

**GRISWOLD PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION
SPECIAL MEETING
MINUTES**

OCTOBER 23, 2006

GRISWOLD TOWN HALL

I. SPECIAL MEETING (7:00 P.M.)

1. Call to order:

Chairperson G. Rooke-Norman called this public hearing of Griswold Planning & Zoning Commission to order at 7:01 p.m.

2. Roll Call:

Present: Chairperson Gail Rooke-Norman, Members Daniel DeGuire, Alternates Martin McKinney, Town Planner Carl Fontneau, ZEO Peter Zvingilas, Recording Secretary Donna Szall

Absent: Members Philip Anthony, Clyde Seaman, John Schumaker, Courtland Kinnie

3. Determination of Quorum

G. Rooke-Norman appointed M. McKinney to sit for Clyde Seaman. It was determined that there is a quorum for this public hearing.

4. Matter Presented for Consideration:

A. Open discussion of Golf Barn Driving Range on Voluntown Road.

G. Rooke-Norman stated that M. McKinney asked that when the Commission voted to go to two meetings a month, was the second meeting to be a special meeting. G. Rooke-Norman asked C. Fontneau to explain this. C. Fontneau stated that a new schedule must be filed with the town clerk and the secretary of state at the end of the year; and until that time, any other meetings must be special meetings. There was discussion of this matter.

G. Rooke-Norman stated that there was a question of funding from the Board of Finance for staff for two regular monthly meetings. P. Zvingilas asked about the by-laws and the town ordinance for two monthly meetings. D. DeGuire stated that a letter would be written to the Selectmen requesting additional funding. G. Rooke-Norman asked D. Szall to list the adjournments to be added to the letter for the Selectmen.

G. Rooke-Norman asked P. Zvingilas if he has received any further complaints about golf balls. P. Zvingilas stated that he has not received any calls in the last two weeks.

G. Rooke-Norman asked the Commission and Staff if they had any questions or concerns.

D. DeGuire asked about the temporary permit. P. Zvingilas explained that a temporary permit might be given when the use of a building can be safely occupied but that not all the amenities have been finished. D. DeGuire stated that he has received many phone calls about a temporary permit for a place with open pits and no paving. P. Zvingilas stated that there was no permit for the building but only for the driving range. There was discussion of this matter including that there are no employees and only golf balls are being hit.

G. Rooke-Norman asked if temporary permits had been granted in the past when not all of the amenities had been complete. P. Zvingilas explained that they had been issued for the school. She asked if this was ever done for non-municipal buildings. P. Zvingilas stated that it was done for the Ames Store when the whole building was not completed. There was further discussion of this matter.

P. Zvingilas explained that the driving range was completed and the temporary CO was issued for the range only. He explained that the paving and lighting for the parking lot have not been done. There was discussion of this matter including hours of operation and following the plan as approved by the Commission.

G. Rooke-Norman stated that there are allegations that the driving range has problems, and if the engineering calculations should be revised. She stated that the Commission has an obligation to look into all the issues of the driving range. There was discussion of this matter including relying on expert interpretations.

John Schumaker and Courtland Kinnie arrived at 7:10 p.m. G. Rooke-Norman stated that J. Schumaker is a regular member and C. Kinnie was appointed to sit for P. Anthony.

G. Rooke-Norman asked for comments and questions from the Commission. J. Schumaker stated that he would like the issue of the golf balls out of the way. C. Kinnie stated that public health and safety is an issue. He stated that the applicant made adjustment to keep the balls from over the net. There was discussion of this matter including asking the applicant's engineer to provide the impact of the adjustment made.

G. Rooke- Norman asked if there was an as built plan submitted. P. Zvingilas stated no.

M. McKinney asked if there was an issue with the poles having been moved away from the road. P. Zvingilas stated that there was an issue with the poles having been moved. There was discussion of this matter.

G. Rooke-Norman asked the applicant to speak to the Commission.

Nelson Rodriguez, Golf Barn Driving Range stated that he brought a professional to speak about the golf balls.

Sammy Sampson, member of PGA America, stated that he was a professional golfer. He explained that he had consulted with driving ranges and golf courses. He addressed the safety issues in question of the Golf Barn Driving Range. There was lengthy discussion of this matter that included net height, the tee net dividers, limited flight golf balls.

G. Rooke-Norman stated that the applicant must come before the Commission with a proposal to add the safety netting to the tees. There was discussion of this matter including engineer specifications.

