

GROTON PLANNING BOARD

August 29, 2012

Meeting convened at 7:10 pm.

Present: Dave Labar, Jenny Burnett, Russ Carruth, Deb Johnson, Chair Steve (Slim) Spafford, Select Board Liaison Miles Sinclair and Clerk/Alternate Sherry Nelson

Absent: Celine Richer

Minutes of July 25th were read and accepted. Jenny and Deb abstained as they had been absent. Sherry offered some information, referencing P 4, which had not been available to her when minutes were done. After our meeting on July 25th, Celine had emailed to Tara our chosen language for an ad, inviting public to our meeting on Aug. 15th to discuss Groton's future. Celine had received word on the morning after our meeting that Tara didn't like our language. Hurrying out of her house to a commitment, Celine quickly read Tara's proposed language and felt it expressed the board's original intent. She then called Pam and told her to go ahead with the ad language Tara suggested and left message with Chair as to what had transpired.

OLD BUSINESS

Miles reported that "Google Earth" map he'd seen was old and wouldn't work for us in examining the extent of Ethier's excavation. Jenny will check to see if the forest service has any maps that could be useful to us for this purpose.

Next we talked with Alan Barnard regarding Vintage Lands Subdivision on Sculptured Rocks Road. Notices to abutters gave incorrect date for hearing, instead of tonight. Chair informed us that LGC attorney Sanderson advised against approving this subdivision as presented. Alan felt that his plan fit with his definition of a boundary line adjustment – no new lot or new owners would be created. Board questioned if a lot line adjustment could be done with parts of the lot being across the street. Alan said that the road must be considered the boundary line. Deb and Chair felt that Town Counsel should be involved. Attorney Sanderson had advised that as well. Deb moved, Miles 2nd, to send Barnard's subdivision plat and all other collateral documents submitted to our town attorney. A letter should be included asking our attorney to review all and provide board her opinion as to the legality of the submitted plan. All approved the motion. Alan asked if we could schedule the hearing on Sept. 12th, in order to make a decision on the subdivision plan within thirty days from its submission. Feeling a need for more time to investigate this multifaceted plan, Deb wants Chair to ask Legal Counsel if we can waive the 30 day requirement. Miles asked Alan if his client would be willing to waive the 30 days required for coming to a decision. Alan agreed to talk with her and put her decision in writing.

We jumped to an item under New Business since it involved Mr. Barnard. He presented information about his survey work regarding the expansion of River Road Cemetery.

Back to Old Business, Chair reported his finding that Wetland Mapping being done by some surrounding towns has proved to be expensive. Perhaps we can get assistance with this mapping from Dan, working with NLRA under a grant.

Under the topic of Growth Management/Updating Master Plan we shared our thoughts about our Public meeting on August 15th and questioned what to do next. Consensus of group was to form survey questions to mail to residents. We spoke of the careful framing required in asking questions and giving information. For example, a priority for Miles is requiring setbacks. Some residents may not know what a setback is so questioning might go as follows:

1. Do you want to retain the rural character of Groton?
2. One way to achieve retention of this rural character is to require setbacks (explain briefly). Would you be in favor?

All of us agreed to bring some possible survey questions to our next meeting. Chair read Steve Whitman's letter saying he and Tara Bamford have spoken about different services each can offer Groton. Deb asked Chair to ask Tara to send some Masterplans of like communities. Deb will look for her copy of the town values project done about ten years ago by SPNHF. We agreed to meet twice monthly in order write, mail out and collate our survey questions and proceed with updating our Masterplan.

NEW BUSINESS

We received information about a Newfound Watershed Forestry Roundtable to be held on the afternoon of September 13th. Chair agreed to attend.

Information was available also about the 2012 Law Lecture Series. Deb hopes that two or three of us will attend the session about zoning for our own education.

Motion to adjourn was agreed to at 9:20 pm.

Sharon Nelson
Clerk