



Planning Board Minutes – January 9, 2018

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A joint meeting of the Town of Freetown Planning Board was held on **January 9, 2018** at the Freetown Senior Center, 227 Chace Rd Freetown, MA. **Planning Board Members Present:** Robert Jose, Keven Desmarais, Mark Rogers, Debra Robbins and James Frates

The Chairman stated that Nicolas Velozo had submitted his letter of resignation to the Board; he introduce new member James Frates.

A. Continued Public Hearing – Fall Brook subdivision

The applicants have requested a continuance; Motion to continue to 2/6/18 at 6 PM at the Town Hall: Mark Rogers; Second: Robert Jose; all in favor.

B. Continued Public Hearing – Irving Oil (68 S. Main Street)

The Chairman opened the hearing at 6:05PM. Maria Proulx from EPG was in attendance. Atty. Matthew Costa approached the Board, stating that there were several outstanding engineering questions and proposed solutions to be demonstrated by the applicants. He thanked the Board for their continuances and introduced Nicole Duquette of MHF Design Engineers. The Chairman had stated that Mr. Frates had listened to the recording of the first public hearing, as well as signed the Mullin Rule form.

Ms. Duquette stated that the largest change in response from the peer review comments involved adjusting enlarged the driveways to accommodate the turning radius. The two driveways from S. Main Street were widened to 66 and 99 ft respectively; throats are 45 and 52ft wide. Ms. Duquette states that these changes allow for a typical tractor trailer truck of 62 ft. to exit without encroaching into the opposite lane on S. Main; Ms. Proulx confirmed. Ms. Duquette stated that the wider driveway into and out of the retail area could better accommodate boat trailers, which was a problem stated in the first public hearing; she also stated that the dumpster area has been moved to the rear of the property, and several employee parking spots have been added, with a sidewalk leading to the entrance. This additional parking should alleviate some of the traffic volume during the morning rush.

The Chairman stated that given the concerns that were aired at the first public hearing about the site's existing condition, that some of the issues voiced would begin to improve. He states that it seems as if tractor trailers are almost being encouraged to park on the DOT Access Road, and would have thought that Irving Oil would install some signage. Ms. Duquette stated that they did not put signs since it is DOT's property and not Irving's; she states that the tractor trailer parking spots proposed behind the building can accommodate those that are currently parking on the access road. Mr. Desmarais stated that the Board should have requested that DOT attend tonight's meeting. Mark Rogers passed out a picture he took of (2) trailers parked along the access road.

Mr. Jose asked if the applicants would be putting in new underground tanks; Ms. Duquette stated that the retail side would remain the same, and new tanks will be installed for the new diesel pumps. The Chairman stated that at the last hearing there was discussion about the possibility of moving the fueling area to the back and have the entrance where egress is currently proposed; he states that for vehicles coming off the highway that miss the first left, they will end up going onto other properties to turn around, disrupting traffic on S. Main. Jen Daigle of Irving Oil stated that per MA law, the cashier needs a direct line of site to the fuel pumps; to locate pumps in the rear, the store would need to be reconfigured completely, which isn't feasible. She further stated that cameras cannot be used in lieu of physical view.

The Chairman again touched on the immediacy of the entrance for trucks coming from the northbound off ramp, and the likelihood of the vehicles missing the entrance. Ms. Daigle stated they are proposing entrance signs with visible arrows. Mr. Jose asked the distance from that off ramp to the access road; Tim Letton of GPI, Inc. stated that they had measured the site distance to be 500 ft; and clarified the physical distance to be 150-200 feet to the ramp. Mr. Jose stated he is concerned that tractor trailers waiting to make turns could cause backups on the ramp; if the entrance was moved north 400 feet, that concern would be greatly alleviated. The Chairman stated that there is traffic coming off of Rt 24 onto Ridge Hill Rd, as well as existing tractor trailers leaving Ridge Hill Rd, which leads to a traffic stand off on S. Main as is; he is surprised DOT is allowing this new level of activity so close to the ramp. Mr. Letton stated that they have not done studies to count the traffic coming out of Ridge Hill Rd, but they do have the projected number of trips, which is projected to be less than the existing, due to the retail building's demolition. The Chairman stated that Irving would not be investing into the infrastructure for the new diesel pumps unless there would be an increase in the business; there is an increase in the tractor trailer traffic in town, and the Board has permitted a number of projects recently that have added a number of vehicle trips each day. He states that the applicants should be looking at that activity, especially near the Ridge Hill and S. Main intersection; further the distance from the off ramp to the access road is a major concern. The Chairman states he wishes that there was more local education of the employees; Ms. Daigle said this will be discussed with operations. He states that this store in Freetown could be the model for how all stores can operate if some efforts are made. The Board discussed possible ways to condition the project, including cameras on the tractor trailer spaces in the back to ensure that they are monitored and not staying for extended periods of time. Discussion ensued over what the appropriate amount of time would be; Ms. Daigle said Irving is reluctant to place signage to limit the time as it is difficult to enforce. The Chairman stated that at the first public hearing, effort was made to reassure residents this was not going to be a truck stop, and further that zoning bylaws have been enacted to prevent extended stay truck stop type activities.

Mr. Letton stated that they can take traffic counts and projections for projects existing and permitted on Ridge Hill Rd. Mr. Rogers suggested that employee parking can be put even further back closer to the detention basin, maybe using pervious surface rather than pavement, which would free up additional customer spots. Patty Chase, resident, inquired as to laws regarding idling; Mr. Jose said the federal law is 10 minutes, monitored by a truck team for the state police. Signage would allow for the police to be called.

Motion to continue the public hearing to March 6th at 6PM at the Senior Center: Robert Jose; Second: Mark Rogers; all in favor.

Motion to approve the minutes of 11/7/17 and 11/21/17 and 12/19/17: Mark Rogers: Second: Debra Robbins; all in favor.

Meeting adjourned at 8:00 PM

Respectfully Submitted,

Lauren Moreau, Planning Technician