**TOWN OF GROTON PLANNING BOARD**

**May 8, 2025**

**Meeting Minutes**

A regular meeting of the Planning Board was held on Thursday, April 10, 2025, at 7:00 p.m. The meeting was held in the Town Hall with an option for remote participation via Zoom.

**Members Present in Town Hall:**

Mr. Scott Wilson, Chair

Ms. Lorayne Black, Vice-Chair

Mr. Russell Burke, Board Member

Mr. David Bonnett, Board Member

Mr. Phil Francisco, Board Member

Mr. Paul Hathaway, Board Member

**Participating via Zoom:**

Mr. George Barringer, Board Member

**Also Present:**

Mr. Takashi Tada, Land Use Director/Town Planner

Mr. Wilson stated that because Mr. Barringer was participating via Zoom, all votes would be taken by a roll call vote.

Mr. Wilson also waived the reading of public hearing notices into the record, but they were available at the Land Use Office and the Town Clerk’s Office in the Town Hall.

***Interview Candidate for Planning Board Vacancy***

* Matthew Killam – Previously interviewed on 2/13/25.
* Candidate to be appointed in a joint meeting with the Select Board on Monday, 5/19/25.
* Mr. Wilson’s resignation to take effect on 5/21/25

**MOTION:** Mr. Burke made a motion to recommend the appointment of Matthew Killam to fill the vacancy on the Planning Board. Mr. Francisco seconded the motion.

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

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

 Ms. Black, Mr. Francisco, Mr. Hathaway,

 and Mr. Wilson.

Nay: 0

**MOTION CARRIED: 7 – 0 – 0.**

***Pre-Submission Review – Satellite Emergency Facility, UMass Memorial Health***

* Satellite Emergency Facility (SEF) proposed to be located on Main Street

Presenters: Mr. Chris Anderson, Sr. Project Manager, UMass Memorial Healthcare; Ms. Brittany Gesner, Civil Engineer and Project Manager, VHB; Mr. Vinod Kalikiri, Transportation Planner, VHB; and Mr. David Neal, Architect, SLAM.

Ms. Gesner stated that they had not filed anything yet, but they were working on a new project, noting that scheduling was of the utmost importance. She said she wanted to introduce the project and hear the Board’s thoughts and questions prior to the actual filing.

Ms. Gesner stated that Nashoba Valley Medical Center had to close suddenly the prior summer and because of that, the Governor established a working group that included a number of medical professionals and local officials throughout the area, in an attempt to figure out how they could resolve the void of services in the area, particularly for emergency services. She said that as a result, UMass Memorial announced it would step up over the winter and open an emergency facility to fill the void. She stated that in March, the working group identified a site in Groton, MA, and suggested to UMass Memorial that it would be an ideal site to use.

Ms. Gesner said that they hoped to file with the Board in June, with public hearings in July and August. She said that ideally, they would like to start construction in the fall, with the facility expected to be open by the end of 2026. She added that the Town Manager and Fire Chief both took part in the Governor’s working group.

Ms. Gesner noted that they would need to request a Special Permit and Site Plan Review for the emergency medical use and to address the following Special Permit criteria per the Zoning Bylaw:

* Social, economic, or community needs that are served by the proposal
* Traffic flow and safety
* Adequacy of utilities and other public services
* Neighborhood character
* Impacts on the environment
* Potential fiscal impact on the town

Ms. Gesner also stated that they would need to file with the Conservation Commission, as a jurisdictional wetland was located in the center of the property, and they would review the regulations of the Earth Removal Stormwater Advisory Committee.

Ms. Gesner stated that the existing site conditions included:

* 7+ acres undeveloped site to be created with an ANR Plan
* 800’ frontage along Main Street
* 4,000 SF jurisdictional wetland on-site
* Project located in the Petapawag Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC)
* Single-family homes are located to the south of the proposed project.

Ms. Gesner reviewed the full build-out of the proposed project and added the following:

* Stormwater Management System proposed
	+ Surface basins
	+ Peak Rate Mitigation
	+ Treatment
	+ Recharge
* Public sewer, water, and electricity are available along the site frontage.

Mr. Kalikiri, regarding the traffic portion of the proposed project, stated that Main Street was under MassDOT jurisdiction and they would require an access permit from MassDOT as well as to go through the MEPA (Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act). He said they had a very positive meeting with MassDOT. He added that they would provide a full traffic study.

Mr. Neal reviewed the floor plan, stating that there would be:

* 11 – Treatment Rooms
* 2 – Treatment Bays
* 1 – Isolation Room
* 1 – Trauma Room
* 1 – Holding Room
* 1 – Radiology Room
* 1 – CT-Scan Room
* 1 – Ultrasound Room

The applicants would return for multiple meetings to seek permits and have further discussions.

