill Subdivision (Fox Meadow Realty Corp.)**

Attorney Bob Collins, representing the applicant, Mr. Dave Moulton, stated the proposed lot line change was for a lot that had a duplex on it. He said the corner of the abutting lot protruded into what should be the backyard of one of the over 55 units. He further said the plan was to change the lot line by cutting off 165 square feet of what was currently 121 Robin Hill Road and it would become part of the over 55 complex.

Mr. Barringer made a motion to endorse the ANR plan prepared by Ducharme & Dillis Civil Design Group for Fox Meadow Realty in Groton, MA, dated August 27, 2020. Ms. Nilsson Ripps seconded the motion.

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

Yea: Ms. Nilsson Ripps, Mr. Barringer, Ms. Black, 6  
Mr. Wilson, Mr. Bonnett, Mr. Burke

Nay: 0

**VOTE: 6 – 0 – 0**  
**MOTION CARRIED**

**ANR (Approval Not Required) Plan**  
**22 Orchard Lane**

Attorney Bob Collins was present via Zoom to represent the applicant. He said the applicant needed to replace their septic system and, in order to meet the Title 5 offsets the lot line needed to move. Mr. Collins said it made sense to modify the configuration of the two lots so the left-hand lot, instead of being surrounded on two sides by the house lot, would be a more rectangular shape with the requisite land area and frontage to remain a buildable lot.

Mr. Barringer made a motion to endorse the ANR Plan by Ducharme & Dillis Civil Design Group for 22 Orchard Lane in Groton, MA, dated August 27, 2018. Ms. Black seconded the motion.

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

Yea: Ms. Nilsson Ripps, Mr. Barringer, Ms. Black, 6  
Mr. Wilson, Mr. Bonnett, Mr. Burke

Nay: 0

**VOTE: 6 – 0 – 0**  
**MOTION CARRIED**

***Discussion – (Continued from 9/24/20)***  
***Preliminary Subdivision Plan – “Village at Shepley Hill”***  
**Longley Road and Sand Hill Road (Assessor’s Parcel 226-2)**

Mr. Burke pointed out that although Mr. Wilson did not participate in the September 24, 2020, meeting, he had reviewed the video and the minutes and was current on the matter.

Attorney Jill Mann was present via Zoom representing the applicant, Shepley Hill Capital Partners (Larry Smith, Managing Director). She said they had submitted a preliminary plan which showed 14 duplex units (28 dwellings) on a condominium plan. She added the plan was designed in a waiver free format in an effort to provide the Planning Board with an understanding of what they were trying to achieve with the development.

Attorney Mann stated the requests made at the last meeting were to reduce impervious areas/pavement, and investigate the possibility of reducing the number of entrances to one instead of the two that were proposed, in order to lessen the traffic impacts. She said the preliminary plan was revised which reflected a number of the changes the Board had asked for.

The revised preliminary plan shows an emergency-only access on Sand Hill Rd. The width of the proposed condominium road (private) has been reduced from 22’ to 20’. They also included a conceptual “flexible development” plan for comparison. Ms. Mann said they are seeking closure of the Preliminary Plan process and would like to proceed with a Definitive Plan application in the near future.

Ms. Nilsson Ripps reiterated the traffic safety concerns on Longley Road and Sand Hill Road. Mr. Smith said the traffic impact report would be peer-reviewed as part of the Definitive Plan review process.

Mr. Burke said the Longley Road sight lines seem to be better than those on Sand Hill Road. He said the traffic impact assessment peer-review would verify the validity of the traffic data and methodologies used in the assessment.

Mr. Barringer said he liked the narrower roadway, but asked to confirm the adequacy of the turning radius in the cul-de-sac for emergency vehicles. He also expressed a preference for keeping both access points open, and asked about the length of the proposed road in the flexible development design. Mr. Charlie Wear, the project engineer, responded that they kept the width of pavement in the circle at 22’ in order to accommodate a fire apparatus. He said the length of the flexible development road is approximately 1,200 feet.

Ms. Black suggested moving the proposed group mailboxes to the other (westerly) side of the road, which would make more sense for residents entering from Longley Rd. She also suggested providing a better turnaround option before the emergency-only access on Sand Hill Rd.

Mr. Bonnett asked about the proposed water line capacity and also the estimated tax revenues from the project. Mr. Smith said it would be a 12" diameter water line up Longley Road with laterals at every house lot along the way. He also said the projected tax revenue is based on the anticipated selling price of the condo units.

Mr. Wilson asked to clarify the type and location of the proposed septic system. Mr. Wear said they are proposing a common septic system for the whole development, which will be located in the area shown as a green rectangle and labeled "Potential Subsurface Sewage Disposal System Area" on Sheet 2 of the preliminary plan.

Mr. Burke read aloud from messages received via Zoom as summarized as follows:

Ms. Joyce Strong, 238 Longley Rd: I am concerned about speeding on Longley as well as larger vehicles traveling on it.

Ms. Claire Wilson, 138 Sand Hill Rd: Will the Sand Hill Rd access point be only the present site or the requested move of access point to the east?

Mr. David Perrin, 250 Longley Rd, addressed the Board and said he was concerned about speeding on Longley Road. He said his preference was to have the entrance to the proposed development to be on Sand Hill Road. Further, Mr. Perrin said he thought there should be access points on both Longley Road and Sand Hill Road and the residents of the development could choose which one they wanted to use.

Mr. Tada read aloud from letters received from abutters as summarized as follows:

Mr. Paul Reilly, a resident, indicated he was concerned about wetland encroachment, asked if additional traffic surveys would be done, and also expressed concern with having only one access point as well as light pollution.

