**TOWN OF GROTON PLANNING BOARD**

**Thursday, September 14, 2023**

**Meeting Minutes**

A virtual meeting of the Planning Board was held on Thursday, September 14, 2023, at approximately

7:00 p.m.

**Members Present:**

Mr. Scott Wilson, Chair

Ms. Alyson Bedard, Clerk

Mr. Russell Burke, Board Member

Mr. George Barringer, Board Member

Mr. David Bonnett, Board Member

Mr. Phil Francisco, Board Member

**Not Present:**

Ms. Lorayne Black, Board Member

**Also Present:**

Mr. Takashi Tada, Land Use Director/Town Planner

Per the Massachusetts Attorney General’s guidance regarding the Massachusetts Wiretap Statute and Open Meeting Law, Mr. Wilson stated that the meeting was virtual and recorded, and all votes must be taken via roll call. The Planning Board members were introduced.

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

***601 Lowell Road, Assessor’s Parcel 126-15***

Attorney Bob Collins and Mr. Frank McPartlan, from Dillis & Roy Civil Design Group, were present on behalf of the applicant, Robert Kiley.

Attorney Collins explained the request involved changing a lot line between two properties located at 599 and 601 Lowell Road to take a 10,000-square-foot non-conforming lot of record and replace it with two lots that both exceeded the minimum requirements of 80,000 square feet of land and 225 feet of frontage. He said supplemental information was provided to the Planning Board as follows.

* Extension request letter from Attorney Collins – 8/25/23
* Supplemental exhibit plan from Dillis & Roy – 8/26/23
* Supplemental letter from Attorney Collins – 8/28/23

Mr. Wilson asked if there were members of the Board who had questions or comments.

Mr. Burke asked what the shape factor was for both lots. Attorney Collins replied that one of the two lots did not meet the shape factor but pointed out that it was close.

**MOTION:** Mr. Burke made a motion to endorse the Approval Not Required (ANR) Plan for 601 Lowell Road, Assessor’s Parcel 126-15, with the condition that a statement be added on the plan that one of the properties did not comply with the lot shape factor. Mr. Barringer seconded the motion.

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

Yea: Mr. Barringer, Mr. Francisco, Mr. Bonnett, 6 Mr. Burke, Ms. Bedard, and Mr. Wilson

Nay: 0

**MOTION CARRIED: 6 – 0 – 0.**

***Discussion – Request for Minor Modification (Field Change)***

***79 Maple Avenue (Lot 5, Hayes Woods Major Residential Subdivision)***

* Field Change Request Letter with Sketch Plan, Bob Collins, 8/10/23
* Reduce the front setback of the house from 180’ to 150’
* Refer to Condition 3 of the Special Permit for Hayes Woods Major Residential Subdivision, PB #2021-17

Attorney Bob Collins was present on behalf of the applicant. He said the proposed request would result in less overall site disturbance. The house would be located within an area that has already been cleared for the septic system. It would not require additional tree removal. Placing the house in the original approved location would require additional land clearing and regrading.

Mr. Francisco asked if there would be any changes to the restricted area that provides vegetated screening on Maple Avenue. Attorney Collins replied that it would not affect the vegetated screening.

**MOTION:** Mr. Burke made a motion to approve the field change to allow the house on lot 5 to be moved forward by 30 feet, as shown on the plan as presented. Mr. Francisco seconded the motion.

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

Yea: Mr. Barringer, Mr. Francisco, Mr. Bonnett, 6 Mr. Burke, Ms. Bedard, and Mr. Wilson

Nay: 0

**MOTION CARRIED: 6 – 0 – 0.**

***Discussion – Request for Release of Performance Bond***

***Hummingbird Lane, Rocky Hill Subdivision***

* Letter from Bob Collins, 8/24/23
* As-Built Plan from Dillis & Roy Civil Design Group, 9/5/23
* As-Built Plan Review and Site & Inspection

Mr. Burke commented that he would like to see Nitsch Engineering and/or the Department of Public Works perform a final inspection prior to releasing the performance bond. Attorney Collins agreed to come back to the Board after the inspection was complete.

***Discussion – Pre-Submission Review for a Change of Use***

***142 Main Street***

* Project Description (Form of Intent), 9/1/23
* Site Plan, D.E. Ross Associates, 7/29/23
* Floor Plans, Main Building, and Carriage House
* Parking Plan Blueprint

Mr. Michael McAndrew, the applicant, addressed the Board and stated that he was in the process of purchasing 142 Main Street and explained that he planned to change the use to a beauty spa/salon from what used to be professional offices. He pointed out that he was not proposing any structural changes, but would come forward with a Site Plan Review application for the change of use.

Mr. Barringer asked how many employees there would be. Mr. McAndrew replied that there would be seven or eight.

Mr. Barringer asked if there was any off-street parking. Mr. McAndrew replied there would be ten spots in the back of the building and there was parking available on Main Street.

Mr. Barringer asked if there was any external lighting. Mr. McAndrew replied that there was at least one light located on the back of the building.

***Discussion – Master Plan Update***

* Revised Community Engagement Plan, 9/12/23
* Agenda for First Community Meeting on 9/26/23
* Draft Community Survey for Launch on 9/26/23

Ms. Lauren Lind, Senior Planner, Barrett Planning Group, LLC. addressed the Board and provided an update on the Master Plan, including:

* The Communications Plan has been Updated
* Community Meeting #1 to be held at the Groton Center on September 26th from 7:00 – 8:30 p.m.
* Draft Community Survey is Ready to be Reviewed
* Upcoming Planning Board Meeting: November 9, 2023 – Discussion of Community Meeting & Survey Results.

