**TOWN OF GROTON PLANNING BOARD**

**October 24, 2024**

**Town Hall, First Floor Meeting Room**

**Meeting Minutes**

A virtual meeting of the Planning Board was held on Thursday, October 24, 2024, at 7:00 p.m.

**Members Present:**

Mr. Scott Wilson, Chair

Ms. Lorayne Black, Vice-Chair

Mr. Phil Francisco, Clerk

Mr. George Barringer, Board Member

Mr. Russ Burke, 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, Mr. Wilson stated that the meeting was virtual and recorded, and all votes must be taken via roll call. Mr. Wilson introduced the Planning Board members who were present in the remote meeting.

***Discussion – Master Plan Update***

Ms. Jill Slankas and Mr. Tony Duong, Barrett Planning Group, were present to speak to the Planning Board.

Ms. Slankas said she felt that the Master Plan was in the home stretch, and Mr. Tada had sent her an updated implementation plan.

Ms. Slankas stated that she had heard back from the Invasive Species Committee, which provided some input to the “Key Issues” document that was submitted the previous spring. She said they added some specific information to Groton, which was helpful.

Ms. Slankas stated that one of the questions the Board and she had discussed was how they would attempt to keep the document alive moving forward. She said they discussed having an annual retreat or being incorporated into an annual goal-setting process between the Town Manager and the Select Board. She noted that some text would be added to the Implementation Plan that indicated the plan should be reviewed.

Mr. Tada commented that in the past, the Select Board, as part of their annual goal setting, requested department heads to provide annual reports. He said publicizing the progress of the plan would be a good idea, and he would reach out to the Town Manager to obtain some guidance.

Mr. Hathaway commented that encouraging the town departments and commissions to do a periodic compass check against the master plan would be a smart thing to do. He said, however, that tracking various initiatives against the master plan should be within the Planning Board's purview. He said he would be happy to track that progress.

Ms. Slankas asked the Planning Board how much time they felt the complete document should be available for public review. She noted that typically, the time frame was three weeks.

After some discussion, the Board suggested that there be a thirty-day time frame for the document to be available to the public, and if more time were needed, they could extend it to 45 days.

The Board suggested that the final draft of the master plan would be presented at a Special Meeting of the Planning Board on Tuesday, November 19th, to be held remotely on Zoom.

***Public Hearing (continuation) – Definitive Subdivision Plan and Special Permit for Major Residential Development, “Gratuity Brook Farm Estates,” 63 Gratuity Road, Assessors’ Parcel 216-47 (Routhier & Roper Gratuity Road, LLC)***

Mr. Tada stated that Attorney Melissa Robbins had requested another continuance.

**MOTION:** Mr. Burke made a motion to continue the public hearing to November 14, 2024. Ms. Black seconded the motion.

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

Yea: Ms. Black, Mr. Burke, Mr. Hathaway, 7

 Mr. Barringer, Mr. Francisco, Mr. Bonnett,

 Mr. Wilson

Nay: 0

**MOTION CARRIED: 7 – 0 – 0.**

**Recorder’s Note: At approximately 7:38 p.m., Mr. Barringer was excused from the meeting.**

***Discussion – Preliminary Plan Approval for Madigan Hill Residential Compound Plan, 423 Old Ayer Road, Assessors’ Parcel 221-20 (P. Madigan)***

Mr. Tada explained that he had sent out his draft Approval Decision for the preliminary plan; however, Mr. Burke had provided additional input, which the Planning Board reviewed.

**MOTION:** Mr. Burke made a motion to approve the Preliminary Plan, as per the draft Approval Decision, as amended, dated October 24, 2024. Mr. Francisco seconded the motion.

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

Yea: Ms. Black, Mr. Burke, Mr. Hathaway, 6

 Mr. Francisco, Mr. Bonnett,

 Mr. Wilson

Nay: 0

**MOTION CARRIED: 6 – 0 – 0.**

***Project Updates***

* Groton Hill Music Center – There were no updates.
* Village at Shepley Hill – There were no updates.
* Kilbourn Place, 240 Main Street
	+ Mr. Tada stated that the headline in the last issue of the Groton Herald was misleading. He said they were still working on mitigating the noise coming from the rooftop HVAC unit. He said the State Department of Public Health had decided not to get involved, pointing out that the local Board of Public Health was involved, but noise complaints can be difficult to resolve.
* Village Meadows (Bluebird Lane)
	+ Mr. Tada explained that the developer, Roger Kanniard, had lined up Nitsch Engineering to conduct a pre-paving site visit with the paving contractor.
* Groton Farms, 500 Main Street – There were no updates.

***Committee Updates***

* Complete Streets Committee
* Construction of sidewalks on West Main Street and Lowell Road is underway; the contractor is working on West Main Street this week. Construction should be complete in approximately two weeks.
* Community Preservation Committee
	+ Mr. Burke stated that the committee would meet the following Monday to review the preliminary applications.
* Conductorlab Oversight Committee – There were no new updates.
* ZBA Updates – There were no new updates.
* Sign Committee
	+ Mr. Tada stated that the cannabis dispensary on Forge Village Road had received approval for their sign permits.

***General Business***

* Meeting Minutes – There were no minutes to review.

***Planning Board Meeting Schedule***

* November 14, 2024 (In-person)
* November 19, 2024 (Via Zoom)
* December 5, 2024 (Via Zoom)
* December 19, 2024 (Via Zoom)

***Adjournment***

At approximately 8:15 p.m., Mr. Burke made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Hathaway seconded the motion.

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

Yea: Ms. Black, Mr. Burke, Mr. Hathaway, 6

 Mr. Francisco, Mr. Bonnett,

 Mr. Wilson

Nay: 0

**MOTION CARRIED: 6 – 0 – 0.**

Respectfully submitted:

Trish Gedziun

Recording Secretary

*Approved 12/19/2024*