Ms. Susan Perrin, 250 Longley Rd, also had concerns with the amount of traffic as well as the access points.

Ms. Lynn Bover, 233 Longley Rd, expressed concern that if the access point was on Longley Road that it should not be moved any closer to their property than what was proposed and that it not be any wider. She also said having two access points might be the most reasonable for everyone concerned.

Mr. Roger Shaller & Ms. Kathy Shaller, 154 Sand Hill Rd expressed concern about the Sand Hill Road entrance coming out in front of their house and their neighbor's house.

Mr. Tada reminded the Board that he had received a letter from the Conservation Commission which indicated the need to file a Notice of Intent, which applicant had already acknowledged. He also said due to the multiple wetland crossings and structures within the buffer zone the applicant needed to be prepared to propose wetland replication areas for the road crossings, and the applicant needed to make all efforts to fully comply with the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act and the Groton Wetlands Bylaw.

Mr. Tada said the Conservation Commission also encouraged the applicant to redesign the project to meet flexible development standards which would offer the greatest opportunity to protect the open space by providing a contiguous, permanently preserved conservation land.

Mr. Barringer made a motion to approve the preliminary subdivision plan submitted for the Village at Shepley Hill, prepared by Meridian Associates, for Shepley Hill Capital Partners, dated August 28, 2020, which showed two access roads, one on Longley Road, and one on Sand Hill Road. Mr. Barringer added the plan included the roadway construction details with the narrower roadway, a single sidewalk along the roadways in the plan, and that the applicant strongly considers some of the points of discussion from the meeting. Mr. Wilson seconded the motion.

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

Yea:	Ms. Black, Mr. Barringer, Mr. Wilson, Ms. Nilsson Ripps, and Mr. Burke	5
Nay:		0
Abstained:	Mr. Bonnett	1

**VOTE: 5 – 0 – 1**  
**MOTION CARRIED**

***Public Hearing (Continued from 9/24/20)***  
***Scenic Roads Permit for Tree Removal***  
***145 Hayden Road (K. Chilton)***

Mr. Burke stated the applicant, Ms. Kasey Chilton, had provided a plan showing Hostas would be planted in place of the tree. Mr. Burke said he was expecting another tree to be planted, rather than border plantings.

Mr. Tom Delaney, Department of Public Works and Tree Warden, commented he did not think the proposed vegetation would fare very well during the winter, especially with the salt. He suggested the applicant might donate a tree to “Friends of the Trees” to be planted in another area.

Ms. Chilton commented she did not want to plant another tree in the same location because eventually her view would become obstructed again. She also said the existing tree appeared to have guy wires affixed to it, from the utility pole across the street. Mr. Delaney said the tree company that Ms. Chilton hires will need to contact GELD about removing the guy wires.

Mr. Barringer made a motion to approve the removal of the tree at 145 Hayden Road with the stipulation that the applicant provides a donation for a replacement tree to the “Friends of the

Trees” for planting at an appropriate site in the Town of Groton. Mr. Wilson seconded the motion.

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

Yea: Mr. Wilson, Ms. Nilsson Ripps, Mr. Bonnett, 7  
Ms. Black, Mr. Barringer, Mr. Burke, and Mr. Delaney

Nay: 0

**VOTE: 7 – 0 – 0**

**MOTION CARRIED**

***Discussion - Olivia Way Drainage Mitigation Update  
Red Pepper Lane – Street Acceptance and Bond Reduction  
Reedy Meadow Estates***

Mr. Burke stated although the Planning Board had favorably recommended to accept Red Pepper Lane, the Select Board had decided not to accept it because the vote would have had to be seven days prior to the date of the Town Meeting vote and they could not meet that schedule.

Mr. Burke suggested that the Planning Board should consider the applicant’s request for a bond reduction, given the steady progress being made on the Olivia Way drainage mitigation. Mr. Barringer commented that he was in agreement, and he provided further updates on the status of the work which is being done under a Stormwater Management Permit.

Mr. Burke commented that the Select Board was going to arrange for the Town to snowplow the street so the onus would not fall on the residents.

Mr. Gary McNab, a resident, asked who would maintain the detention pond, the Town or the condominium association? Mr. Barringer replied it was the condominium owners’ responsibility. Mr. Tada commented there was an easement that allowed the basin on the Town’s conservation land to be created and maintained, but he did not think it was a transfer of the land.

Mr. McNab asked if the Town could maintain the pond. Mr. Burke replied the Town was not in a position to accept responsibility for maintaining the pond. Mr. Tada stated that his understanding was the easement allowed for access to the pond, and maintenance requirements were spelled out in the Operations & Maintenance Plan prepared by the developer’s engineer.

Mr. Barringer made a motion to reduce the remaining surety on Red Pepper Lane to \$12,801.13. Ms. Black seconded the motion.

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



Yea: Mr. Wilson, Ms. Nilsson Ripps, Mr. Bonnett, 6  
Ms. Black, Mr. Barringer, and Mr. Burke

Nay: 0

**VOTE: 6 – 0 – 0**  
**MOTION CARRIED**

Mr. Burke suggested that the remainder of the agenda would be taken up at the next Planning Board meeting due to the lateness of the hour.

**Planning Board Meeting Schedule**

- October 22, 2020
- November/December Dates

**Adjournment**

Mr. Wilson made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Barringer seconded the motion.

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

Yea: Mr. Wilson, Mr. Barringer, Mr. Bonnett, 6  
Ms. Black, Ms. Nilsson Ripps, and Mr. Burke

Nay: 0

**VOTE: 6 – 0 – 0**  
**MOTION CARRIED**

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 10:15 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Trish Gedziun  
Recording Secretary

*Approved 11/5/2020*