N. Rodriguez stated that he wanted to rectify the problems. J. Schumaker asked if anyone was monitoring the driving range. N. Rodriguez stated that S. Sampson would be there to help him monitor the driving range. He stated that he has put up signs stating the rules of the range. There was lengthy discussion of this matter.

G. Rooke-Norman stated that the Commission would allow people to speak on this issue and the keep their comments brief.

Lisa McGrory, Latham Road, read her list of concerns for the record. She submitted them for the record. She asked if copies of the complaints could be reviewed.

Harry Barber, 1118 Voluntown Road, explained that he had 118 golf balls that fell in his yard. He voiced his concerns of the balls going over the road onto his property.

Tim Byer voiced his concerns for the safety of people driving on Rte 138. He was concerned that the individual who hit the ball was responsible and not the driving range.

Gerald Biels stated that he drives on Rte 138 and he has not seen golf balls on lawns or on the road.

Sharon Pendelton, Alvina, voiced her concerns that she cannot walk with her children on Latham and feared for their safety.

Genevieve Keogh said she lives in Voluntown and drives on Rte 138 all the time. She stated that she sees golf balls going over Rte 138. She stated that the site was not good for a driving range. She suggested it be a miniature golf course.

Lisa McGrory stated that there were 36 golf balls collected at the bus stop.

Marge Jones, Rte 138. She stated that when Channel 3 was at the driving range N. Rodriguez told them that people were picking up golf balls from his driving range.

Randy Jones stated that he had 70 golf balls that landed on his property and that he did not pick them up from the driving range. He stated that he was concerned for the safety of the traffic on Rte 138.

N. Rodriguez stated that he would hire people to keep track of the golf balls. He invited the Commission to come to the driving range. N. Rodriguez stated that he will look into the fence for the tees and if that does not work, he will look at other changes. He stated that he wanted to work with the Town.

N. Rodriguez had intended the golf range to be fully automated, but he can see that he or staff must be there at all times. There was discussion of this matter.

G. Rooke-Norman thanked N. Rodriguez for coming to this meeting.

G. Rooke-Norman asked for a motion to take a break. J. Schumaker made a motion to take a break. M. McKinney seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion was carried. The meeting recessed at 8:20 p.m.

G. Rooke-Norman reconvened the meeting at 8:30 p.m.

II. WORKSHOP FOR PLAN OF CONSERVATION & DEVELOPMENT (8:00 P.M.)

A. Workshop of the Plan of Conservation and Development

G. Rooke-Norman stated that she spoke with C. Seaman and that he cannot come to the meetings. She stated that she would review the plan of conservation and development with him at his home.

G. Rooke-Norman stated that M. McKinney could not remain on the School Building Committee due to scheduling conflicts and she asked if anyone on the Commission had time to be on the committee that meets every second and fourth Wednesday. There was discussion of this matter to include this item on the agenda for the November 13, 2006 regular meeting to discuss a liaison to the Building Committee.

G. Rooke-Norman asked C. Fontneau if there was a ruling from Atty. Branse regarding appointment of the alternate member. C. Fontneau stated that he would be meeting with Atty. Branse on Wednesday. There was discussion of this matter.

G. Rooke-Norman asked about the last section of the implementation steps. C. Fontneau stated that by changing the working on some of the goals, it would place the purview to the proper entity. There was discussion of this matter.

The Commission reviewed and discussed the goals and recommendations that included the maps for land use and the business and commercial inventory.

G. Rooke-Norman asked the Commission to rank the goals for the next meeting on November 13, 2006.

G. Rooke-Norman stated that there should be a brochure to be sent to developers as a marketing tool. C. Fontneau stated he had worked a brochure for Salem and would bring it to the next meeting. There was discussion of this matter.

G. Rooke-Norman asked for comments and additions by the Commission. C. Kinnie read his recommendations for the record. She asked that members receive a copy of these recommendations.

There was discussion of Pachaug Pond and the invasive non-indigenous plants. C. Fontneau stated that this would be a long-term goal for the use of herbicides with DEP on Pachaug Pond.

G. Rooke-Norman asked that C. Fontneau let the Commission know when applications submitted are not complete. There was discussion of this matter.

C. Fontneau stated that new information was received regarding the placement of sidewalks over I-395. There was discussion of this matter.

G. Rooke-Norman asked for a motion to adjourn. C. Kinnie made a motion to adjourn. D. DeGuire seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion was carried. Meeting adjourned at 9:25 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Donna M. Szall
Recording Secretary