**TOWN OF GROTON PLANNING BOARD**

**April 10, 2025**

**Meeting Minutes**

A regular meeting of the Planning Board was held on Thursday, April 10, 2025, at 7:00 p.m., in the Town Hall.

**Members Present:**

Mr. Scott Wilson, Chair

Ms. Lorayne Black, Vice-Chair

Mr. Russell Burke, Board Member

Mr. George Barringer, Board Member

Mr. David Bonnett, Board Member

**Members Not Present:**

Mr. Paul Hathaway, Board Member

**Participating via Zoom:**

Mr. Phil Francisco, Clerk

**Also Present:**

Mr. Takashi Tada, Land Use Director/Town Planner

Mr. Wilson stated that meeting was being recorded and broadcast on The Groton Channel. He also said Phil Francisco was participating remotely via Zoom; therefore, all votes would be taken by a roll call vote.

Mr. Wilson also waived the reading of the public hearing notices, which are available in the Land/Use Office in the Town Hall.

***Public Hearing – Proposed Zoning Bylaw Amendment, MBTA Communities Multi-Family Overlay District***

Mr. Wilson opened the public hearing.

Mr. Burke explained that the Town of Groton was an MBTA Community and therefore, the town was required to adopt multi-family zoning. He added that if a community chose not to comply with that requirement, the community would lose eligibility for certain state funding programs. He said the target compliance date was October 31, 2025.

Mr. Tada explained that the MBTA Communities Zoning Law was enacted to address the acute need for housing in Massachusetts. He said the Law required MBTA Communities to adopt local zoning that provided at least one zoning district of reasonable size in which multi-family housing was allowed “as of right” at a minimum gross density of 15 units per acre.

Mr. Tada, summarizing the proposed zoning amendment, stated that the parcels on Main Street identified for inclusion in the overlay district were zoned General Business (BG) and were located within the sewer district. The existing zoning of the parcels included in the overlay district would remain unchanged.

Mr. Burke commented that the Planning Board had received a second request from a property owner, Mr. Brem, that he would like to have all of his parcels included in the MBTA Zoning District. After discussing Mr. Brem’s request, the Planning Board decided to deny his request due to include the residentially-zoned parcel in the overlay district.

Mr. Wilson asked if there were questions or comments from the public. There were none.

**MOTION:** Mr. Barringer made a motion to close the public hearing. Mr. Bonnett seconded the motion.

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

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

 Ms. Black, Mr. Francisco, and Mr. Wilson.

Nay: 0

**MOTION CARRIED: 6 – 0 – 0.**

**MOTION:** Mr. Burke made a motion that the Planning Board make a positive recommendation to Town Meeting for the adoption of the proposed MBTA Multi-Family Overlay District, as written. Mr. Barringer seconded the motion.

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

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

 Ms. Black, Mr. Francisco, and Mr. Wilson.

Nay: 0

**MOTION CARRIED: 6 – 0 – 0.**

***Discussion – Monarch Path Road Acceptance, As-Built Plan Review***

Mr. Ebi Masalehdan, the applicant, addressed the Board and reviewed the updated As-Built Plan that showed all property boundary monuments that had been installed.

Mr. Tada noted that he had received comments on the updated As-Built Plan from Nitsch Engineering, and he also received an email from Tom Delaney, DPW Director, confirming that the catch basins were in satisfactory condition.

Mr. Jeff Hannaford from NDS, Inc., was also present and stated that he was hired do the septic design for Lots 4 and 5. He would plan to install/survey the interior lot boundary monuments.

**MOTION:** Mr. Burke made a motion to recommend the acceptance of Monarch Path as a way, subject to the interior monuments being in place prior to the issuance of any Certificate of Occupancy permits. Mr. Francisco seconded the motion.

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

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

 Ms. Black, Mr. Francisco, and Mr. Wilson.

Nay: 0

**MOTION CARRIED: 6 – 0 – 0.**

***Discussion – Approval Not Required (ANR) Plan, 101 Longley Road, Assessors’ Parcel 225-28. (Christopher Curtis)***

Mr. Wilson explained that the ANR Plan was to formalize the subdivision of the property into two lots. He added that the Planning Board approved special permits for the Hammerhead Lot and Shared Driveway on February 28, 2025.

**MOTION:** Mr. Barringer made a motion to endorse the ANR Plan for 101 Longley Road, Assessors’ Parcel 225-28. Ms. Black seconded the motion.

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

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

 Ms. Black, Mr. Francisco, and Mr. Wilson.

Nay: 0

**MOTION CARRIED: 6 – 0 – 0.**

***Discussion – Approval Not Required (ANR) Plan, Apple Valley Center, 400 Groton Road and Old Ayer Road, Ayer Assessors’ Parcels 4-2 & 4-2B, and Groton Assessors’ Parcel 221-43.1.***

***(Added on 4/9/2025)***

Mr. Kevin Conover, of David E. Ross Associates, was present on behalf of Stern Consultants and Affiliated Entities.

