

Groton Planning Board
Draft Minutes 5/28/14

Present: Chairman Slim Spafford, Celine Richer, Deb Johnson, Dave LaBar, Russ Carruth, Jenny Burnett, Ray Blake, Sherry Nelson and Select Board Liaison Bob Ferriere
Meeting Commenced at 7:08.

Draft Minutes of 4/30/14 were read and approved by all except Deb who abstained.

Next Alan Barnard presented the finalized plats for the Green Acre Woodlands Inc. Subdivision and Land Swap. Mr. Barnard explained that there were no easements or other restrictions to accommodate harvest across the back of the 6 acre Town lot in this final version. Rather, 150' of frontage off the west side of the lot will be reserved for skidding. There will be a restriction written into the deed in order to ensure the preservation of the Town Pound. The plats were previously approved by the Select Board. Slim moved that the Board accept the plans and Jenny seconded his motion. All approved unanimously and we all signed the plats.

The Board then moved to the Tkachuk Lot Merger, involving Lots 1 and 7 on Map 7. Slim read aloud some of the paperwork to include a Notice of Voluntary Merger by Tkachuk Development LLC. Mr. Michael Tkachuk was present, and explained to the Board that the lot is in the Arpino Subdivision north of Victoria Mountain Way on Halls Brook Rd. There are no mortgages or encumbrances on the property. Mr. Tkachuk was not planning to merge lots until he wanted to put in a septic system and found he needed more room for the leach field. He also mentioned that there is a chain across Mine Rd. just out of sight from Halls Brook. Slim and the rest of the Board felt that the paperwork was complete. Jenny moved, with a second from Celine, that we accept the Lot Merger as presented. All were in favor and the Board signed.

At this point, Deb nominated Slim to be the Conservation Commission Liaison. We all thought this was a fine idea and Slim was promptly elected.

Finally, we turned our attention to Steve Whitman's analysis of 3.9N of the Subdivision Regulations, which we had requested after an informational subdivision proposal presentation last month by Alan Barnard on behalf of Rockhaven Financial LLC. His email transferred arithmetic showing that neither of the lot configuration proposals were correct.

We all felt that Groton had always had 150 feet as a minimum road frontage per subdivided lot and a minimum 2 acre lot size, but these measurements are not compatible with our most recent redrafting process. In the redraft we adopted ratios to regulate subdivision lot sizes with the intention of avoiding a common pitfall known as "spaghetti lots", where road frontage is minimal and minimum lot sizes are met by extending the lot into a long narrow shape. This leads to residential areas that feel congested and can be hard on the ecosystem.

Examination of the regulations led to the consensus that in our most recent redrafting process there was also an oversight in that the ratios should apply to lots on **all** roads.

Deb moved we amend 3.9 N of the Groton Subdivision Regulations dated February 29, 2012 to delete the words “new and constructed” such that the regulations shall read “all roads in the Town of Groton shall subscribe to the above regulations”, as well as the following amendments to the lot size ratio: “2 to 10 acres 3:1, 11 to 50 acres 4:1” will be changed to “2 to 50 acres 4:1”. The remaining ratios will remain as written. Russ seconded this motion, and a vote found all in favor.

We will have a public hearing June 25 on amended language to the Subdivision Regulations. This is our next Planning Board meeting. We will also meet June 18th for a work session.

Submitted by Jenny Burnett