***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 & Rober Gratuity Road, LLC)***

Attorney Melissa Robbins of Farrell & Robbins, P.C., and Mr. Matthew Waterman, Senior Project Engineer, LandTech Consultants, Inc., were present on behalf of the applicant.

Attorney Robbins stated that they had to address a couple of outstanding housekeeping items identified in the peer review, which were now completed.

* The Planning Board conducted a site walk on 4/5/25.
* Email from Nitsch Engineering confirming resolution of outstanding peer review comments, 4/29/25
* Comments from the Conservation Commission, 4/9/25.
	+ Attorney Robbins stated that they would convey the open space to the Conservation Commission.

Mr. Waterman explained that the location of the septic system on Therese Lane had been adjusted to preserve at least 50 feet of vegetation between the limit of work and the abutting property line. They also added seven trees to the landscaping plan to provide additional screening around the septic system.

Attorney Robbins commented that she verified that they were in accordance with the Affordable Housing Regulations.

* Revised plans and supporting documentation submitted, 4/15/25

Mr. Burke asked why the proposed fence did not extend further north. Ms. Waterman replied that the fence was approximately 5 feet from the track and was intended to focus on its impact on the residential component, rather than the open space.

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

Ms. Anna Eliot, a member of the Parks Commission, addressed the Board and stated that she was also working with Hazel Grove. She said she felt it would be preferable to continue the fence further north. Attorney Robbins replied that she would be happy to continue discussions with the Hazel Grove Agricultural Association regarding the fence.

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

Ms. Paula Martin, 88 Jenkins Road, addressed the Board and stated that she was the closest abutter to Therese Lane. She expressed concerns about the landscaping and lighting.

Recorder’s Note: Mr. Barringer was excused from the meeting at approximately 8:10 p.m.

**MOTION:** Mr. Burke made a motion to close the public hearing. Mr. Hathaway seconded the motion.

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

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

 Mr. Francisco, Mr. Hathaway,

 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 explained that the applicant had submitted a request for a continuance to the June 12, 2025, Planning Board meeting.

**MOTION:** Mr. Burke made a motion to continue the public hearing to June 12, 2025. Mr. Francisco seconded the motion.

**MOTION:** Mr. Burke made a motion to close the public hearing. Mr. Hathaway seconded the motion.

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

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

 Mr. Francisco, Mr. Hathaway,

 and Mr. Wilson.

Nay: 0

**MOTION CARRIED: 6 – 0 – 0.**

***Project Updates***

* Groton Hill Music Center
	+ Demolition of the former Prescott House was completed.
	+ Lighting Concerns – Need to Contact Groton Hill Music Center
		- Inquiries from Ginger Vollmar and Virginia Wood
* Village at Shepley Hill – There were no new updates.
* Kilbourn Place, 240 Main Street – There were no new updates.
* Village Meadows (Bluebird Lane) – There were no new updates.
* Groton Farms, 500 Main Street – There were no new updates.
* Monarch Path Subdivision – There were no new updates.

Mr. Burke suggested that Mr. Barringer conduct a light measurement prior to the Board contacting the Groton Hill Music Center.

* Minor Site Plan Review Updates
	+ 214A Main Street – Coco Home Décor & Gifts
	+ 189 Forge Village Road – Detached ADU (Accessory Dwelling Unit)

***Committee Updates***

* Complete Streets Committee
* Submitted application for Tier 3 Construction funding for three projects.
	+ Lovers Lane, Sandy Pond Road, & Temple Drive.
* Community Preservation Committee – There were no updates.
* Conductorlab Oversight Committee – There were no updates.
* ZBA Updates
	+ 409 Martins Pond Road appeal
* Sign Committee
	+ Sign Permit issued for 54 Hill Road

Mr. Francisco suggested adding a topic to a future agenda regarding a discussion of the Master Plan with the Planning Board.

***General Business***

* Meeting Minutes
	+ Minutes from the January 23, 2025, meeting.

**MOTION:** Ms. Black made a motion to approve the minutes from the January 23, 2025, meeting, as presented. Mr. Francisco seconded the motion.

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

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

 Mr. Francisco, Mr. Hathaway,

 and Mr. Wilson.

Nay: 0

**MOTION CARRIED: 6 – 0 – 0.**

As this was Mr. Wilson’s last meeting, the Planning Board collectively thanked him for his dedication and service to the Town of Groton over the last 23 years.

***Planning Board Meeting Schedule***

* May 22, 2025 – (Via Zoom)
* June 12, 2025 (Via Zoom)
* June 26, 2025 (Via Zoom)

***Adjournment***

**MOTION:** At approximately 8:50 p.m., Mr. Hathaway made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Francisco seconded the motion.

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

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

 Mr. Francisco, Mr. Hathaway,

 and Mr. Wilson.

Nay: 0

**MOTION CARRIED: 6 – 0 – 0.**

Respectfully submitted:

Trish Gedziun

Recording Secretary

*Approved 7/17/2025*