

TOWN OF GROTON PLANNING BOARD
Thursday, April 22, 2021
Meeting Minutes

A virtual meeting of the Planning Board was held on Thursday, April 22, 2021, at approximately 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
Ms. Lorayne Black, Board Member
Mr. David Bonnett, Board Member
Ms. Allison Bedard, Board Member

Also Present:

Mr. Takashi Tada, Land Use Director/Town Planner

Discussion: Surrenden Farm Reserve Parcel (Assessor's Parcel 220-33.2)
Mr. Nathan Shapiro, 133 Shirley Road

Mr. Nathan Shapiro stated he was present to seek the Planning Board's support for the citizens' petition which proposed to move the Surrenden Farm Reserve Parcel from the control of the Select Board to the Conservation Commission. He said the reserve parcel was 14.5 acres and was part of a larger 350-acre plot of land that was "rescued" from development in 2006.

Mr. Shapiro pointed out that the reserve parcel had evolved into a heavily used passive recreation area which he felt should be under the control of the Conservation Commission to preserve it permanently.

Mr. Barringer asked if the request had gone before the Select Board. Mr. Shapiro replied it had and the Select Board voted in favor. He added the Conservation Commission was also in favor of the request.

MOTION: Mr. Barringer made a motion to recommend to Town Meeting the approval of the request. Mr. Wilson seconded the motion.

Discussion:

Mr. Jack Petropoulos addressed the Board and said he felt it was important to note that the Select Board voted three in favor and two opposed. He asked what would be lost by leaving the land as it was and what was gained by encumbering it for conservation only.

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

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

Nay:

0

VOTE: 7 – 0 – 0

MOTION CARRIED

Discussion: Town Meeting Vote on Accessory Apartments Amendment

Mr. Jason Kauppi, Town Moderator, stated he would discuss the amendment with Town Counsel the following Tuesday. He felt if everyone were in agreement the correct way to proceed would be when the Planning Board gives its report at Town Meeting that it includes a recommendation that the quantum of the vote be a simple majority under the new law.

Discussion: Affordable Housing Trust – CPC Article on Spring Town Meeting Warrant
Ms. Carolyn Perkins

Ms. Carolyn Perkins addressed the Board and stated the Housing Trust was requesting \$75,000 from the CPC (Community Preservation Committee) to provide site assessments for town-owned property. She said the Town of Groton had not built or initiated any affordable housing projects in ten years and currently, the median price for a house in Groton was \$590,000. She said there was a great need for affordable housing in Groton.

Ms. Perkins pointed out that the Select Board voted two against, two in favor, and one to vote at Town Meeting. She asked for the Planning Board's support of the request at Town Meeting. She added although the Article was part of the consent decree, some people had mentioned that they would ask that it be held for debate.

MOTION: Mr. Wilson made a motion to support the proposal from the Affordable Housing Trust. Mr. Barringer seconded the motion.

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

Yea:	Ms. Bedard, Mr. Barringer, Ms. Black, Mr. Bonnett, Mr. Wilson, Ms. Nilsson Ripps, and Mr. Burke	7
Nay:		0

VOTE: 7 – 0 – 0

MOTION CARRIED

Public Hearing - Scenic Roads Permit – Trails Committee
Relocate the Trailhead on Fritz & Helen Walker Conservation Area
Chicopee Right-of-way (Assessor's Parcel 225-55)

Mr. Burke opened the public hearing and Mr. Tada read the public notice into the record. Mr. Burke stated it was a joint public hearing of the Planning Board and the Tree Warden.

Mr. Paul Funch, Groton Trails Committee, was present on behalf of the application. He said the trail had a fair amount of use and it was not very safe due to the grading. He said the request was to realign the trail so that it went straight across Chicopee Road.

Mr. Funch stated in order to do that realignment there was a possibility that a tree might have to be removed in order to successfully relocate an existing stone wall.

Mr. Tom Delaney, Tree Warden, said he supported of the request and would assist with the grading work within the public way.

Mr. Tada commented that the Planning Board received letters of support from both the Conservation Commission and the Groton Conservation Trust.

MOTION: Mr. Barringer made a motion to approve the Scenic Road application. Ms. Bedard seconded the motion

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

Yea:	Mr. Tom Delaney, Ms. Bedard, Mr. Barringer, Ms. Black, Mr. Bonnett, Mr. Wilson, Ms. Nilsson Ripps, and Mr. Burke	8
Nay:		0

VOTE: 8 – 0 – 0
MOTION CARRIED

Public Hearings (Continued)

Definitive Plan and Special Permit for Flexible Development
“Hayes Woods” – Maple Realty Trust (Robert Kiley, Trustee)
Maple Avenue/Hill Road/Pepperell Road (Assessor’s Parcels 212-13 & 104-30)

Attorney Bob Collins, representing the applicant, requested the public hearing for the Definitive Plan and the Special Permit for Flexible Development be continued until the May 13, 2021 Planning Board meeting. This would allow them the time to submit the materials required under a major project and decide what would work best for the site.

