**TOWN OF GROTON PLANNING BOARD**

**July 11, 2024**

**Meeting Minutes**

A virtual meeting (via Zoom) of the Planning Board was held on Thursday, July 11, 2024, at 7:00 p.m.

**Members Present:**

Mr. Scott Wilson, 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

**Members not Present:**

Ms. Lorayne Black, Vice Chair

**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. Further, the Planning Board members were introduced.

***Discussion – Master Plan Update, Barrett Planning Group***

Jill Slankas and Tony Duong of the Barrett Planning Group were present for the discussion.

Ms. Slankas addressed the board and said she had provided the Planning Board with a summary from the community forums, which included detailed notes that were collected.

Ms. Slankas stated that the consulting team, which consists of Nitsch Engineering, FXM, and the Barrett Planning Group, was creating an initial set of priority action items for each of the goals. She then said that after the departments had the opportunity to look at the action items and add to them, she would share the document with the Planning Board.

Ms. Slankas said the consulting team was also creating a GIS Story Map sometime in August and providing a draft master plan at GrotonFest. She mentioned that she felt it was important to have a tight action plan developed by the end of August.

Mr. Francisco asked how long the GIS Story Map would be available after the plan was published. Ms. Slankas replied that it would have to be determined.

Mr. Hathaway suggested that GrotonFest should be an action item on future agendas. He added that he had secured a booth.

***Public Hearing (Continuation)***

***Preliminary Subdivision Plan and Special Permit for Flexible Development “Casella Acres,”***

***Wyman Road, Assessors’ Parcel 229-58***

* Attorney Bob Collins, on behalf of the applicant, had submitted a request to continue the hearing to July 25, 2024.
* The applicant had provided a letter regarding the Yield Plan (basic number of lots)

Mr. Burke stated that a letter from the applicant was received requesting a continuation and that the item be referred to Town Counsel. He said he felt that certain assertions within the letter should be discussed.

Mr. Burke said that at the first public hearing, the Planning Board asked the applicant if they had looked at any other conceptual plans, and the applicant stated that they had but never produced them. He said at the meeting four weeks prior that he discovered the inconsistency between the yield plan in terms of what they were proposing. He added that the applicant had provided a yield plan without the benefit of an overlay of what the Natural Heritage protected areas were. He said that the Planning Board received a letter that indicated that the yield plan should be able to use the protected land as part of the calculus, which could be reasonable in some cases. He said, however, that the yield plan had to demonstrate that the project could be reasonably built.

Mr. Wilson defined a yield plan as the conventional subdivision that one could fit on a property within the lot lines without any waivers.

Mr. Burke stated that the property included a cul-de-sac with the proposed lots coming off of it. He said some areas within the lots had been removed from the protected area.

Mr. Burke said that two of the proposed lots (lots 3 & 4) were located entirely within the Natural Heritage protected areas. He said the cul-de-sac for which the applicant relied upon to obtain the necessary frontage was also entirely within the Natural Heritage protected area.

Mr. Burke said that in his letter to the board, Attorney Collins said they could make adjustments to the protected area. He also noted that Attorney Collins had suggested that Town Counsel advise the Planning Board on the matter. He added that he did not think it was a legal issue but a planning issue and, therefore, could be managed by the Planning Board.

**MOTION:** Mr. Burke made a motion to approve the request to extend the public hearing, date specific, to the July 25, 2024, meeting, and that the Planning Board would not seek Town Counsel’s advice on the matter. Mr. Barringer seconded the motion.

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

Yea: Mr. Burke, Mr. Barringer, Mr. Bonnett, 6

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

Nay: 0

**MOTION CARRIED: 6– 0 – 0.**

**Discussion – Request for Release of Covenant**

**Hayes Woods Lane Subdivision (added on 7/9/24)**

* The applicant provided a check to the town to establish a bond account.
* The applicant submitted a request for a Release of Covenant (lot release)

**MOTION:** Mr. Barringer made a motion to accept the Request for Release of Covenant request from Mr. Robert Kiley, Trustee, Maple Avenue Realty Trust, Groton, MA, dated 7/9/2024. Mr. Francisco seconded the motion.

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

Yea: Mr. Burke, Mr. Barringer, Mr. Bonnett, 6

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

Nay: 0

**MOTION CARRIED: 6– 0 – 0.**

***Discussion – Potential Zoning Amendments for Age-Restricted Housing and Solar Parking Canopies (added on 7/8/24)***

* Reviewed definition of Age-Restricted Housing

Mr. Burke stated that a revised definition of Age-Restricted Housing was needed to be compliant with the language contained in the Fair Housing Act and Housing for Older Persons. He also said that additional changes included changing the language indicating that the “housing had to quality for inclusion in the subsidized housing inventory.”

* New provisions for Solar Parking Canopies

Mr. Tada reviewed the edits made by Mr. Burke and Mr. Wilson regarding the Solar Parking Canopies. Mr. Barringer stated that he was hopeful that the items would be ready for Fall Town Meeting.

John Sopka, 344 Boston Road, asked if there could be any requirements in the zoning bylaw to ensure the structural integrity of solar parking canopies. Mr. Burke responded that the canopy structures would have to meet the state building code requirements.

Mr. Tada commented that he had a discussion with Kevin Lindemer, one of the Groton Electric Light commissioners, and he wanted to make sure that the Planning Board was welcome to attend any of their meetings to discuss light pollution.

***Project Updates***

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

Mr. Tada stated the landowner had been working with some of the abutters regarding noise coming from the HVAC systems on the roof. He said the Board of Health was now involved, and the landowner had hired an outside consultant to help mitigate the noise issue.

* Village Meadows (Bluebird Lane) – There were no new updates.
* Groton Farms, 500 Main Street – There were no new updates.
* Monarch Path Subdivision
  + Received an application to modify the Definitive Subdivision Plan for Monarch Path to account for the as-built stormwater management systems (i.e., eliminate Detention Basin #5 at the end of the cul-de-sac road.)
  + Revised drainage report and other materials have been provided to Nitsch Engineering for peer review.
  + Public hearing scheduled for 7/25/24 (In-Person)

***Committee Updates***

* Complete Streets Committee – There were no new updates.
* Community Preservation Committee – There were no new updates.
* Conductorlab Oversight Committee – There were no new updates.
* ZBA Updates
  + ZBA approved the 40B project at Heritage Farms with multiple conditions.

***General Business***

* Meeting Minutes – June 13, 2024

**MOTION:** Mr. Barringer made a motion to approve the minutes from the June 13, 2024, meeting as presented. Mr. Hathaway seconded the motion.

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

Yea: Mr. Burke, Mr. Barringer, Mr. Bonnett, 6

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

Nay: 0

**MOTION CARRIED: 6 – 0 – 0.**

***Planning Board Meeting Schedule***

* July 25, 2024 (In-person)
* August 2024 dates TBD
* September 12th & September 26th, 2024

***Adjournment***

At approximately 8:45 p.m. Mr. Burke made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Barringer seconded the motion.

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

Yea: Mr. Burke, Mr. Barringer, Mr. Bonnett, 6

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

Nay: 0

**MOTION CARRIED: 6 – 0 – 0.**

Respectfully submitted:

Trish Gedziun

Recording Secretary