

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN-REGULAR SESSION MINUTES-6/4/01  
"MINUTES APPROVED"**

**Present:** Chairman Peter S. Cunningham, Clerk Dann Chamberlin, Member Thomas P. McCuin, Jr., Administrative Officer Jean E. Kitchen and Administrative Secretary Doris T. Wheeler.

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM.

**EOEA GROTON BUILDOUT ANALYSIS**

The Executive Office of Environmental Affairs (EOEA), Montachusett Regional Planning Commission (MRPC), Planning Board and Conservation Commission were represented. Arthur Bergeron, EOEA, gave a presentation on the results of a build out analysis for the Town of Groton. The purpose of the analysis was to give residents a sense of what the Town would be like if all the privately held land in Town which is now undeveloped were developed under the current zoning requirements. EOEA has done this analysis throughout the communities in the Commonwealth. At build out the population in Groton will double. EOEA is not suggesting where the Town wants to be going. The Town should find out where it is going as it relates to Groton's neighboring communities. Groton should develop a vision of where it wants to go. Then figure out where the Town wants its open space at buildout and where the economic development would be. EOEA encourages neighboring communities to look at Executive Order 418 together. It looks like water supply availability will be a real problem at build out. Mr. Bergeron reiterated that the land that abuts the Town lines should be looked at. The State's premise is community preservation.

Mr. McCuin noted that 2 significant zoning changes regarding open space were approved at the Annual Town Meeting, which would change the build out projections.

Mr. Chamberlin said that this will be a great tool, especially once the GIS system is in place.

Mr. Cunningham said that the Town could use MRPC and Lowell Regional Planning as resources. The primarily work would come out of the MRPC. The community preservation part would be Lowell Regional Planning. Mr. Bergeron said they are all cooperating together. The first thing that should happen is that the Town needs to figure out what should be saved for open space. EOEA is not asking the Town to do something it has already done recently, i.e. through the Master Plan. EOEA wants to make sure the communities figure out where they want to go.

Mr. McKinney, Growth Management Advisory Committee, when the GIS tools would be available. Mr. Bergeron said that EOEA was thinking of giving away a \$1500 GIS software package to the cities and towns, which would be ready in Sept. or Oct.

Ms. Collette said the Town is in its final stages of the Master Plan, so a lot of what Mr. Bergeron described has been done. She asked if the Town could have funds for zoning drafting. Mr. Bergeron said that could happen.

Mr. Clements asked if there was a strategy to overcome the water shortage issue. Mr. Bergeron said it is a statewide problem that probably should be addressed at the State level. He said that Virginia Wood asked at the Lowell Meeting how the Town can deal with this issue with regard to the grandfather clause. Mr. Bergeron said that maybe the State could eliminate the grandfather clause regarding water resources.

**GROWTH MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

The following members of the Growth Management Advisory Committee (GMAC) were present: Charles McKinney, Carolyn Perkins and Craig Auman. The GMAC presented the Board with a 2001 State of the Town Report (which is on file in the Selectmen's office). The purpose of this report is to serve as a core resource for Town Government boards and committees. The report will be updated on an annual basis. The Selectmen found the format of the report to be well done, easy to read and understand. The charts are very helpful. Boards and commissions can look at this and say this is where we want to be, but this is where we really are. The GMAC will be evaluating tools and techniques to address growth management. The Selectmen need to choose a new representative on the GMAC.

Mr. McCuin said that it was brought to his attention that the 3% regarding the affordable housing in Groton was not accurate. Ms. Kitchen said the Board had recent communication from the State regarding the Executive Order 418 application, and it showed that the figures were correct. Ms. Collette said the Town can only use affordable housing that is

State and Federal subsidized under Executive Order 418.

## **TRAILS COMMITTEE**

Present were Trails Committee members: Edward McNierney, Bradford Paul and Bruce Clements. They discussed the need to have a field survey done to determine if a strip of land exists between the Friedrich property, the old roadbed and the Nashua River. The cost of having the research and survey done by David E. Ross, Inc. is estimated at \$4,000.

Mr. McNierney said nobody ever did a survey to lay out Jenkins Road. The issue is the status of the road. This was brought forward when the Friedrichs blocked the road. Research has been done going through Town Meeting records since the late 1800's. There are votes in the past discontinuing the road, then later votes that reconsidered the discontinuance. Brad Paul said the river is washing out the road. When the Friedrichs built their home the building permit said there was frontage on a public way known as Jenkins Road.

Mr. Chamberlin moved that the Town enter into a contract with David E. Ross, Inc., as described in its letter of March 27, 2001, in an amount not to exceed \$4000. The motion was seconded and voted unanimously.

## **POLICE PROMOTION APPOINTMENT**

Present for the discussion were Police Chief Robert Mulhern and Sgt. Jack Balonis. Chief Mulhern highly recommended promoting Sgt. Balonis to the position of Lieutenant. Second in command Jack Sable.

Mr. McCuin moved the appointment of Jack Balonis as Police Lieutenant. The motion was seconded and voted unanimously.

## **NEW PRECINCT**

Town Clerk Bonnie Biocchi said that the Federal Census of 2000 placed Groton's population at 9,547. Federal rules require that the population be equally divided between precincts. The target quota is set at 3,182, therefore, Groton is being divided into 3 precincts. The detailed description will be submitted to the Secretary of State's Office, once approved by the Selectmen. It is proposed that Precinct 1 will be held at the Senior Center for voting purposes. This will help to alleviate some of the traffic and parking problems.

