



**PLANNING  
BOARD**

**TOWN OF GRAFTON**  
GRAFTON MEMORIAL MUNICIPAL CENTER  
30 PROVIDENCE ROAD  
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(508) 839-5335 ext. 1120 • FAX (508) 839-4602  
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**M E M O R A N D U M**

TO: The Grafton Planning Board  
FROM: Fiona Coughlan, Town Planner  
CC: Natalia Alward, Planning Assistant (via email)  
DATE: May 16, 2023  
SUBJECT: Approval Under Subdivision Control Not Required Plan (ANR 2023-05) – 62 Wesson Street, Willard House Clock Museum, Inc. (applicant/owner).

Request for Special Permit (SP 2023-02/SPA) and Site Plan Approval, 62 Wesson Street, Willard House Clock Museum, Inc. (applicant/owner).

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I am forwarding a memorandum outlining the Planning Department's initial review of two applications before the Planning Board on May 22, 2023 – an ANR Application and a Special Permit/Site Plan Approval Application for 62 Wesson Road. The applicant resubmitted the ANR Application on May 16, 2023, following a denial at the March 13, 2023, Planning Board meeting. The Board upheld the fee waiver for resubmission of the ANR Application at the March 27, 2023, Planning Board meeting. The Applicant has submitted the Special Permit/Site Plan Approval Application with the ANR plan to demonstrate that the proposed Common Driveway will address access issues required for the creation of the new lots, specifically Lots 2 and 3. It would be otherwise challenging to achieve access for Lot 3 from its legal frontage. While Town Counsel has advised that access in this case is under the purview of the Conservation Commission and is not a reason to deny the proposed ANR, several Planning Board members were nevertheless concerned about this issue when the plan was first brought before them in March. To alleviate this concern, the Applicant has brought both applications before the Board at this time.

As of the date of this memorandum, the Applicant has not filed for permits with the Conservation Commission. The Town Planner emailed the Applicant on April 4, 2023, to confirm if they will apply. The Applicant has also not applied for a Scenic Road permit yet. The Town Planner emailed the Applicant on April 4, 2023, to confirm if they will apply. They plan to apply shortly after the Board hears these two applications. The Decision for SP 2023-02/SPA will eventually require conditions contingent upon the Scenic Road and Conservation Commission Applications. Please note, the Conservation Commission may require changes to the Site Plan that must be reflected on the Planning Board's Site Plan (may require a modification of the Special Permit through the Planning Board).

ANR 2023-05:

At the meeting on March 13, 2023, the Board questioned whether the presence of wetlands prevented reasonable access to one of the new lots created at 62 Wesson Street. Upon consultation



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with Town Counsel, the presence of wetlands preventing reasonable access to the third proposed home on the 62 Wesson Street application is not grounds for an ANR denial. The proposed Common Driveway avoids the extension of nuisance or detrimental uses by avoiding breaking/creating separate openings in the stone wall along Wesson Road and paving over wetlands present on Lot 3, per the Zoning Bylaw's *Purpose and Intent*.

There are marginal differences between the March and May ANR applications. Differences mainly include an adjusted driveway design serving Lot 2, removal of visuals indicating septic leaching field locations, and updated square footage for the exclusive access easement serving Lot 3. Such differences should not affect the Board's review, but should be indicated for the record.

#### SP 2023-02/SPA:

The Planning Department has reviewed the SP/SPA Application and has made the following comments.

#### Common Driveway (ZBL):

- (a) compliance with the design and construction requirements for Common Driveway as set forth in the Rules and Regulations Governing the Subdivision of Land, Grafton, Massachusetts. **The Application will need to be reviewed for design and construction compliance by the Town's consulting engineer, Graves Engineering, but the proposal appears to meet the requirements set forth in the Subdivision Rules and Regulations, including minimum width of eighteen feet, maximum grade of 10 percent, and maximum length of five hundred feet. The driveway conforms to the minimum requirements for the Grafton Fire Department, which is twenty-four feet (currently thirty feet). The Common Driveway serves two lots, and all associated easements are located within the boundaries of the lots to be served by the driveway. The narrowing of the driveway to serve the house on Lot 3 should be at least twelve feet (12') wide and have an opening of at least sixteen feet (16') at the gutter line. The exclusive portion of the Common Driveway shall be between one hundred fifty feet (150') and five hundred feet (500'). Graves Engineering will provide final analysis.**

**Per Section 5.14 of the Regulations, Common Driveways shall be graded, and a one-inch (1") course of binder and a one-inch (1") course of wearing surface applied to at least the minimum required width. The Applicant proposes one and a half (1.5") inch of finish and two-inch (2") of binder (hot mix asphalt) and is designing the driveway to the "minor street" road gravel and pavement depth specifications. Graves Engineering will analyze for compliance with the Town's regulations, but the plans appear to show compliance.**



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**The driveway openings shall not contain catch basins (application complies), and driveways or other curb cut openings shall be designed so surface runoff can neither enter nor leave the road right of way. The Conservation Commission and Graves Engineering will confirm compliance.**

**Lastly, the site plans demonstrate septic and sewer facility compliance with the ZBL and Subdivision Rules and Regulations. The Applicant will need to submit septic plans to the Board of Health, who will confirm compliance. The Planning Department circulated the plans for comment on March 15, 2023, and May 8, 2023.**

