

**TOWN OF GROTON PLANNING BOARD**  
**Thursday, August 26, 2021**  
**Town Hall - 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Meeting Room**  
**173 Main Street, Groton, MA**  
**Meeting Minutes**

A regular meeting of the Planning Board was held on Thursday, August 26, 2021, at approximately 7:05 p.m. at Town Hall, 173 Main Street, Groton, MA, in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Meeting Room.

**Members Present:**

Mr. Russell Burke, Chair  
Mr. Scott Wilson, Vice Chair  
Ms. Annika Nilsson Ripps, Clerk  
Mr. George Barringer, Board Member (Participated via telephone at approximately 7:15 p.m.)  
Ms. Lorayne Black, Board Member  
Mr. David Bonnett, Board Member – (Arrived at approximately 7:25 p.m.)

**Members Not Present:**

Ms. Alyson Bedard, Board Member

**Also Present:**

Mr. Takashi Tada, Land Use Director/Town Planner

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

***Approval Not Required (ANR) Plan***  
**North Street & Wyman Road – Ray Blood (Assessors' Parcel 229-15)**

Mr. Ray Blood addressed the Board and said his intent was to create two new house lots; one for each of his children. He said a septic plan had already been submitted for the property on Wyman Road and there were no plans to do anything on North Street for a few more years. He said he was also going to build a house for himself on the remaining 43 acres of land and had already submitted plans for a building permit. Most of the 43 acres is enrolled in Ch. 61 for forestry, and there is an approved Forest Cutting Plan on file with the state forester (DCR).

Mr. Burke said the lot as shown had adequate frontage as required by the zoning regulations and, therefore, did not constitute a subdivision requiring approval under the Subdivision Control Law.

**MOTION:** Mr. Wilson made a motion to endorse the plan of land presented by Ray Blood, prepared by Summit Survey, Inc., dated June 29, 2021. Ms. Black seconded the motion.

**The motion carried 4 – 0 – 0.**

***Discussion – Scenic Roads Permit for Alteration of a Stone Wall***  
**330 Old Dunstable Road – Richard Lewis (Assessors' Parcel 248-6)**

Mr. Burke explained there was a stone wall that had to be removed to make room for the shared driveway into the site.

Mr. Tada said the applicant proposed to take the stones which were being removed and place them across the existing gap in the wall at the barway.

**MOTION:** Mr. Wilson made a motion to approve the removal of a section of stone wall to accommodate the shared driveway under the Scenic Road Bylaw and relocate the stones that were being removed to fill the existing barway gap as indicated on the plan. Ms. Nilsson Ripps seconded the motion with the following two stipulations:

1. That the stone wall not be removed until the shared driveway was approved.
2. That the stone wall be rebuilt in the same manner and style as the existing stone wall.

Mr. Wilson, as the maker of the motion, indicated his approval of the amendments.

**The motion carried 4 – 0 – 0.**

**Discussion – Revised Covenant for Village at Shepley Hill Subdivision  
Longley Road & Sand Hill Road (Assessors' Parcel 226-2)**

Mr. Burke explained the revised covenant had been reviewed by Town Counsel who made one recommendation in the language (\*Item #7) as it pertained to responsibility for maintaining the road.

*\*The undersigned hereby agrees to remain solely responsible for maintaining road access to the released lots. This includes but is not limited to snow removal, and a sanding program acceptable to the Board. This Covenant will remain in effect unless otherwise changed by acceptance of the Subdivision Roadways by Town Meeting vote and subsequent Order of Taking by the Select Board.*

**MOTION:** Mr. Barringer made a motion to approve the revised Covenant for the Village at Shepley Hill Subdivision. Mr. Wilson seconded the motion.

A roll call vote was taken; which resulted as follows:

Yea: Ms. Nilsson Ripps, Ms. Black, Mr. Barringer, 5  
Mr. Wilson, and Mr. Burke

Nay: 0

**The motion carried 5 – 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**

Mr. Mark Haddad, Town Manager, addressed the Board and presented a proposed plan that resembled Concept Plan 3D as approved by the Planning Board for intersections improvements. He said Mr. Tada had reached out to the Traffic Engineer who did the original peer review in 2016 and who provided a helpful review letter on the latest intersection plan.

Mr. Haddad explained there was a change which included making the intersection on the south side, near the Mobile station, more of a 90-degree intersection which they felt was safer and had better site lines. He added that both the Fire Chief and the Police Chief were in favor of the plan.

Mr. Tom Delaney, DPW Director, said two-way traffic would be maintained on Old Ayer Road North. He also pointed out that the plan indicated the removal of a tree in the common next to Old Ayer Road South that in actuality would not be removed.

Mr. Wilson commented he felt the Planning Board needed to see a plan that reflected a basic traffic pattern. Mr. Delaney replied he would provide an updated plan.

Mr. Wilson asked if a stop sign would be placed where the southbound traffic came onto Old Ayer Road. Mr. Delaney replied there was not but they could include it if they had to.