Mr. McCuin asked if identification could be made available for residents which would show which precinct they are in. He said he had this in Florida and found it useful. Ms. Biocchi said she could look into that. She added that the precinct is shown on the census forms.

Mr. Chamberlin moved to accept the 2001 Re-Precincting Plan for the Town of Groton, as presented by the Town Clerk. The motion was seconded and voted unanimously.

## **PERSONNEL BOARD APPOINTMENT**

Jane Bouvier, Personnel Board, and applicant Susan Searles were present. The Personnel Board unanimously recommended Susan Searles to fill the vacancy on the Board.

Mr. McCuin moved the appointment of Susan J. Searles as a member of the Personnel Board, term to expire June 30, 2004. The motion was seconded and voted unanimously.

## **MUNICIPAL SPACE NEEDS RECOMMENDATION**

Tom Hartnett, Michelle Collette, Brooks Lyman, Jim Western and Richard Chilcoat were present from the Municipal Space Needs Committee. They presented the Board with a proposal to remodel the existing space at Legion Hall for 3 offices. Mr. Estabrook, Building Maintenance Supervisor, told Mr. Hartnett that there is enough money in this year's budget to cover the cost to do this work. Mr. Chamberlin asked if the Legionnaires had been involved with what is being proposed. Ed Kopec said the Legion was not informed. He encouraged the Board to look into this more thoroughly before doing the work. The stairs are an issue. Mr. Hartnett said the Committee was not trying to disrupt the Legion. The Committee was charged with finding municipal office space. The Library was there for 1½ years and did not impact the Legion. Mr. Cunningham reiterated that the committee was charged with finding space. He said that Mr. Estabrook can look at the stairs and take care of what needs to be done. Ms. Kitchen noted that there used to be offices downstairs prior to the Library using it. Ms. Collette said this proposal would free up the shared space at Town Hall by putting Mr. Estabrook at Legion Hall. Having him at Legion Hall would be an asset to that building, so that he can keep an eye on it, especially in the winter months. The Committee was suggesting temporary partitions, not permanent alterations to the building. Mr. Belitsky noted that many of

the Legion, Minutemen and Auxiliary members cannot walk up the stairs, so the Legion was talking about using the downstairs meeting room. Mr. Cunningham said there would still be room downstairs for meetings with the proposed configuration. Mr. Belitsky added that the Minutemen memorabilia is locked up upstairs and should be allowed to be displayed downstairs.

Mr. McCuin said he understood the pressing need for more space, but felt strongly that as a courtesy, the Legion should have been consulted prior to the plan being brought to the Selectmen. Mr. Chamberlin agreed, but did not want to stop the progress. Mr. Cunningham said the memorabilia should be in a secure location. He suggested contacting the Historical Society. Mr. McCuin said the problem is that the upstairs is not suitable for the Legion according to handicap requirements.

Mr. Chamberlin moved to approve the expenditure of \$4,860, as shown in the agreement with 1<sup>st</sup> Environmental Contractors, Inc. for the conversion of Legion Hall to accommodate 3 office spaces. Mr. Cunningham seconded. Vote: Cunningham – Aye, Chamberlin – Aye, McCuin - No

Mr. Chamberlin asked if the Municipal Space Needs Committee considered the house next door to Town Hall for municipal office space. The Committee had not, but was willing to look into it. It was looked at several years ago for the public safety building and voted down. Chris Long suggested waiting to see what happens to Prescott School.

## **SELECTMEN'S GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

The Selectmen went over the goals and objectives which was last updated on February 12, 2001. The results are attached.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

### **Minutes**

Mr. Chamberlin moved approval of the April 9 regular session minutes. The motion was seconded. Mr. Chamberlin and Mr. Cunningham voted in favor, Mr. McCuin abstained.

Mr. Chamberlin moved approval of the May 22 regular session minutes, as amended. The motion was seconded and voted unanimously.

Mr. Chamberlin approved the Special Session minutes of May 17. (He was the only existing Selectman who attended this meeting regarding the proposed road and parking lot between Broadmeadow Road and Station Ave. and the rail trail in that area.)

As a follow-up to the May 17 meeting, the Selectmen will meet with the Conservation Comm. on June 12.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER REPORT**

### **Lost Lake Association Invitation**

Lost Lake Association invited the BOS to go on a boat ride to view the lake, then to look later in the season to get a birds eye view of what happens. The 11<sup>th</sup> works for all the Selectmen.

### **SBAB Funding**

The Board received a letter from Superintendent Jennings regarding SBA funding. Mass. Assoc. of School Superintendents and the Boston Society of Architects are recommending that the SBA funding reimbursement rate be raised for school construction to more accurately reflect current construction cost in Massachusetts. The Selectmen agreed and will send a letter to Rep. Hargraves and Sen. Panagiotakos in support of increasing funding.

### **VH Shea**

A new agreement has been drafted and sent to Florida for signing, which reflects the changes requested by the Selectmen.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

At 10:06 PM Mr. Chamberlin moved to adjourn. The motion was seconded and voted unanimously.

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_

Respectfully Submitted,

Dann Chamberlin, Clerk

Approved: July 16, 2001

Doris T. Wheeler

Administrative Secretary