

PLANNING COMMISSION  
SEPTEMBER 13, 2005 – 7:00 P.M.  
TOWN HALL ANNEX – COMMUNITY ROOM 2

I. ROLL CALL

Regular Members Present: Roper, Steinfeld, and Munn  
Staff Present: Murphy, Goodrich and Moulding

Acting Chairman Steinfeld opened with roll call at 7:03 p.m.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES of August 9, 2005

MOTION: To approve the minutes of the August 9, 2005, Planning Commission meeting with the following modifications:

1. Page 8, 1<sup>st</sup> line, the last word include should be included
2. Page 4, #3, add “There were no members from the public present.”
3. Page 7, the word Regulations was omitted from the end of the 9<sup>th</sup> line up from the bottom of the page

Motion made by Roper, seconded by Munn, so voted unanimously.

III. PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS

Staff noted that a transmittal was received from the State Traffic Control stating that they are ready to issue a certificate upon the receipt of additional information from the Great Brook subdivision.

Roper stated that Councilor Sheetz had called him regarding the Great Brook Subdivision and she asked if the Planning Commission would write a letter agreeing that the Town of Groton should be responsible for enforcing the restrictions in the easements. Roper felt the agreements were private contracts between the applicant and the Groton Open Space Association and that the Town should not be responsible for enforcing the restrictions. Other Commission members concurred. Roper also received information regarding the public hearing on a proposed map change to the State Plan of Conservation and Development in the mail from the Office of Policy and Management and an invitation to Citizenship Day.

Steinfeld was contacted by a Groton resident asking who was responsible for the rope fence along Poquonnock Plains Park that is in disrepair. Staff will discuss it with the Town Manager and /or Parks and Recreation.

MOTION: To move the site plan section of the agenda to the beginning of the meeting.

Motion made by Steinfeld, seconded by Munn, so voted unanimously.

IV. SUBDIVISIONS

1. O & C Subdivision, 120 Godfrey Road (4 lots)

Staff briefly outlined the proposal for this four-lot subdivision on 8.9 acres. The public hearing was closed at the last meeting. Staff had received a response from Groton Utilities the day before the hearing was closed, which asked for an area of the site to be reserved as open space and dedicated to Groton Utilities to protect Haley Brook. Staff has proposed a smaller area be dedicated as open space, the rest being protected with a

conservation easement. Staff showed the boundaries on the site plan. Staff stated that the stone walls would be saved. Steinfeld asked about the wetlands extending into the easement area. Staff stated that the buffer would protect the wetlands and that there will also be conservation markers placed on the site.

MOTION: To approve the O and C Subdivision with the following modifications:

1. The stone walls shall be preserved to the extent possible. If necessary, the stone walls shall be relocated on-site and noted on the plans.
2. The primary septic system for Lot 3 shall be relocated south of the proposed house.
3. Underground utilities for Lot 3 must be located at least 10 feet from the leaching area.
4. The area north of a straight line along the wetland flags extending to the northern property boundary shall be deeded as open space to Groton Utilities for the protection of the Haley Brook water resource.
5. A conservation easement shall be placed across the rear of Lots 2 and 3 beginning at a straight line along the 100 foot wetland buffer line extending north to the boundary line of the open space that is to be deeded to Groton Utilities.
6. Comments from Ledge Light Health District shall be addressed.
7. Technical Items raised by staff shall be addressed.

The Planning Commission notes that it is not requiring a sidewalk on Godfrey Road due to the site not being within the priority area for sidewalks in the 2002 Plan of Conservation and Development and there are no sidewalks in the area

Motion made by Munn, seconded by Roper, so voted unanimously.

2. Hickey Subdivision, 287 Briar Hill Road (5 lots)

Staff briefly reviewed what had been proposed for this site over a series of public hearings. Staff stated that the Commission had discussed whether a bituminous path or a 5' concrete sidewalk should be installed. Water will be brought to the site and the applicant has agreed that the stone walls will be saved and/or relocated. Drainage was discussed. Mailboxes within the Right of Way may have to be relocated as part of the road widening. Munn voiced concerns on the timing of construction traffic and the beginning and end of the school day. Staff stated that the applicant is amenable to working around the school schedule.

Roper prefers the bituminous walkway to the concrete sidewalk. Discussion ensued regarding extending the walkway off site in an easterly direction approximately 145 to 150 feet to the next driveway.

Steinford would rather have lot #5 use the existing driveway easement on the lot for the driveway instead of sharing a driveway with Lot #4 or constructing a new driveway to Lot #5.