MOTION: Mr. Barringer made a motion to continue the public hearing for the Definitive Plan and Special Permit for Flexible Development application to May 13, 2021, at 7:00 p.m. Mr. Wilson seconded the motion.

Discussion:

Ms. Deb Collum, a resident, asked if the developer had any plans to pursue a parallel path with respect to the environmental notification plans. Attorney Collins replied the applicant would have to amend the environmental notification submission based on whatever plan ended up being approved.

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

Yea:	Ms. Bedard, Mr. Barringer, Ms. Black, Mr. Bonnett, Mr. Wilson, Ms. Nilsson Ripps, and Mr. Burke	7
Nay:		0

VOTE: 7 – 0 – 0
MOTION CARRIED

**ANR (Approval not Required) Plan (Added 4/20/21) Maple Avenue and Pepperell Road
New Lots Hayes Family Real Estate Trust**

Attorney Collins also requested that the deadline by which the Board would need to act on an ANR (Approval not Required) Plan be similarly extended. Additionally, he requested that the Planning Board be allowed to amend the applicant's pending submission to incorporate the major projects section of the bylaw.

Mr. Barringer made a motion to accept the applicant's request to extend the time to act on the Approval not Required Plan submitted to May 27, 2021.

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

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

Nay: 0

VOTE: 7 – 0 – 0
MOTION CARRIED

ANR Plan (Added 4/20/21)
Oriole Drive – Lot Line Adjustment
Rocky Hill Subdivision

Attorney Collins, representing the applicant, said they realized there was a strip that ran along the power lines on the back of the lot.

MOTION: Mr. Barringer made a motion to endorse the ANR (Approval not Required) Plan of land produced by Dillis and Roy Civil Design Group, dated March 15, 2021, for Moulton Construction Company. Mr. Wilson seconded the motion.

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

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

Nay: 0

VOTE: 7 – 0 – 0
MOTION CARRIED

**Discussion – Music Center at Indian Hill, 122 Old Ayer Road
Compliance with Site Plan Review Permit**

Mr. Burke stated that one of the provisions that was becoming increasingly troublesome to him was the fact that they were obligated to make significant improvements to the intersection of Old Ayer Road and Route 119 even though there was an anticipated 2022 completion date. He said they still had not seen a plan for the proposed work.

Mr. Burke requested that Mr. Tada draft a letter to the Music Center at Indian Hill that expressed the Planning Board's concern relative to the improvements at the intersection of Old Ayer Road and Route 119 and request that they provide an update of the status and notify them that if the construction was not complete they would not receive a Certificate of Occupancy Permit.

MOTION: Mr. Barringer made a motion to ask Mr. Tada to draft a letter to the Music Center at Indian Hill requesting plans and schedules for the modifications to the intersection of Old Ayer Road and Route 119 or an Occupancy Permit would not be granted until the work was completed. He added the letter should include the requirements to upgrade the Old Ayer Road and Peabody Street intersection and all other outstanding obligations to be sent via certified/return receipt mail. Mr. Wilson seconded the motion.

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

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

Nay: 0

VOTE: 7 – 0 – 0
MOTION CARRIED

Discussion – Community Planning Grants – FY 2022

Mr. Burke explained there was a state funding program that was accepting applications until the end of May for planning activities.

Mr. Tada stated he felt the Town could receive some amount of funding that they could potentially couple with the capital planning funding request for updating the Master Plan.

MOTION: Mr. Wilson made a motion to request that Mr. Tada submit an application for funding to support part of the Master Plan effort. Mr. Barringer seconded the motion.

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

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

VOTE: 7 – 0 – 0
MOTION CARRIED

Committee Updates

- Complete Streets Committee

Mr. Barringer stated the Committee would resubmit the plan that was declined by the state by May 1, 2021. He pointed out the list of projects had not changed. Mr. Tada stated that the Town Manager had given him verbal direction to submit the application on behalf of the Town as he was aware the Complete Streets Committee may not have been able to meet prior to May 1st.

- Community Preservation Committee

Mr. Burke stated with the absence of Mr. Svarczkopf, who was the Planning Board's representative on the Community Preservation Committee, there was an open seat and it had to be filled by a Planning Board member. He asked Board members to contact Mr. Tada if interested.

General Business

- ZBA Updates

Mr. Tada said the Zoning Board of Appeals had a public hearing regarding 48 Boston Road and Attorney Collins, who was representing the applicant, informed him that the applicant received approval for a change of use for the property and a site plan review would be brought before the Planning Board in the future.

Planning Board Meeting Schedule

- May 1, 2021 – Spring Town Meeting
- May 13, 2021
- May 27, 2021

Adjournment

At approximately 8:50 p.m. Mr. Wilson made a motion to adjourn. Ms. Nilsson Ripps seconded the motion.

The motion carried by a roll call vote. 7 – 0 – 0.

Respectfully submitted:

Trish Gedziun
Recording Secretary

Approved 5/27/2021