

**TOWN OF GROTON PLANNING BOARD**  
**Virtual Meeting**  
**Thursday, November 5, 2020**  
**Meeting Minutes**

A virtual meeting of the Planning Board was held on Thursday, November 5, 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, Vice Chair  
Ms. Annika Nilsson Ripps, Clerk  
Mr. George Barringer, Board Member  
Mr. David Bonnett, Board Member  
Ms. Lorayne Black, Board Member

**Members not Present:**

Mr. Timothy M. Svarczkopf, Board Member

**Also Present:**

Mr. Takashi Tada, Land Use Director/Town Planner

**Discussion – Site Plan Modification Request – Composting Area  
600 Cow Pond Brook Road (DPW Facility)**

Mr. Tada explained the Planning Board was in receipt of a site plan modification request letter from Mr. Tom Delaney, Director of Public Works who was the operator of the overall site facility.

Mr. Burke stated the proposed request included a fabric covering for the drop-off area and he indicated there was a proposed location for future greenhouses that would be part of the composting operation. Mr. Andrew Brousseau of Black Earth Compost replied that was correct, however, he noted they did not presently plan on constructing the greenhouses. He said the request before the Planning Board was regarding the fabric roof structure. Mr. Burke stated the request also included overhead lighting and a gravel parking area.

Mr. Barringer asked Mr. Brousseau to confirm with the Groton Electric Light Department if the proposed lighting would be Dark Sky compliant, and he also asked about dust control. Mr. Brousseau said he would check with GELD about the light fixtures. Regarding the dust concern, he responded that the compost piles require a certain level of moisture to facilitate the processing of the material, thereby controlling dust.

Mr. Bonnett asked how the odor would be controlled. Mr. Brousseau replied they would combine food scraps, leaves, and the brush grindings under the roof structure, for approximately six days and during that period it would be moved three times. He also said the structure would have forced aeration that would go through a bio-filter to mitigate odors.

Mr. Delaney was present and stated he was in favor of the request, which would significantly enhance the services provided to residents at the Transfer Station, and put the composting operation at the forefront of communities in Massachusetts.

Mr. Barringer made a motion to approve the modification to the site plan, PB #2019-01, for the addition of a semi-enclosed biomass composting facility as shown on a plan sketch prepared by Andrew Brousseau of Black Earth Compost, with the stipulations that the lighting shall be Dark Sky compliant, the operator shall monitor the open composting windrows for dust and material dispersing outside of the boundaries of the composting area, take the appropriate action to contain them, and address any odor issues. Ms. Nilsson Ripps seconded the motion.

Mr. Brousseau said he would add a title and date to the sketch plan, for reference in the decision.

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

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

Nay: 0

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

Mr. Barringer made a motion to authorize Mr. Tada to inform the Building Inspector that the Planning Board had no objection to the issuance of a building permit prior to the formal completion of the site plan approval documentation. Mr. Wilson seconded the motion.

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

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

Nay: 0

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

**Discussion – Olivia Way Drainage Mitigation Update**  
**Reedy Meadow Estates**

Mr. Barringer commented there was nothing new to report although he was concerned that the paving had not been started. He added there was an Earth Removal Stormwater Advisory Committee meeting the following Tuesday and he expected to hear from Mr. Cricones then.

### **Discussion – Potential Zoning Amendments for 2021 Spring Town Meeting**

- Change the Title of the “Attached Accessory Apartments” to “Accessory Apartments”
- Dwelling Conversion
- DEP Model Floodplain Zoning

### **Committee Updates**

- Complete Streets Committee

Mr. Barringer said an application was submitted to the state (MassDOT) for funding to construct two sidewalk projects (West Main Street and Lowell Road) noting they had to drop the project to connect Whistle Post Lane to the Rail Trail.

Mr. Barringer indicated the two projects were to extend the sidewalk on Lowell Road from its current terminus to the driveway to Gibbet Hill, and to extend the West Main Street sidewalk from its current terminus easterly to the driveway at the Groton Senior Center.

Mr. Barringer commented that the Town had approved \$35,000 to cover the cost of engineering and Nitsch Engineering had agreed to charge \$42,000 for engineering costs. He added he had solicited funds from interested parties, specifically from properties that adjoined and perhaps directly benefited from a sidewalk on Lowell Road, and currently had commitments from two parties that would predominantly make up the difference.

- Community Preservation Committee

Mr. Tada stated the deadline for the project summary applications had passed and a public hearing was scheduled to receive initial feedback on Monday, November 9<sup>th</sup>.

### **General Business**

- Meeting Minutes from September 24, 2020

Mr. Barringer made a motion to approve the minutes from the September 24, 2020, meeting. Ms. Black seconded the motion.

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

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

**VOTE: 5 – 0 – 1**

**MOTION CARRIED**

- Meeting Minutes from October 8, 2020

Mr. Barringer made a motion to approve the minutes from the October 8, 2020. Ms. Nilsson Ripps seconded the motion.

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

Yea:	Mr. Wilson, Ms. Nilsson Ripps, Mr. Barringer, Ms. Black, Mr. Bonnett, and Mr. Burke	6
Nay:		0

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

**Planning Board Meeting Schedule**

- November 5, 2020
- November 19, 2020
- December 3, 2020
- December 17, 2020

**Adjournment**

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

A roll call vote was taken and the meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:22 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Trish Gedziun  
Recording Secretary

*Approved 12/3/2020*