Mr. Wilson stated the biggest thing he took away from the last meeting was the conflict of left-hand turns and felt the Planning Board had made it clear that they did not think it was a good idea to include it.

Mr. Barringer commented that he had observed large vehicles such as dump trucks struggling to safely make a left-hand turn onto Main Street from the northbound fork of Old Ayer Road because they could not see oncoming traffic from the south of the intersection.

Mr. Burke read aloud a portion of the Peer Review Report as summarized below:

*Option 3D from 2016 shows a realignment of the intersection which is situated at the south side of the common. The realignment helped to reduce the skew of the intersection to improve sight lines and slow turning movement speeds. The July 2021 Intersection Modification Plan is consistent with Option 3D in that it also shows a realignment of the Old Ayer Road South approach to Main Street/Main Street (Route 119), however, option 3D proposed maintaining two-way traffic flow on Old Ayer Road North and continuing to encourage left-turns from Old Ayer Road onto Main Street/Route 119 to occur at the Old Ayer Road North intersection with Main Street.*

*The Intersection Modification Plan proposes the construction of a dedicated left-turn lane on Old Ayer Road South eastbound approaching Main Street/Boston Road (Route 119) as well as a bypass lane on Main Street northbound to facilitate left-turns exiting Old Ayer Road South.*

*The Intersection Modification Plan appears to suggest that the majority of left-turns from Old Ayer Road to Main Street (Route 119) will occur at the Old Ayer Road South intersection with Main Street. This condition was previously reviewed by the applicant's engineer, Stantec, and in their November 28, 2016, memorandum, and by GPI in our December 1, 2016, peer review letter. Both consultants noted that shifting Old Ayer Road eastbound left-turns to the Old Ayer Road South Main Street/Boston Road (Route 119) intersection would increase delays and queues for traffic exiting Old Ayer Road onto Route 119 in both directions; north and south.*

*As a result of this review, the Groton Planning Board rejected the design alternatives, Options 1 & 2, that includes this shift of left-turns to the southerly intersection. GPI continues to maintain that this shift in left-turns will increase delays, queuing, and vehicle conflicts at the Old Ayer Road South/Main Street/Boston Road (Route 119) intersection.*

Mr. Burke said his concern with rush hour on any given day having heavy traffic going up Old Ayer Road wanting to take a left onto Main Street and people going up Main Street wanting to take a left onto Old Ayer Road.

Mrs. Pine, a resident, addressed the Board and said the townspeople were expecting the intersection to be improved and given the police chief, the fire chief, and the DPW Director would all prefer the plan with the 90-degree intersection at the south end, she felt it was the better choice.

Mr. Barringer suggested that trucks not be allowed to take the turn toward the north side. Mr. Haddad said the Select Board could approve an alternate route and have no trucks allowed.

After some discussion, the Planning Board asked the applicant to return with a more detailed plan to include the suggestions made by the Board.

Mr. Russ Harris, of *The Groton Herald*, addressed the Board and expressed concern regarding the intersection; pointing out he felt it was very dangerous.

***Public Hearings – Special Permits for Major Residential and Flexible Development  
Hayes Woods – Maple Realty Trust (Robert Kiley, Trustee)  
Maple Avenue/Hill Road/Pepperell Road (Assessors' Parcels 212-13 & 104-30)***

The Planning Board collectively decided to waive the reading of the public hearing notice into the record.

Attorney Bob Collins represented the applicant, Robert Kiley. He said the overall plan would create four estate-sized lots in excess of 10 acres on Maple Avenue; three conventionally-sized lots of approximately 3 acres each on Maple Avenue; a future flexible development parcel on Pepperell Road; and would result in approximately 60-acres of protected conservation land. He added the land on Pepperell Road would be the subject to a future special permit for a small subdivision road with nine flexible development lots.

Attorney Collins stated there would not be more than 16 lots on the whole site. The seven lots on Maple Avenue would be created by an Approval Not Required (ANR) Plan.

Mr. Burke commented that he had asked to see a more detailed plan regarding areas of vegetation on Maple Avenue and to pinpoint where clearing would be done. Attorney Collins replied Maple Avenue would look as it did currently and noted that the driveway entrances could be installed without taking down any of the trees.

Ms. Nilsson Ripps asked if any of the proposed housing would include affordable housing. Attorney Collins replied they would all be market-rate but that Mr. Kiley would be speaking with the Affordable Housing Trust about the possibility of assisting in some other way.

Mr. Bonnett said there were inconsistencies in the letter and the drawings. He asked how the Open Space would be protected. Attorney Collins replied the Open Space parcel would be gifted to the Town and the restricted area on the ANR lots would be subject to a permanent conservation restriction within the meaning of the statute that complied with the zoning provisions. He noted there would be no public access to the restricted areas, while the public would have access to the Open Space parcel. Mr. Bonnett requested to have the language in writing. Attorney Collins replied he would provide the Board with a draft.

Ms. Black asked for more information about the existing trees that could form a visual buffer along Maple Avenue.

