**TOWN OF GROTON PLANNING BOARD**

**March 14, 2024**

**Meeting Minutes**

A virtual meeting of the Planning Board was held on Thursday, March 14, 2024, at 7:00 p.m.

**Members Present:**

Mr. Russell Burke, Board Member

Mr. Phil Francisco, Clerk

Mr. George Barringer, Board Member (Arrived at 7:05 p.m.)

Ms. Alyson Bedard, Board Member

Mr. David Bonnett, Board Member

**Members Not Present:**

Mr. Scott Wilson, Chair

Ms. Lorayne Black, Vice Chair

**Also Present:**

Mr. Takashi Tada, Land Use Director/Town Planner

Per the Massachusetts Attorney General’s guidance regarding the Open Meeting Law, Mr. Wilson stated that the meeting was virtual and recorded, and all votes must be taken via roll call. Further, the meeting participants introduced themselves.

***Discussion – Minor Site Plan Review (Public Hearing)***

***195C Main Street, Proposed Craft Brewery and Taproom***

***Request for Parking Waiver (Continued)***

**Application Withdrawn**

* Letter requesting withdrawal received on 3/7/24 from the applicants Ed Shaffer and Nirmal Mallavarapu.

**MOTION:** Ms. Bedard made a motion to close the public hearing. Mr. Francisco seconded the motion.

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

Yea: Mr. Francisco, Mr. Bonnett, 4

Ms. Bedard & Mr. Burke

Nay: 0

**MOTION CARRIED: 4 – 0 – 0.**

**MOTION:** Mr. Francisco made a motion to accept the applicant's request to withdraw the application. Ms. Bedard seconded the motion.

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

Yea: Mr. Barringer, Mr. Francisco, Mr. Bonnett, 5

Ms. Bedard & Mr. Burke

Nay: 0

**MOTION CARRIED: 5 – 0 – 0.**

***Discussion – Request for Extension of Special Permit***

***32 Court Street (Walter H. B. Platt)***

Attorney Bob Collins was representing the applicant, Walter H.B. Platt.

* Request Submitted by Attorney Bob Collins on behalf of Halsey Platt for a two-year extension.
* Special Permit PB #2021-28 issued on 3/17/22 (Valid for two years.)

**MOTION:** Ms. Bedard made a motion to extend special permit PB#2021-28 for a period of 24 months from the date of expiration. Mr. Barringer seconded the motion.

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

Yea: Mr. Barringer, Mr. Francisco, Mr. Bonnett, 5

Ms. Bedard & Mr. Burke

Nay: 0

**MOTION CARRIED: 5 – 0 – 0.**

***Special Permits and Major Site Plan Review***

***Proposed Multifamily Age-Restricted Housing***

***797 Boston Road, Assessors Parcel 133-49 (119 Partners, LLC) (Public Hearing)***

* The applicant submitted a request to continue the public hearing without discussion to the 3/28/24 meeting. (Letter from Melissa Robbins received on 2/23/24.)

**MOTION:** Mr. Barringer made a motion to continue the public hearing for 797 Boston Road to the March 28, 2024, meeting at 7:30 p.m. Mr. Francisco seconded the motion.

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

Yea: Mr. Barringer, Mr. Francisco, Mr. Bonnett, 5

Ms. Bedard & Mr. Burke

Nay: 0

**MOTION CARRIED: 5 – 0 – 0.**

***Discussion – Master Plan Update***

***Lauren Lind, Barrett Planning Group***

Ms. Lind addressed the Board and summarized the Community Engagement event that was held on February 6, 2024. She said there were two sessions, one in the afternoon and one in the evening, with a total of approximately 70 people. She said they received a lot of good feedback on concepts to include in the 2024 Master Plan, including but not limited to the following:

* Preserve and promote historic properties through policy.
* Educate the public and visitors on town history and culture.
* Address the effects of Groton Hill Music Center.
* Improved safety regarding transportation.
* Reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.
* More community and recreational facilities.
* Limit activity on conservation land.
* Create more affordable housing.
* Some expressed concern regarding the suggested economic development potential due to the presence of long-standing vacancies in existing commercial spaces, particularly in the Four Corners area.

Ms. Lind stated that the next steps included having a working session with the Planning Board to discuss the vision and goals. The meeting date is to be determined.

Ms. Lind suggested that the Board start to think about what they would like to have as a vision statement for the Master Plan.

***Project Updates***

* Groton Hill Music Center – No new updates.
* Village at Shepley Hill – No new updates.
* 240 Main Street, Kilbourn Place

Mr. Tada shared that the property owner, Mr. Gus Widmayer, had invited him and the members of the Planning Board to walk the site, review the landscaping, and discuss any outstanding items.

* Bank of America ATM, 167 Main Street – No new updates.

***Committee Updates***

* Complete Streets Committee
  + Construction Bids due 3/14/2024
* Community Preservation Committee – All applications will be on the warrant for the Spring Town Meeting.
* Conductorlab Oversight Committee – No new updates.
* Firearm Sale Regulation Study Committee
  + Memo to the Planning Board – 3/7/24
  + Draft Zoning Amendment Article – To be reviewed at a future meeting.
* ZBA Updates
  + Heritage Landing – The last hearing date was held on March 6th.
    - The next public hearing to be held on 3/20/24.
  + Housing Production Plan (HPP) Update
    - Current Housing Production Plan to expire on 6/30/2025
    - Looking out for grant opportunities to update the HPP.

***Other***

Mr. Francisco noted that he had attended a tour as part of NRWA’s (Nashua River Watershed Association) MVP Grant work. He said the tour was of Nature-Based Solutions for low-impact development in Devens, MA, and they visited approximately seven different sites, including residential and industrial/business sites in the area. He said he felt it would be very beneficial for the Planning Board to participate in such a tour.

***General Business***

* Meeting Minutes
* February 8, 2024

**MOTION:** Mr. Franciscomade a motion to approve the minutes from the February 8, 2024, meeting as presented. Mr. Bonnett seconded the motion.

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

Yea: Mr. Barringer, Mr. Francisco, 4

Mr. Bonnett, Mr. Burke

Nay: 0

**MOTION CARRIED: 4 – 0 – 1. (Abstain – Ms. Bedard)**

***Planning Board Meeting Schedule***

* March 26th – Spring Town Meeting
* **March 28th – In-Person Meeting at Town Hall**
* April 11, 2024
* April 25, 2024
* May 9, 2024
* May 23, 2024

***Adjournment***

At approximately 8:50 p.m. Mr. Barringer made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Francisco seconded the motion.

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

Yea: Ms. Black, Ms. Beddard, Mr. Francisco, 5

Mr. Bonnett, & Mr. Wilson

Nay: 0

**MOTION CARRIED: 5 – 0 – 0.**

Respectfully submitted:

Trish Gedziun

Recording Secretary

*Approved 4/11/2024*