Ms. Lind reviewed a draft of the proposed agenda for the Community Meeting, as well as the draft proposed survey.

Ms. Anna Eliot, a resident of Groton, addressed the Board via Zoom and suggested adding the question, “How much land do you own, and how do you see it being developed?”

Ms. Lind proceeded to review the proposed draft survey with the Planning Board, which provided edits/changes.

***Discussion – Minor Plan Modification (Field Change) for Slope Stabilization***

***Village at Shepley Hill (added 9/13/23)***

* Slope Reinforcement Plan, Dillis & Roy, Rev. 9/6/23
* Approved by the Earth Removal Stormwater Advisory Committee (ERSWAC) on 9/5/23

Mr. Larry Smith, Shepley Hill Capital Partners (developer) and Mr. Frank McPartlan, Sr. Civil Engineer from Dillis & Roy Civil Design Group, were present for the proposed modification request.

Mr. McPartlan addressed the Board and explained that in July of 2023, the slope uphill of the infiltration basin on Lot 2 experienced a failure due to the heavy rains. He said it was the second failure at the same location, noting that the first failure had been stabilized until the middle of July. Mr. McPartlan said the eroded soil was contained within the infiltration basin, so there are no offsite impacts. He proposed to stabilize the slope using a combination of riprap, crushed stone, geotextile fabric, and a mid-slope drain pipe.

Mr. Tada stated that the Earth Removal Stormwater Advisory Committee (ERSWAC) had approved the proposed remediation in their last meeting.

Mr. McPartlan stated that Nitsch Engineering would continue to monitor the site at the ERSWAC’s request.

**MOTION:** Mr. Barringer made a motion to approve the field change for slope stabilization at the Village at Shepley Hill, dated 9/6/23. Mr. Bonnett seconded the motion.

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

Yea: Mr. Barringer, Mr. Francisco, Mr. Bonnett, 6 Mr. Burke, Ms. Bedard, and Mr. Wilson

Nay: 0

**MOTION CARRIED: 6 – 0 – 0.**

***Discussion – Multi-Family Zoning for MBTA Communities***

***Update on Technical Assistance Grant from the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission (MRPC)***

***Revised Compliance Guidelines***

* Revised Compliance Guidelines from the Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities (EOHLC) 8/17/23
* Technical Assistance Memo and Supporting Materials from the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission (MRPC)
* Feedback for the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission (MRPC)

Mr. Tada shared the revisions made to Section 3A Compliance Guidelines.

**MOTION:** Mr. Burke made a motion to instruct Mr. Tada to reach out to the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission (MRPC) and indicate their desire for additional technical assistance as it becomes available. Mr. Burke seconded the motion.

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

Yea: Mr. Barringer, Mr. Francisco, Mr. Bonnett, 6 Mr. Burke, Ms. Bedard, and Mr. Wilson

Nay: 0

**MOTION CARRIED: 6 – 0 – 0.**

***Planning Board Reorganization & Appointments***

To be addressed when there was a full complement from the Board in attendance.

***Project Updates***

* **Academy Hill**
  + Road Acceptance – Select Board Public Hearing on 10/2/23.
* **Monarch Path**
  + Road Acceptance – Waiting for Documentation of Stormwater System Modification
* **Groton Hill Music Center**
  + No update from Groton Hill Music Center
  + Earth Removal Stormwater Advisory Committee Granted a one-month Extension to the end of October for Site Compliance
  + Wheel Stops not installed yet
* **240 Main Street, Kilbourn Place**
  + Emerson Health Office is now open
  + Final Landscaping not Completed; all other Sitework is Done
  + The Planning Board Should Pay Attention to the Parking Situation (No Problems Reported so far)

***Committee Updates***

* Complete Streets Committee

There were no updates to share.

* Community Preservation Committee

Mr. Burke stated that the Community Preservation Plan for 2024 had been finalized and the application cycle was open.

* Conductorlab Oversight Committee

Mr. Tada explained that the Conductorlab Oversight Committee was in the process of negotiating with the landowner, Honeywell, regarding the hiring of a peer review consultant who would assist the Town with reviewing the Draft Permanent Solution Statement.

***General Business***

* ZBA Updates

Mr. Tada stated the next ZBA hearing regarding Heritage Landing and Groton Farms (40B projects) would be held on Wednesday, September 20, 2023, at 6:30 p.m.

* Meeting Minutes
  + July 13, 2023

**MOTION:** Mr. Barringer made a motion to approve the minutes from the July 13, 2023, meeting, as amended. Ms. Bedard seconded the motion.

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

Yea: Mr. Barringer, Mr. Francisco, Mr. Bonnett, 6 Mr. Burke, Ms. Bedard, and Mr. Wilson

Nay: 0

**MOTION CARRIED: 6 – 0 – 0.**

***Planning Board Meeting Schedule***

* September 28th
* October 12th
* October 26th
* October 28th – Fall Town Meeting

***Adjournment***

At approximately 9:55 p.m. Mr. Burke made a motion to adjourn. Ms. Bedard seconded the motion.

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

Yea: Mr. Barringer, Mr. Francisco, Mr. Bonnett, 6 Mr. Burke, Ms. Bedard, and Mr. Wilson

Nay: 0

**MOTION CARRIED: 6 – 0 – 0.**

Respectfully submitted:

Trish Gedziun

Recording Secretary

*Approved 10/26/2023*