Attorney Collins stated he would return with a more detailed plan, along with some suggested conditions for the permit at the next Planning Board meeting on September 9, 2021. The plans will include more details regarding existing vegetation and proposed areas of disturbance.

***Public Hearing (Continuation)  
Definitive Plan and Special Permit for Flexible Development  
Hayes Woods – Maple Realty Trust (Robert Kiley, Trustee)  
Maple Avenue/Hill Road/Pepperell Road (Assessors' Parcels 212-13 & 104-30)***

**MOTION:** Ms. Black made a motion to continue the public hearings, date specific to the September 9, 2021, Planning Board meeting at 7:45 p.m. Ms. Nilsson Ripps seconded the motion.

A roll call vote was taken; which resulted as follows:

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

Nay: 0

**The motion carried 6 – 0 – 0.**

***Discussion – Field Change - Rocky Hill Subdivision***

Attorney Collins commented the applicant wanted to switch 108 A & B (units 14 & 15), a duplex, with a single-family house to make the area less crowded. He said it did not change anything on the site except for the switch.

**MOTION:** Mr. Wilson made a motion to approve the field change as proposed. Ms. Nilsson Ripps seconded the motion.

A roll call vote was taken; which resulted as follows:

Yea: Ms. Nilsson Ripps, Mr. Barringer, 5  
Mr. Wilson, Mr. Burke, and Mr. Bonnett

Nay: 0

Abstained: Ms. Black 1

**The motion carried 5 – 0 – 1.**

***Discussion – Special Permit Decision for a Shared Driveway  
330 Old Dunstable Road (Richard Lewis – Assessors' Parcel 248-6)***

Prior to the discussion, Mr. Bonnett recused himself.

Mr. Tada reviewed the findings of the Special Permit with the Planning Board.

**MOTION:** Mr. Barringer made a motion to approve the Special Permit for a shared driveway at 330 Old Dunstable Road. Mr. Wilson seconded the motion.

A roll call vote was taken; which resulted as follows:

Yea: Mr. Barringer, Mr. Wilson, Mr. Burke, 5  
Ms. Black, and Ms. Nilsson Ripps

Nay:

0

**The motion carried 5 – 0 – 0.**

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

***Discussion (Continuation)***

***Minor Modification of Special Permit for Exterior ATM – Lighting Plan  
167 Main Street – Bank of America (Assessors' Parcel 113-48)***

Mr. Barringer commented that he had viewed the property on several occasions at night, and he reviewed the six recommendations listed in his letter dated August 17, 2021.

Mr. Josh Waggoner, from GMR, representing the applicant, addressed the recommendations in Mr. Barringer's letter. Mr. Waggoner said they could meet five of the six recommendations. But recommendation #5 is impossible to meet. The recommendation is as follows:

*"#5 - Reduce fixture power ratings to ensure that candlepower at property boundaries does not exceed 2.0 footcandles."*

Mr. Waggoner said the compliance area regulations require a minimum of 2 foot-candles for a 50-foot radius surrounding the ATM. The Main Street property line is less than 50 feet from the ATM. Mr. Waggoner said they can get down to approximately 4 foot-candles at the Main Street property line. However, they can get down to 1 foot-candle at the road.

**MOTION:** Mr. Barringer made a motion to approve the Minor Modification of the site plan referenced in the Special Permit for Exterior ATM located at 167 Main Street (Bank of America), to include the proposed lighting upgrades, with the condition that the Planning Board review the site for compliance following installation of the new lighting. Mr. Wilson seconded the motion.

A roll call vote was taken; which resulted as follows:

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

Nay: 0

**The motion carried 6 – 0 – 0.**

Mr. Barringer was excused from the meeting at approximately 9:13 p.m.

**Approval of Meeting Minutes**

- **June 24, 2021**

**MOTION:** Mr. Wilson made a motion to approve the minutes of the June 24, 2021, meeting as presented. Ms. Black seconded the motion.

**The motion carried 5 – 0 – 0.**

- **July 8, 2021**

**MOTION:** Ms. Black made a motion to approve the minutes of the July 8, 2021, meeting as presented. Mr. Wilson seconded the motion.

**The motion carried 5 – 0 – 0.**

- **August 5, 2021**

**MOTION:** Mr. Wilson made a motion to approve the minutes of the August 5, 2021, meeting as presented. Ms. Nilsson Ripps seconded the motion.

**The motion carried 4 – 0 – 1. (Abstained – Ms. Black)**

- **August 16, 2021**

**MOTION:** Mr. Wilson made a motion to approve the minutes of the August 16, 2021, meeting as presented. Mr. Bonnett seconded the motion.

**The motion carried 5 – 0 – 0.**

**Adjournment**

**MOTION:** At approximately 9:25 p.m. Mr. Wilson made a motion to adjourn. Ms. Black seconded the motion.

**The motion carried 5 – 0 – 0.**

Respectfully submitted:

Trish Gedziun  
Recording Secretary

*Approved 10/7/2021*