

TOWN OF GROTON PLANNING BOARD
Thursday, July 8, 2021
Town Hall, 173 Main Street, Groton, MA
Meeting Minutes

A regular meeting of the Planning Board was held on Thursday, July 8, 2021, at approximately 7:00 p.m. at Town Hall, 173 Main Street, Groton, MA, in the 2nd floor meeting room.

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
Mr. George Barringer, Board Member
Mr. David Bonnett, Board Member
Ms. Lorayne Black, Board Member
Ms. Alyson Bedard, Board Member

Members Not Present:

Ms. Annika Nilsson Ripps, Clerk

Also Present:

Mr. Takashi Tada, Land Use Director/Town Planner

Mr. Burke noted the agenda would be taken out of order.

Discussion – Conversion of Half Moon Road to a Conservation Parcel – Bruce Easom (Added 7/6/2021)

Mr. Bruce Easom addressed the Board and said he felt converting Half Moon Road to a conservation parcel would be of a benefit to the Town. He asked the Planning Board if they felt there would be any obstacles in moving forward with the conversion.

Mr. Easom stated that his preference would be to get the road surveyed and to establish the boundaries in perpetuity. He said the old road is maintained as a trail by the Trails Committee, but the ownership status along the right-of-way is unclear.

Mr. Robert Collins, 204 Gay Road, said he served on the Roads Committee around 40 years ago. The Roads Committee determined that Half Moon Road existed since the 1700's. Mr. Collins suggested following the same procedure that was used to discontinue a portion of Nate Nutting Road.

Collectively the Planning Board said they felt the conversion was a good idea.

Mr. Easom said he would keep the Board up-to-date on his progress.

**Public Hearings – Special Permit for a Shared Driveway
Scenic Roads Permit for Alteration of a Stone Wall
330 Old Dunstable Road – Richard Lewis (Assessor's Parcel 258-6)**

Mr. Burke opened the public hearing.

Prior to the discussion, Mr. Bonnett recused himself as he was an abutter to the Applicant. He took a seat in the audience.

Attorney Bob Collins and Mr. Stan Dillis of Dillis and Roy Civil Design Group were present on behalf of the Applicant. Attorney Collins stated the proposed driveway would serve three lots, two of which had frontage on Old Dunstable Road and one which had frontage on Bridge Street.

Attorney Collins said there was an existing barway providing access into the field. He further said the barway was close to the wetland resource area. He proposed that a section of the stone wall be opened for the new driveway entrance, farther from the resource area. The stones displaced by the new driveway would be relocated to fill in the existing barway gap.

Mr. Dillis said the stormwater runoff from the new driveway would be managed using low impact development (LID) techniques including infiltration, a detention area, and a rain garden.

Ms. Black commented she would like to see more robust plantings in the rain garden and would like to see a detail sheet.

Mr. Burke asked if there were members of the public who had questions or comments.

Mr. Rodney Hersh, 8 Bridge Street, addressed the Board and said he was concerned that Bridge Street was a private road and maintained at the cost of the residents who lived on the road. He asked if access to a private road (which he said was essentially a private driveway) qualified as frontage for a buildable lot. He said there was plenty of access along Old Dunstable Road to have driveways rather than claiming frontage on a private road. Attorney Collins replied there would be no impact on Bridge Street.

Mr. Phil Francisco, 32 Bridge Street, said he had concerns with the dip in Old Dunstable Road, and the oak tree next to the road, which made it difficult to see oncoming cars. He asked how far the driveway would be from the dip in the road (where the Oak Tree was located). Mr. Dillis replied the driveway would be located approximately 100 feet beyond the tree.

Mr. Bonnett, addressing the Board as a private citizen, also shared his concern regarding the obstruction the oak tree caused. Mr. Bonnett presented several images of Old Dunstable Road and the problematic oak tree, compiled from Google Earth.

Ms. Sandra Hersh, 8 Bridge Street, asked what would be across the street from the proposed driveway. Mr. Dillis replied the proposed driveway would be located greater than 120 feet from the Applicant's shed on the opposite side of Old Dunstable Road.

Mr. Thurman Van Riper, 36 Bridge Street, said there were a lot of trees along Bridge Street and wanted to confirm they did not plan on cutting down any trees. Attorney Collins replied there were no plans to cut down any trees along Bridge Street for the shared driveway, and they could add cutting limitations to the deed.

MOTION: Mr. Wilson made a motion to close the public hearing for a shared driveway and to review the findings and conditions at the next Planning Board meeting. Mr. Barringer seconded the motion.

The motion passed 5 – 0 – 0.

MOTION: Mr. Barringer made a motion to close the public hearing for the Scenic Roads Permit for the alteration of a stone wall. Ms. Bedard seconded the motion.

The motion passed 5 – 0 – 0.

