



Sustainability Commission

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Think long-term, act now

Letter to Groton Zoning Board of Appeals regarding Groton Farms (500 Main Street) Comprehensive Permit Application

Date: May 17, 2023

To: Groton Zoning Board of Appeals

Dear Zoning Board of Appeals Members,

We are generally supportive of the proposed Groton Farms 40B development application. We applaud the applicant's plans to use all-electric heat pump technology for heating and cooling to move away from dependence on fossil fuels, the reduction by more than 33% of impervious surfaces on the site to greatly reduce stormwater runoff and aid in the recharge of the aquifer, the adherence to Dark Sky-compliant lighting to limit outdoor light pollution, the planned deployment of multiple EV car chargers on the property and in garages to facilitate the sustainable transition in automobiles, and for the use of so many native plantings and grasses on their extensive planned planting list.

However, after reviewing the applicant's proposed plans, the Groton Sustainability Commission has identified a brief list of suggested conditions that we believe should be considered as the application moves forward, as follow:

- Make every attempt to keep larger trees currently existing on site
- Make use of rainwater harvesting for use in irrigation and/or creation of rain gardens
- Further look to minimize impervious surfaces
- Refer to and use the Commonwealth's list of plantings to avoid invasive species. We strongly recommend referring to the recent letter submitted to the ZBA by the Invasive Species Commission for review of the more problematic plantings in the applicant's plan, as well as suggested alternative native plantings.
- Plant wildflower and native grass meadows
- Solar hot water heating for residential units; can also heat swimming pool with excess solar energy
- Use motion sensors and auto-dimming on any security lights to further minimize light pollution
- Minimize the use of plastics in construction materials
- Minimize the storage of on-site chemicals
- Consider the use of onsite compost for household kitchen scraps and yard waste
- Manage dog waste to avoid water contamination (e.g., using appropriate signage, etc.)

Once again, we appreciate the excellent work done by the applicant to address sustainability issues thus far in their application and look forward to their continued positive direction along those lines in the project. We urge the ZBA to please consider these as potential conditions on

the Groton Farms project as the application to the Town moves forward. Thank you for considering this request. Please contact us if you have any questions.

Respectfully submitted,

Andrew H. Scott - Commission Member, on behalf of the Groton Sustainability Commission