- **(b) access to the proposed building site of each lot using the legal frontage of said lots. The Applicant meets the minimum frontage requirements of 140 feet for each of the proposed lots served by the Common Driveway.**
- **(c) provisions for safe ingress/egress of the residents of the lots served by the proposed Common Driveway, as well as public safety vehicles and personnel. The Applicant should confirm the Common Driveway entrance will be void of all obstacles to a minimum of thirty feet (i.e., light poles, trees, shrubs, stone walls, gates and posts, mailboxes, etc.), and that turning radii that will accommodate fire apparatus. Grade changes cannot change more than 5 percent in any 75-foot length, with minimal percentage change at changes of intersections (applicant states slopes are no greater than 3 percent). If fire hydrants are present, they should be indicated on the site plans.**
- **(d) the location of the point of ingress/egress of the proposed Common Driveway with respect to public safety, convenience, and traffic flow, including, but not limited to, topography, sight lines and road grades. The Application does not pose concerns with respect to traffic flow and convenience. The Common Driveway makes access to Lots 2 and 3 more convenient. Please see above for public safety concerns regarding fire. The Planning Department asks that breaks in the stone walls do not pose adverse impacts on sight lines at the intersection of the Common Driveway and the right of way.**
- **(e) location of environmental and/or historical resources, and the impacts of driveway construction on such resources without the use of a Common Driveway. The Common Driveway is located on a Scenic Road and will require a Special Permit through the Grafton Planning Board. This application offers a solution that reduces the need to disturb the stone wall excessively by eliminating a curb cut. The alternative would be the creation of three driveways, resulting in more wall disturbance and direct disturbance of the vegetated wetlands on Lot 3. A Common Driveway is the preferred**



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way to service a home on Lot 3 given the environmental and historical resources present.

- (f) the potential for the proposed Common Driveway to reduce excessive points of ingress/egress along roadways and minimize access points to the extent practical. **The application reduces adding additional points of ingress/egress along the roadway by serving two lots through one access point.**

Special Permit Conditions (ZBL):

- (a.) Ingress and egress to property and proposed structures thereon with particular reference to automotive and pedestrian safety and convenience, traffic flow and control and access in case of fire or catastrophe. **See comments above.**
- (b.) Off-street parking and loading areas where required, and the economic, noise, glare, or odor effects of the special permit on adjoining properties and properties generally in the district. **This Application is not anticipated to pose adverse impacts on adjoining properties and properties in the district regarding off-street parking and loading, economic, noise, glare, or odor effects.**
- (c.) Refuse collection or disposal and services areas. **Refuse collection and disposal will be handled by homeowners and the Town of Grafton.**
- (d.) Screening and buffering with reference to type, dimensions, and character. **The Applicant is not providing details to this effect, as indicated in their Waiver Request Form.**
- (e.) Signs, if any, and proposed exterior lighting with reference to glare, traffic safety, economic effect, and compatibility and harmony with properties in the district. **The Applicant is not providing details to this effect, as indicated in their Waiver Request Form.**
- (f.) Required yards and other open space. **This Condition is satisfied in the opinion of the Planning Department. The Applicant should confirm compliance with setbacks by including measurements for the Board.**
- (g.) General compatibility with adjacent properties and other property in the district. **This Condition is satisfied in the opinion of the Planning Department.**
- (h.) There will not be any significant adverse impact on any public or private water supply. **This Condition is satisfied in the opinion of the Planning Department.**
- (i.) If the subject site is located within the Water Supply Protection Overlay District, there will not be any significant or cumulative impact upon municipal water supplies, and the Board shall give appropriate consideration to contamination by nitrate-nitrogen loading in making this determination. **Not applicable.**



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- (j.) Protect important historic, cultural, and scenic landscapes. **This Condition is satisfied in the opinion of the Planning Department, as there will be fewer breaks in the stone wall along this Scenic Road with the project as proposed.**

Site Plan Review (1.3.3.3d ZBL):

- (13.) All property lines of the subject property, and all setbacks of buildings and parking areas from said lines, and existing and proposed easements, if any. **Requested a waiver but indicates compliance on Site Plan. Setbacks not clearly defined on the submitted Site Plan.**
- (15.) Lot coverage calculations showing percentage of buildings, percentage of pavement, and percentage of open space/ landscaped areas. **Requested a waiver. The percentage of pavement should be clearly defined on the submitted Site Plan for the Board.**
- (17.) Calculations of the volume of earth material to be removed or filled on the property, and delineation of the location(s) of such activity. **Requested a waiver. Compliance should be considered when addressing the storage of stone wall material on site. The Applicant should discuss how they plan to address the removal of dirt and vegetation when constructing the Common Driveway.**
- (25.) Stormwater management facilities (drainage). **Did not request a waiver. The Applicant submitted a Stormwater Report on April 26, 2023. Graves Engineering and the Conservation Commission will need to confirm compliance with the Stormwater Bylaw and confirm no increase in the rate of runoff. As of May 8, 2023, the Planning Department is still awaiting Graves's report. The report will be added to the Exhibits once submitted for review by the Board.**
- (28.) Utilities and their exterior appurtenances (e.g., fire connections). **Did not request a waiver. Utilities and their placement on the Site Plan should be clearly defined for the Board. Water infrastructure should be specified.**
- (29.) Provisions for dust and erosion control. **Did not request a waiver. Erosion control addressed in Site Plan but will require sign-off from the Conservation Agent and Graves Engineering.**

Please contact me if you have any questions by phone at 508-839-5335 x1402, or by email at [coughlanf@grafton-ma.gov](mailto:coughlanf@grafton-ma.gov).

Thank you.

Fiona Coughlan  
Town Planner