**TOWN OF GROTON PLANNING BOARD**

**June 27, 2024**

**Meeting Minutes**

A virtual meeting of the Planning Board was held via Zoom on Thursday, June 27, 2024, at 7:00 p.m.

**Members Present:**

Mr. Scott Wilson, Chair

Ms. Lorayne Black, Vice Chair

Mr. Phil Francisco, Clerk

Mr. Russell Burke, Board Member

Mr. George Barringer, Board Member

Mr. David Bonnett, Board Member

Mr. Paul Hathaway, 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 the Open Meeting Law, Mr. Wilson stated that the meeting was virtual and recorded, and all votes must be taken via roll call. Mr. Wilson also introduced the Planning Board members.

***Discussion***

***Pre-Submission Review – 25 Station Avenue – Steve Phaneuf***

* Discussion canceled by Mr. Phaneuf (Offer was not Accepted by the Seller)

***Public Hearing (Continuation)***

***Proposed Zoning Amendment for Firearms Retail Establishments***

Mr. Wilson explained that a draft zoning amendment had been provided to the Attorney General’s Office for an informal review on June 27, 2024. Mr. Tada stated that they were awaiting the comments from the Attorney General’s Office.

Mr. Wilson asked if there were any comments or questions from the public.

Ms. Ginger Vollmar, a resident, stated via chat that she was pleased with the proposed zoning by-law. She asked, however, why the number of establishments was changed from two to three. Mr. Burke replied that it was left up to the Planning Board to decide on the number of establishments, and they decided on three.

**MOTION:** Mr. Burke made a motion to continue the public hearing, date-specific to the July 25, 2024, Planning Board meeting, to wait for an informal opinion on the proposed zoning from the Attorney General’s Office. Mr. Francisco seconded the motion.

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

Yea: Mr. Burke, Mr. Barringer, Mr. Bonnett, Ms. Black 7

Mr. Francisco, Mr. Hathaway, & Mr. Wilson

Nay: 0

**MOTION CARRIED: 7 – 0 – 0.**

**Project Updates**

* Master Plan Update
  + Summary of Community Forum #3

Mr. Francisco commented that over the two sessions, only 60 people attended. He also commented that he felt the level of engagement was somewhat like “speed dating,” and the dynamic he saw was that just as a group of people were starting to get into an involved topic, it was time to move on. He said he felt there should be another Community Forum scheduled where the Barrett Planning Group provided an overview of their thoughts about what they thought should be in the Master Plan and have a discussion with the audience. Mr. Wilson stated that he agreed.

Mr. Tada commented that the Barrett Group wanted to have another event of some sort to gain additional feedback. He added that the Barrett Group was open to trying something else in order to get as much public input as possible. Mr. Tada also said that the Barrett Group wanted to plan or strategize the types of implementation actions that they would put into the implementation plan.

Mr. Burke stated that he felt the schedule should be lengthened, and another forum should be held in September, perhaps using the “Groton Fest” as a recruiting tool.

Mr. Tada stated that he would follow up by contacting the Barrett Group about providing a draft of the Master Plan, adding a community forum, and extending the date of completion. Mr. Tada mentioned, however, that if additional monies were required, they would have to strategize how they would procure the funds.

Ms. Volmer commented that she felt all of the committees and boards in town should have the opportunity to provide input regarding the Master Plan.

* Invitation to Discuss Lighting Policy and Standards, e.g., Dark Sky, with Electric Light Commission.
* Groton Hill Music Center

Mr. Barringer commented that the interior lights had been turned down after hours, but the parking lot lights went out at 11:00 p.m. Mr. Wilson commented that he felt the Planning Board should follow up with the Groton Hill Music Center regarding wheel stops or other safety measure around the drainage swales in the parking lot.

* Village at Shepley Hill – There were no new updates.
* Kilbourn Place, 240 Main Street

Mr. Barringer commented that he would draft a letter to the owner of Kilbourn Place regarding the lighting.

* Village Meadows (Bluebird Lane)
  + The last water connection has been installed and the developer hopes to complete construction this year.
* Groton Farms, 500 Main Street
  + Demolition of the former Deluxe Corporation building to begin on July 8th.

***Committee Updates***

* Complete Streets Committee
  + Meeting held on June 18, 2024, to interview potential candidates.
    - Deanna Kass to be appointed to the Complete Streets Committee
  + Sidewalk construction to begin soon.
  + Ms. Black mentioned that the paving of Farmers Row resulted in elimination of the berms along the sidewalk. This is a real safety concern.
* Community Preservation Committee – There were no new updates.
* Conductorlab Oversight Committee – There were no new updates.
* Firearm Sale Regulation Study Committee – Discussed previously.
* ZBA Updates
  + Meeting held on June 27, 2024, regarding Heritage Landing

***General Business***

Mr. Barringer noted that there was a billboard-type sign on Main Street across from Mill Run Plaza that said “Cannabis Dispensary” with an arrow pointing toward the plaza. He noted it was an off-premise sign, and the Planning Board did not approve it. Mr. Tada commented that the Sign Committee approved the sign for a period of three months. He added that a public hearing was held by the Sign Committee at the request of the cannabis dispensary, United Cultivation.

**MOTION:** Mr. Barringer made a motion to notify the Chair of the Sign Committee, who was the Town Manager, that the Planning Board objects to the off-premise sign for United Cultivation and is generally opposed to the approval of such off-premise signs. Mr. Francisco seconded the motion.

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

Yea: Mr. Burke, Mr. Barringer, Mr. Bonnett, Ms. Black, 7

Mr. Francisco, Mr. Hathaway, & Mr. Wilson

Nay: 0

**MOTION CARRIED: 7 – 0 – 0.**

On the topic of signage, Mr. Burke pointed out that the Mobil station located at 6 Boston Road also appears to have new signage on the canopy over the fuel pumps.

* Meeting Minutes – May 23, 2024

**MOTION:** Mr. Barringer made a motion to approve the minutes from the May 23, 2024, meeting as amended (corrections). Ms. Black seconded the motion.

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

Yea: Mr. Burke, Mr. Barringer, Mr. Bonnett, Ms. Black 7

Mr. Francisco, Mr. Hathaway, & Mr. Wilson

Nay: 0

**MOTION CARRIED: 7 – 0 – 0.**

***Planning Board Meeting Schedule***

* July 11 & 25, 2024

***Adjournment***

At approximately 8:39 p.m. Mr. Barringer made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Hathaway.

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

Yea: Mr. Burke, Mr. Barringer, Mr. Bonnett, Ms. Black 7

Mr. Francisco, Mr. Hathaway, & Mr. Wilson

Nay: 0

**MOTION CARRIED: 7 – 0 – 0.**

Respectfully submitted:

Trish Gedziun

Recording Secretary