**TOWN OF GROTON PLANNING BOARD**

**Thursday, April 27, 2023**

**Meeting Minutes**

A virtual meeting of the Planning Board was held on Thursday, April 27, 2023, at approximately 7:00 p.m., on Zoom.

**Members Present:**

Mr. Scott Wilson, Chair

Ms. Alyson Bedard, Clerk

Mr. Russell Burke, Board Member

Mr. George Barringer, Board Member

Ms. Lorayne Black, Board Member

**Members Not Present:**

Ms. Annika Nilsson Ripps, Vice-Chair

Mr. David Bonnett, Board Member

**Also Present:**

Mr. Takashi Tada, Land Use Director/Town Planner

Per the Massachusetts Attorney General’s guidance regarding the Massachusetts Wiretap Statute, Mr. Wilson stated the meeting was virtual and recorded, and all votes must be taken via roll call. Further, the people who were participating in the meeting introduced themselves.

Mr. Wilson stated the reading of the public hearing notices would not be read into the record, but they were available at the Land/Use Office in the Town Hall.

***Definitive Plan and Special Permit (Public Hearing – Continued)***

***Hayes Woods Subdivision – Flexible Development***

***Pepperell Road, Assessors’ Parcel 104 – 30 (Kiley)***

Attorney Bob Collins and Mr. Stan Dillis, of Dillis & Roy Civil Design Group were present on behalf of the application.

* Revised plans dated 4/12/23 include updated house numbers and bump-out for passing on the shared driveway.
* Stormwater Management Permit had been issued.

***Special Permit for Shared Driveway – (Public Hearing – Continued)***

***Hayes Woods Subdivision – Pepperell Road – Lots 3, 4, & 5***

***Assessors’ Parcel 104-30 (Kiley)***

* Revised plans dated 4/12/23 as noted above.

**MOTION:** Mr. Barringer made a motion to close the public hearings. Ms. Bedard seconded the motion.

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

Yea: Mr. Barringer, Ms. Black, Ms. Bedard, 5

Mr. Burke, and Mr. Wilson

Nay: 0

**MOTION CARRIED: 5 – 0 – 0.**

Mr. Barringer requested Mr. Tada to prepare draft decisions for both the Definitive Plan and the Special Permits for review at the next meeting on May 11, 2023.

***Discussion – Approval Not Required (ANR) Plan***

***Sand Hill Road/Common Street (Assessors’ Map 225; Parcels 17, 18, & 19)***

* ANR Plan to create one new house lot on Sand Hill Road
* Plan involves three existing lots under common ownership.

Mr. Stan Dillis, of Dillis & Roy Civil Design Group, was present on behalf of the application. He said all of the necessary requirements for an ANR Plan.

**MOTION:** Mr. Barringer made a motion to approve the ANR Plan for 280 Common Street Trust prepared by Dillis & Roy Civil Design Group, dated December 5, 2022. Ms. Black seconded the motion.

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

Yea: Mr. Barringer, Ms. Black, Ms. Bedard, 5

Mr. Burke, and Mr. Wilson

Nay: 0

**MOTION CARRIED: 5 – 0 – 0.**

***Discussion – Planning Board reports for Spring Town Meeting***

* Accessory Apartment Zoning Clarifications (Article 19)
  + Need to designate a Planning Board member to read the motion for Warrant Article 19, and also the Planning Board Recommendation.

Mr. Burke offered to read the motion for Warrant Article 19, as well as the Planning Board’s recommendation.

* Citizen’s Petition to Rezone 797 Boston Road (Article 23)
  + Need to vote on a recommendation for Town Meeting and designate a Planning Board member to read the recommendation.

Mr. Tada said Warrant Article 23 would be moved by either Mr. Van Dyne or another signatory of the petition, and the Planning Board would be asked to provide its recommendation.

Mr. Wilson commented that he felt the RA (Residential/Agricultural) was a holdover from a previous era and much had changed at Four Corners since that zoning was put in place. He further said he felt it was out of sync with what was needed in the particular location. Mr. Wilson said he felt the parcel should be rezoned to be consistent with what the other three corners currently looked like.

Mr. Burke said the public had made some very passionate and strong points concerning the proposed zoning. He pointed out that most of the concerns were those that would be addressed in the permitting process. He said he agreed that a Neighborhood/Business district would be a more appropriate zoning designation.

