



Planning Board Minutes – February 16, 2016

A meeting of the Town of Freetown **Planning Board** was held on **February 16, 2016** at the Freetown Senior Center, 227 Chace Rd. Freetown, MA. **Present:** Debra Robbins, Robert Jose, Mark Rogers, Keven Desmarais, Nicolas Velozo

A. Concurrent public hearings for proposed Amazon warehouse, 0 Rt. 24/Innovation Way (Map 236, Lot 6)

Meeting called to order at 6:05 PM. Motion to waive the reading of the public hearing notice: Nicolas Velozo; Second: Robert Jose; all in favor.

George Laigaie of Trammel Crow Company and Richard Burrow of Langan Engineering approached the Board to present. The public hearings for a modification to a previously approved site plan as well as for a special permit for signage were being run concurrently. Firstly, Mr. Burrow explained the proposed changes to the approved site plan (plan set revised through 1/15/16). The differences include: the addition of 15 loading docks, widening of the guardhouse island, relocation of parking spaces to coordinate with NGRID transformer requirements, modified speed limit signs, lowering of the developed portion of the site by 4 inches, additional details related to drainage and pond and rain garden, upsizing of the sewer force main, addition of barbed wire to the fence and gates, and modification to the monument signs. These proposed changes were described in a letter dated 1/27/16 and submitted with the site plan review application.

The Chairman inquired as to how the additional loading docks would impact the amount of traffic on sight. Mr. Burrow replied that the docks have been added to increase the utility of the building in the future. The impact to peak hour traffic will be negligible and well within the thresholds of what MEPA has already established for the site.

Signage was the next topic discussed. There are many signs proposed throughout the campus, and some number of these will require a special permit according to Freetown bylaws. Mr. Burrow stated that Joe Biskzo, Fall River's Building Inspector has jurisdiction over this project, and reviewed the plan set. He issued a letter outlining which signs needed relief from the sign bylaw. A follow up letter was received on February 12, 2016 from Langan Engineering, accompanied by a signage plan which did not change any of the signage depicted on the original plan reviewed, but further clarified in red font which of the signs require a special permit. The letter indicates that relief is needed for 3 additional address and visitor usher signs proposed to be 20 sf that were on the original plans but not relief was not formally requested for in their original application.

The first sign requiring a special permit is the monument sign proposed for the northern side of the driveway entrance; Mr. Burrow furnished a picture of a similar sign at a New Jersey warehouse. It will be illuminated at night, and a DOT permit has already been obtained for the sign. It is proposed to be set back approximately 15 ft from the road.

Mr. Burrow further stated that all the proposed signs which do not currently meet Freetown bylaws are in existence at other Amazon facilities, and conform to their signage package standards. Mr. Burrow states that Amazon has two standard sizes for their campus directional and traffic signs; 6 sf and 20 sf. He showed the Board a true to size 6 sf directional sign. There are a number of these as well as the 20 sf signs proposed on the site; currently the Town only allows up to 3sf for directional signs. The applicants are also seeking a special permit for an additional freestanding sign; only one sign of this type is currently allowed on the property.

Mr. Burrow described that they are also seeking a special permit for the internally illuminated wall sign that will face Route 24 on the far corner of the building closest to Freetown. It is 39 ft long and 9 ft high, which exceeds the bylaw's allowable dimensions, however, Mr. Burrow contends the size is in line with the scale of the building. The Board discusses their major concern involves the illumination of the sign.

Mr. Velozo asks why they are only installing 1 sign facing Route 24; Mr. Burrow states that a wall sign will also be on the front, on the side of the building that is located in Fall River; this is their standard for wall signage location. Mr. Jose inquires as to how many lumens the wall sign is proposed to be. Mr. Burrow states that he is not sure.

Mr. Jose asks when the applicants are proposing to put up the landscape berms and plantings that were discussed as part of the original site plan approval. Mr. Laigaie stated that it will occur in the first phase; landscapers are scheduled back in the spring with an anticipated summer opening. Mr. Velozo asks if the proposed barbed wire will run along side the highway. Mr. Burrow states that it will run along the rear of the property facing Rt. 24 around the truck court. The wire and fence are black and will be well behind the berm and plantings.

The Chairman closed the site plan review hearing at 6:28 pm. Motion to approve the revised site plan: Robert Jose; Second: Mark Rogers; all in favor.

The Board further discussed the signage, specifically the illumination of the wall sign. Motion was made to approve a special permit for the signage requested by the applicants, with the condition that the wall sign is not to exceed the illumination standards determined by the DOT: Mark Rogers; Second: Nicolas Velozo; all in favor.

B. Misc

The Board discussed the proposed changes to the site plan review bylaw and rules and regulations. It was determined relative to applicability that any expansion or construction under 2500 sf resulting in less than 25 vehicle trips per day would not be subject to site plan review. The Board also discussed changing the application fees - \$100 for a minor site plan application and \$500 for a major site plan application, with a \$100 fee for any subsequent modification.

The Board reviewed the addendum to the certificate of approval for Ole Blue Way. Motion to endorse the document: Debra Robbins: Second: Robert Jose; all in favor

Meeting Adjourned at 7:30 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Lauren Moreau
Planning Technician

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