

MINUTES
SPECIAL JOINT MEETING/WORKSHOP
ZONING AND PLANNING COMMISSIONS
GROTON LAND USE REGULATIONS UPDATE PROJECT
MARCH 4, 2009 - 6:30 P.M.
TOWN HALL ANNEX – COMMUNITY ROOM 1

I. ROLL CALL

Present: Brandt, Cady (6:52pm), French, Kane, Marquardt, O'Neill, Pritchard, Roper, Sherrard, Steinford, Sutherland, Zod.

Staff: Davis, Murphy, Glemboski, Silsby
Also present: Town Attorney Carey

The meeting was called to order at 6:35 p.m.

II. COMMISSION WORKSHOP WITH LAND USE REGULATION UPDATE CONSULTANTS (KENDIG KEAST COLLABORATIVE) AND OPDS STAFF

Murphy welcomed everyone and thanked his staff for their hard work on the project. He explained that tonight's presentation will specifically deal with the environmental constraint plan in relationship to residential parcels. He explained how the regulation amendment process will proceed. He spoke how the 2002 Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) was used in drafting regulation amendments as well as how zoning affects individual parcels. Murphy noted that the Town's website will reflect updated information on this project as it moves forward. Tonight's presentation will also be available from the Town's website.

Davis stated that tonight's workshop will focus on environmental constraints and residential lands. Draft language will be developed at a later date. He referred to various documents that the Zoning and Planning Commissions received which included a staff memo dated 2/27/09, also available for reference this evening were a sewer avoidance map, available residential lands map, zoning map, and resource constraint map. He referred to the Natural Resource Summary Table from the 2002 POCD, and spoke about the 1998 Residential Development Potential Summary. He explained how specific yield values were determined in the 2002 POCD.

Staff noted that copies of maps, memos, and the master plan are available for perusal for those who want to further understand the process.

Mac Birch of Kendig Keast Collaborative provided a power point presentation focusing on the use of environmental protection criteria to achieve POCD objectives. Four Groton sites were modeled in his analysis. He reviewed the four specific areas in Groton that were analyzed (Giordano, Whittle Farm, Groton Lenders LLC, Wolfebrook West) and spoke about possible remedies to deal with constraints. Birch explained his calculation methods for determining yield values in developable areas. He referred to various maps, overlays, and constraints.

The meeting recessed at 7:54 p.m. and reconvened at 8:08 p.m.

Using objectives from Staff's memo as a guide, Birch asked the Commission members for input.

Discussion ensued about unit yields, protection ratios, BMP's, site capacity, slopes, watercourses, and the sewer avoidance area. Staff referred to open space subdivisions and percentages used in calculation methods. Staff noted that moderate slopes would likely be addressed. Staff felt it was important to separate yields and density, and deal with the design of the project. The rationale in determining a maximum yield was clarified.

(Chairman Sherrard left the meeting at 8:45 p.m.)

Discussion continued about protecting wetlands and requirements and formulas used in determining developable land. It was noted that if adopted, these calculation methods could be available on the Town's website in order to aid developers in determining yields themselves, prior to submitting an application. A variety of incentives for increased density on buildable lands was discussed. Staff spoke about sewer avoidance issues, septic systems, and the public water supply. They referred to the 2002 POCD and updating the Conservation element of the POCD next year. Clear cutting and regulating existing trees on individual lots were discussed.

Murphy concluded the workshop by thanking everyone. He noted that the power point presentation will be made available on the project link on the Town's website.

III. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn by French, sec by Brandt. Meeting adjourned at 9:27 p.m.

Robert O'Neill, Vice Chair
Zoning Commission

Prepared by Robin M. Silsby, Office Assistant II