Mr. Barringer said he felt if the property were rezoned to Neighborhood/Business it would require multiple special permits with restrictions that might make it impossible for the proposed pickleball court to be put in.

Ms. Black commented that she felt it should be rezoned as Neighborhood/Business, but she was not in favor of the site plan that was presented.

Mr. Barringer said he would feel better if the applicant came forward and said: “I want to rezone my land to Neighborhood/Business with the premise that they would be bringing local services in.”

Ms. Bedard agreed that changing the zoning to Neighborhood/Business made sense.

**MOTION:** Mr. Burke made a motion that the Planning Board recommend approval of the zoning amendment. Ms. Bedard seconded the motion.

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

Yea: Ms. Black, Ms. Bedard, 4

Mr. Burke, and Mr. Wilson

Nay: Mr. Barringer 1

**MOTION CARRIED: 4 – 1 – 0.**

**Recorder’s Note:** Mr. Barringer was excused from the meeting at approximately 7:50 p.m.

***Discussion – Comprehensive Master Plan Update***

***Proposal from Barrett Planning Group***

* Contract Agreement reviewed by approved by Town Counsel ($149,682)

Mr. Tada noted that some citizens wanted to participate in the Master Plan update process.

Mr. John Sopka, a resident (via Zoom) addressed the Planning Board and said he felt the citizen participation was more than half populated by the Destination Groton Group as they had a singular objective and therefore, may overwhelm the objectives of other citizens.

**MOTION:** Mr. Burke made a motion to proceed with the execution of the contract as prepared by Town Counsel and agreed to by the Town Manager. Ms. Black seconded the motion.

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

Yea: Ms. Black, Ms. Bedard, 4

Mr. Burke, and Mr. Wilson

Nay: 0

**MOTION CARRIED: 4 – 0 – 0.**

***Project Updates***

* Village at Shepley Hill
  + Developer will discuss the project status with the Planning Board on May 11th.
  + Possible request for lease from covenant

Mr. Tada said the developer was fairly certain that they were close to receiving their drinking water permit from the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection for the private wells that were installed. He also said they felt they were also close to getting their permit for the common septic system, as well as the completion of most of the common infrastructure that they could complete at the time.

* Groton Hill Music Center
  + Will invite Groton Hill Music Center to the May 11th meeting to address the following:
    - Lighting
    - Trees in the parking lot
    - Adding wheel stops near the drainage swales
* Boynton Meadows

Mr. Tada stated that Ms. Black had sent her recommendations regarding the landscaping plan and the landscaper had replied in the form of an email which he shared with the Board.

***Committee Updates***

* Complete Streets Committee

Mr. Peter Cunningham, a member of the Complete Streets Committee addressed the Board and said the committee received some preliminary designs from Nitsch Engineering regarding the sidewalks in West Groton and Gibbet Hill. He said they also discussed perhaps adding a sidewalk on Peabody Street, but it would be challenging, and they would continue the discussion.

* Community Preservation Committee

Mr. Burke said all of the projects would be presented at Town Meeting for approval for funding.

***General Business***

* ZBA Updates
  + Groton Farms 40B – Next hearing dates:
    - May 10, 2023, at 6:30 p.m., 2nd-floor meeting room, Town Hall (Traffic – MDM Transportation Consultants
    - May 17, 2023, at 6:30 p.m., 2nd-floor meeting room, Town Hall, (Civil Engineering – Nitsch Engineering)
* Meeting Minutes – April 13, 2023

**MOTION:** Mr. Black made a motion to approve the minutes of the April 13, 2023, meeting, as presented. Mr. Burke seconded the motion.

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

Yea: Ms. Black, Ms. Bedard, 4

Mr. Burke, and Mr. Wilson

Nay: 0

**MOTION CARRIED: 4 – 0 – 0.**

***Planning Board Meeting Schedule***

* May 11th
* May 25th

***Adjournment***

At approximately 8:35 p.m. Ms. Bedard made a motion to adjourn. Ms. Black seconded the motion.

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

Yea: Ms. Black, Ms. Bedard, 4

Mr. Burke, and Mr. Wilson

Nay: 0

**MOTION CARRIED: 4 – 0 – 0.**

Respectfully submitted:

Trish Gedziun

Recording Secretary

*Approved 5/11/2023*