MOTION: To approve a subdivision plan for Hickey Subdivision, (5 lots) 287 Briar Hill Road, with the following modifications:

1. The final plan shall be modified to include the lot design as per the Preliminary Lot Development Plan (Sheet 4 of 7) submitted to Planning Department August 3, 2005.
2. The Erosion Control Plan shall be modified as follows:
  - a) An onsite staging area shall be shown on the plans for parking and storage of materials/equipment.
  - b) Notes shall be placed on the plan for the cleaning of equipment, dust control and periodic street sweeping,
3. A note shall be placed on the plans stating “ The developer shall provide an area for construction parking and turnaround on the site and shall place appropriate signage to direct construction traffic onto the site. The timing of delivery and construction traffic shall take into consideration the beginning and end of the school day at Charles Barnum Elementary.”
4. A note shall be placed on the plan stating “Road work and utility installation shall be designed and coordinated to ensure private and emergency vehicle access on Briar Hill Road at all times.”
5. In lieu of the proposed 4’ concrete sidewalk and curb, a 6’ bituminous path, built to appropriate town standards, shall be placed along the project frontage and east to the next drive approximately 150’, in the Town right of way on the south side of Briar Hill road. The design shall include a snow shelf and shall be in accordance with the Town’s road and drainage standards. Pedestrian easements shall be recorded, if necessary, to allow for the appropriate design.
6. The proposed drainage for Briar Hill Road shall be reviewed and approved by the Director of Public Works based on the final design for the public improvements and grading on Briar Hill Road. The final design may require new driveway aprons for properties on the north side of Briar Hill Road.
7. The developer shall notify the existing owners of all required removal and/or relocation of mailboxes and other appurtenances along the right-of-way and shall coordinate the mailbox locations with the US Post Office.
8. Stonewalls shown “To Be Removed” shall be shown “To Be Relocated” to frontage and/or side property lines.

9. The driveway location on Lot 5 shall be moved to the existing gravel drive on Lot 5.
10. The driveway to Lot 1 shall meet Fire Marshal requirements for access.
11. All technical items by staff shall be addressed.

The Planning Commission notes that the Commission has not required any dedication of public open space on this property in accordance with Section 4.9 of the Subdivision Regulations due to the fact that there is no adjoining open space on the surrounding parcels, the area is not identified in the 2002 Plan of Conservation and Development as an area of future open space, and the Department of Parks and Recreation does not see a need for any active recreation on the site.

The Planning Commission notes that the Commission is requiring the developer to construct Briar Hill Road improvements along the project frontage in accordance with Section 4.3 (1) c) iii) of the Subdivision Regulations.

The Planning Commission notes that the Commission is requiring a 6' bituminous path in lieu of a concrete sidewalk along the Briar Hill Road frontage in accordance with Section 4.7 (1) e) of the Subdivision Regulations.

The Planning Commission notes that the existing streetlights meet the Town standards and that the Commission is not requiring any additional street lights on Briar Hill Road in accordance with Section 4.8 (1) of the Subdivision Regulations

Motion made by Munn, seconded by Roper, so voted unanimously.

3. Way Subdivision, 441 Pequot Avenue (8 lots)

Staff showed the proposed open space on the plan and stated that the open space path has been completed.

MOTION: To accept the open space for the Way Subdivision.

Motion made by Roper, seconded by Steinfeld, so voted unanimously.

4. Way Subdivision, 441 Pequot Avenue (8 lots)

MOTION: To reduce the bond for the Way Subdivision to the remaining 10% or \$27,430.

Motion made by Roper, seconded by Steinfeld, so voted unanimously.

5. Hale Subdivision, Cow Hill Road

The public hearing was scheduled for October 11, 2005.

6. Obrey Subdivision, 2033 & 2039 Route 184

The public hearing was scheduled for October 11, 2005.

7. Deerfield at Mystic, Pumpkin Hill Road

Staff stated that bonds for Phases I, II, III, and VII have been released but the bond for Phase VIII is still being held.

MOTION: To release the public improvement bond for Phases IV, V, and VI totaling \$217,694.00

Motion made by Steinfeld, seconded by Munn, so voted unanimously.

VI. SITE PLANS

1. WPCF Upgrade, Gary Court

Staff stated that the applicant has requested a two-week extension till the next meeting.

MOTION: To approve a two-week extension till the next meeting for the WPCF Upgrade, Gary Court application.

Motion made by Roper, seconded by Munn, so voted unanimously.

