**TOWN OF GROTON PLANNING BOARD**

**January 9, 2025**

**Meeting Minutes**

A virtual meeting of the Planning Board was held on Thursday, January 9, 2025, at 7:00 p.m.

**Members Present:**

Mr. Scott Wilson, Chair

Mr. Phil Francisco, Clerk

Mr. David Bonnett, Board Member

Mr. Paul Hathaway, Board Member

**Members Not Present:**

Ms. Lorayne Black, Vice-Chair

Mr. George Barringer, 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 being recorded, and all votes must be taken via roll call. Mr. Wilson introduced the Planning Board members who were present in the remote meeting.

Mr. Wilson also commented that there were only four members of the Planning Board present, and hence, there was not a quorum for special permit public hearings. He stated that the Board could not address or vote on any special permit applications.

***Discussion – Master Plan Update***

* Consultants are finalizing the revisions per the Comment Resolution Matrix.
  + Questions for the Planning Board
    - Final Formatting: One column or two columns of text?
      * The Planning Board collectively decided on two columns of text.
    - Any further revisions to the implementation table?
      * Mr. Tada to send Mr. Wilson a copy of the draft for any formatting comments.

***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)***

* The applicant submitted a request to continue the public hearing 1/23/25.

***Public Hearing (Continuation) – Preliminary Subdivision Plan, “Casella Acres,” Wyman Road, Assessors’ Parcel 229-58 (J. Casella)***

* The application has been withdrawn via a letter from Attorney Bob Collins.

**Discussion – Letter of Support for Housing Production Plan Grant Application**

Mr. Tada explained that in 2019, Ms. Fran Stanley, Housing Coordinator had asked the Board to provide a letter of support for a Housing Production Plan (HPP) Grant Application to the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission (MRPC) for assistance in updating the HPP. He said the current HPP that was prepared by the MRPC expires later this year. There is a new opportunity to apply for another grant and the application deadline is February 4, 2025.

Mr. Tada said Ms. Stanley had prepared a draft application to be submitted to MRPC and was asking the Planning Board to provide another letter of support.

The Planning Board collectively requested that Mr. Tada prepare a draft letter indicating the Planning Boards support to be reviewed at the January 23rd meeting.

**Discussion – Appoint Representative to Community Preservation Committee**

* To fill the appointments vacated by Russ Burke, who resigned from the Planning Board on December 31, 2024:
  + Planning Board Representative to the Community Preservation Committee.
  + Planning Board Representative to the Montachusetts Regional Planning Committee (MRPC) and the (Montachusett Joint Transportation Committee (MJTC).
  + Planning Board Representative to the Select Board.
    - Mr. Francisco volunteered to be the liaison for the Select Board.

Mr. Tada stated that he would send an email to the Planning Board to see if members who were not present at the meeting may have an interest in being a liaison to the two unfilled appointments.

**Discussion – Potential Zoning Amendments for 2025 Spring Town Meeting**

* Spring Town Meeting Date: Saturday, April 26, 2025
* Warrant Closes: February 21, 2025
  + MBTA Communities Multi-Family Development

Mr. Tada stated that the Planning Board discussed a draft version of a bylaw amendment in 2022, with technical assistance provided through a grant from the MRPC. He also said they received an opinion from the Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities which indicated that the area under consideration was suitable for higher-density, mixed-use development.

Mr. Tada stated that he would schedule a public hearing for the MBTA zoning amendment beginning February 13th.

* + Floodplain Overlay District

Mr. Tada stated that he would forward the State’s Model Floodplain Bylaw to the Planning Board the following day, along with a link to the existing Floodplain Overlay District section from the Zoning Bylaw. He said they would hold public hearings regarding the Floodplain Overlay District and the draft bylaw would have to be reviewed by the MA Department of Conservation & Recreation prior to town meeting.

***Project Updates***

* Groton Hill Music Center
  + Mr. Tada said that he received a comment from Ginger Vollmar who indicated that she did not like the fence being installed at the Groton Hill Music Center.
* Village at Shepley Hill – There were no new updates.
* Kilbourn Place, 240 Main Street – There were no new updates.
* Village Meadows (Bluebird Lane)
* Paving inspection report from Nitsch Engineering, 12/10/25
* Groton Farms, 500 Main Street – There were no new updates.
* Monarch Path Subdivision – There were no new updates.

***Committee Updates***

* Complete Streets Committee
* Community Preservation Committee
* The deadline for complete draft proposals – 1/16/2025
* Conductorlab Oversight Committee – There were no new updates.
* ZBA Updates – There were no new updates.
* Sign Committee – There were no new updates.

***General Business***

* Meeting Minutes – There were no minutes to review.

***Planning Board Meeting Schedule***

* January 23, 2025 (In-person)
* February 13, 2025 (Zoom)
* February 27, 2025 (Zoom)
* March 13, 2025 (Zoom)
* March 27, 2025 (In-Person)

***Adjournment***

At approximately 7:58 p.m., Mr. Francisco made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Hathaway seconded the motion.

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

Yea: Mr. Hathaway, Mr. Francisco, 4

Mr. Bonnett, & Mr. Wilson

Nay: 0

**MOTION CARRIED: 4 – 0 – 0.**

Respectfully submitted:

Trish Gedziun

Recording Secretary

*Approved 4/10/2025*