Mr. Burke asked Mr. Tada to draft a Decision for the Planning Board’s review to include the conditions relative to access onto Bridge Street, a detail of plantings pertaining to the rain garden, and to restrict cutting along the reserve area on Bridge Street as proposed by the applicant. (The condition regarding the cutting along Bridge Street to be included in the deed.)

Mr. Bonnett returned to his role as a full voting member of the Planning Board.

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

Attorney Bob Collins and Mr. Stan Dillis of Ducharme and Dillis Civil Design Group were present on behalf of the applicant. Attorney Collins presented a plan that reflected the proposed lot lines, the house sites, and where the driveways would be proposed to be located.

Attorney Collins reminded the Board that the Maple Avenue portion of the site would have to be separated from the smaller part of the subdivision (under major projects) that would come off of Pepperell Road.

Attorney Collins proposed that he would submit a Major Projects Special Permit Request that had a copy of the presented plan as part of the submission and delineate where the sites would be separated. He added he would also have to do a Shared Driveway Special Permit for the first two lots.

Mr. Burke asked if there were members of the public who had questions or comments.

Mr. Bob Margolius, 16 Maple Avenue, addressed the Board and he was not at all surprised by the proposed development and would be confident in leaving the decision up to the Planning Board.

Ms. Deb Collum, 137 Maple Avenue, addressed the Board and said she would prefer as few houses as possible and said it would be more visually appealing for the front of the houses to face her home. She also said, however, that she still had concerns regarding the tree removal at the beginning of Maple Avenue.

Mr. Aubrey Theall, 197 Maple Avenue, mentioned there is an old gravity-fed well on the Hayes Woods property that provides water to the Shattuck Farm’s barn via a pipe under Maple Avenue.

Mr. Burke said he would like to see a more defined plan of where the cuts would be on Maple Road.

MOTION: Mr. Barringer made a motion to continue the public hearing for the Definitive Plan and a Special Permit for Flexible Development for Hayes Woods, date specific, to the August 5, 2021, meeting at 7:00 p.m. Mr. Wilson seconded the motion.

The motion passed 6 – 0 – 0.

The Board collectively decided to waive the application fee because the applicant had previously filed an application fee.

**Discussion – Special Permit for AirBnB
368 Main Street, a.k.a. The Herb Lyceum (Added 7/6/2021)**

Mr. Wilson pointed out the word “AirBnB” was the name of a company and, therefore, should not be used. Mr. Burke said it should be categorized as an “Inn” per item #63 in the Use Table.

MOTION: Mr. Barringer made a motion to approve the Special Permit to operate an “Inn” located at 368 Main Street (a.k.a. The Herb Lyceum) as amended. Mr. Wilson seconded the motion.

The motion passed 6 – 0 – 0.

**Discussion – Release of Lots from Covenant
Village Meadows Subdivision, a.k.a. Bluebird Lane
Assessor’s Parcel 206-22 (Added 7/6/2021)**

Mr. Burke commented that the applicant had provided the Treasurer of Groton with a check in the amount of \$124,000 to establish the performance bond account.

MOTION: Mr. Barringer made a motion to accept the covenant for the release of lots #1 through #9 at the Village Meadow Subdivision, also known as Bluebird Lane off of Townsend Road. Mr. Wilson seconded the motion.

The motion passed 6 – 0 – 0.

**Discussion – Old Ayer Road/Route 119 Intersection (Prescott Common) Improvements
Pursuant to the Site Plan Review Permit for the Music Center at Indian Hill (Added 7/6/2021)**

Mr. Burke stated that after the previous Planning Board meeting there was a discussion with the Town Manager, the Public Works Director, and the Fire & Police Chiefs relative to the intersection of Old Ayer Road and Route 119.

Mr. Burke said the conversation resulted in the understanding that Indian Hill Music’s engineer would put together a plan to modify the intersection according to Option 3D as specified in the Site Plan Review Permit, with the details to be worked out in conjunction with DPW Director Tom Delaney.

Ms. Black commented that she felt it was important to preserve the trees, particularly the old Sycamore in the southeast corner of Prescott Common.

Committee Updates

- Complete Streets Committee

There were no updates.

- Community Preservation Committee

Mr. Burke volunteered to serve as the liaison to the Community Preservation Committee. Ms. Bedard said she might be willing to take on this role later in the year.

- Design Review Committee (Town Center Overlay District)

Ms. Black said agreed to serve another three years on the Design Review Committee.

Meeting Minutes

- **June 10, 2021**

MOTION: Mr. Barringer made a motion to approve the minutes from the June 10, 2021, meeting. Ms. Bedard seconded the motion.

The motion passed 6 – 0 – 0.

Planning Board Meeting Schedule

- August 5, 2021

Adjournment

At approximately 8:45 p.m. Mr. Wilson made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Barringer seconded the motion.

The motion passed 6 – 0 – 0.

Respectfully submitted:

Trish Gedziun
Recording Secretary

Approved 8/26/2021