Mr. Conover explained that the proposed ANR Plan was to create a separate parcel for the Apple Valley Center (rehabilitation and nursing home) in Ayer, MA, adjacent to the former Nashoba Valley Hospital. He said a small portion of the hospital’s property extended into Groton. The area in Groton is approximately 8,100 square feet.

**MOTION:** Mr. Barringer made a motion to endorse the ANR Plan for the Apple Valley Center land in Groton, MA, as requested. Ms. Black seconded the motion.

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

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

 Ms. Black, Mr. Francisco, and Mr. Wilson.

Nay: 0

**MOTION CARRIED: 6 – 0 – 0.**

***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 to May 8, 2025.

**MOTION:** Mr. Barringer made a motion to continue the public hearing to May 8, 2025. Ms. Black seconded the motion.

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

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

 Ms. Black, Mr. Francisco, and Mr. Wilson.

Nay: 0

**MOTION CARRIED: 6 – 0 – 0.**

***Public Hearing (Continuation) – Special Permit Application for Shared Driveway, 10 Worthen Drive, Assessors’ Map 221, Parcels 14, 14.2 & 14.3 (Jodie Gibson)***

Mr. Tada stated that he never received confirmation from Dillis & Roy Civil Design Group that there would be a representative at the meeting. He said, however, that he was aware that they were working on the requests made at the first public hearing.

Mr. Tada also stated that he received a peer review letter from Nitsch Engineering on April 10, 2025.

**MOTION:** Mr. Burke made a motion to continue the public hearing to May 8, 2025. Mr. Francisco seconded the motion.

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

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

 Ms. Black, Mr. Francisco, and Mr. Wilson.

Nay: 0

**MOTION CARRIED: 6 – 0 – 0.**

***Discussion – Spring Town Meeting Reports***

* Master Plan Presentation

The Planning Board collectively reviewed the presentation and made some suggestions and edits.

Mr. Francisco will present the Master Plan article at Spring Town Meeting.

**MOTION:** Mr. Francisco made a motion that the Planning Board recommend the endorsement of the Master Plan at Spring Town Meeting. Mr. Bonnett seconded the motion.

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

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

 Ms. Black, Mr. Francisco, and Mr. Wilson.

Nay: 0

**MOTION CARRIED: 6 – 0 – 0.**

* Zoning Articles for Spring Town Meeting
* Floodplain Overlay District – Presented by: Mr. Barringer
* MBTA Communities Multi-Family Overlay – Presented by: Mr. Burke
* ADU Update – Presented by: Mr. Burke
* Monarch Path Road Acceptance – Presented by: Ms. Black

***Project Updates***

* Groton Hill Music Center – There were no updates.
* Village at Shepley Hill – There were no updates.
* Kilbourn Place, 240 Main Street – There were no updates.
* Village Meadows (Bluebird Lane) – There were no updates.
* Groton Farms, 500 Main Street – There were no updates.

***Committee Updates***

* Complete Streets Committee

Mr. Tada stated that the next deadline for applications is 5/1/25. He said the Complete Streets Committee decided to prepare an application for three projects on the prioritization list:

* + Install a sidewalk along Lovers Lane, from Boston Road to the Country Club
	+ Connect the end of Temple Drive to the Nashua River Rail Trail
	+ Install a sidewalk along Sandy Pond Road to connect the affordable housing cluster to Robin Hill Road.

Mr. Tada said he received construction estimates from Nitsch Engineering, as follows:

* + Lover’s Lane Project: $360,000 to $380,000
	+ Sandy Pond: $80,000
	+ Temple Drive: $45,000 to $50,000
* Community Preservation Committee – There were no updates.
* Conductorlab Oversight Committee – There were no updates.
* ZBA Updates – There were no updates.
* Sign Committee
	+ Received a sign permit application, 54 Hill Road (Hay Patch Farm), Date TBD.

***General Business***

* Meeting Minutes
	+ Minutes from the January 9, 2025, meeting.

**MOTION:** Mr. Bonnett made a motion to approve the minutes from the January 9, 2025, meeting, as presented. Mr. Burke seconded the motion.

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

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

 Ms. Black, Mr. Francisco, and Mr. Wilson.

Nay: 0

**MOTION CARRIED: 6 – 0 – 0.**

***Planning Board Meeting Schedule***

* April 26, 2025 – Spring Town Meeting
* May 8, 2025 – (In-person)
* May 22, 2025 – (Via Zoom)

***Adjournment***

**MOTION:** At approximately 8:52 p.m., Ms. Black made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Barringer seconded the motion.

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

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

 Ms. Black, Mr. Francisco, and Mr. Wilson.

Nay: 0

**MOTION CARRIED: 6 – 0 – 0.**

Respectfully submitted:

Trish Gedziun

Recording Secretary

*Approved 6/26/2025*