2. Highway Garage Water Main and Parking Lot Improvements, Groton Long Point Road.

Peter Georgetti, Engineer stated that this project was developed to improve the entire parcel. The Highway Department areas do not meet the current standards for access and parking. The vehicle garage currently has a sprinkler system that does not work because there is no water main. A sidewalk would be constructed along the frontage completing that sidewalk network. The impound area is too small in the current location and will be relocated and expanded. The existing driveway out of Fitch High School will line up with the new access area into the parking lot. A water main will be installed and extended all the way around the complex to a dead end that feeds the Annex. A 6" water line will lead to the garage to allow for fire protection. The new parking areas will be landscaped and have handicapped spacing. This plan will benefit circulation on the site particularly in the winter when snowplows are entering and exiting. The dog pound is presently difficult to get to and this will help provide good access for visitors. There will be a sedimentation basin to help improve storm water quality. Mr. Georgetti is requesting a waiver for an internal sidewalk to the maintenance garage.

Staff stated that they reviewed the issues that would be improved by this proposal such as drainage, access for fire trucks, and a critical sprinkler system for the garage. The current construction of the bays does not protect fire trucks as they pull in. This proposal also completes the infill of the sidewalk. There is a minor increase in bituminous coverage of approximately 5,000 sq. ft. The Annex landscaping, and islands, as well as parking for the annex will not change.

Staff stated that the Commission can require an internal sidewalk but in this case there is no pedestrian access needed. Peter Georgetti stated that the detention basin would handle the increased storm water from the bituminous pavement. Roper asked if this plan was funded in the Capital Improvement Plan as part of a larger project. Staff will look into it, although he believes funding may be from another source. There may be

small signs to direct people to the dog pound. The fueling station will not have any changes. There are no new buildings in this proposal just a fence around the new impound area.

MOTION: To approve a waiver of Section 7.5-4 of the Zoning Regulations to allow for no provision of internal sidewalks for the Town of Groton Highway Garage, 108 Groton Long Point Road for the following reasons:

1. The Highway Garage is not a pedestrian destination.
2. There is limited public utilization of the Highway Garage Facility.
3. An internal sidewalk would interfere with the existing garage bay located on the northern side of the building.

The Commission finds that this meets Section 7.5-5 C of the Zoning Regulations.

Motion made by Roper, seconded by Munn, so voted unanimously.

MOTION: To approve the Town of Groton Highway Garage Watermain and Parking Improvements, 108 Groton Long Point Road with the modification that technical items raised by staff shall be addressed.

Motion made by Roper, seconded by Steinford, so voted unanimously.

#### VII. OLD BUSINESS

1. Review of procedure for seating alternates.

The Commission continued this item to the next meeting.

#### VIII. NEW BUSINESS

1. Report of Commission

Roper stated that the Regional Planning Commission meeting would be held Monday, September 19, 2005. Roper also gave staff a booklet entitled "The Downtown of the Future: Opportunities for Regional Stewards" to copy. Munn would like a copy of the booklet. Munn stated he attended the Strategic Plan Steering Committee meeting and gave the Commission an update. Steinford also attended the meeting.

Steinford attended an educational forum on Groton Challenges and Choices (Metropatterns presentation). He also received a mailing from a local Congressman regarding funding received for local area projects.

2. New Applications – none

#### IX. REPORT OF CHAIRMAN

1. Citizenship Day will be held September 19, 2005.

2. A public hearing regarding changes to the State Conservation and Development Policies Plan will be held on September 15, 2005

X. REPORT OF STAFF

Staff noted that 6 or 7 employees would be attending the Citizenship Day dinner. Staff wrote an update on the Allyn Bohlander building for the Town Council, which he reviewed with the Commission.

Staff distributed seminar information on Storm Water Quality. Staff has also received a map from the State showing where all the State Traffic Commission certificates are located.

Staff reviewed an administrative field modification submitted by Michael Scanlon with the Commission for the Petri subdivision. Mr. Petri is proposing to convey two pieces of excess land off to two adjacent property owners. No access will be permitted to Allyn Street and composite deeds have to be prepared and recorded. The stone wall would have a 10-foot cut to allow access but would be maintained.

Roper asked if the Commission should take a formal position on the Office of Policy and Management hearing. Staff will not be recommending in favor of what the applicant is asking for in light of his recommendations to change this area to Neighborhood Conservation during the formal review of the State Plan.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn at 8:55 p.m. made by Munn, seconded by Roper, so voted unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Peter Roper