



Planning Board Minutes – February 7, 2017

A meeting of the Town of Freetown **Planning Board** was held on **February 7, 2017** at the Freetown Town Hall, 3 N Main St, Assonet, MA. **Present:** Keven Desmarais, Mark Rogers, Robert Jose, Nicolas Velozo **Absent:** Debra Robbins

The Chairman opened the meeting at 6:01 PM.

Robert Chamberlain approached the Board with a Form A plan for 33 acre property located off of Friend Street (Map 204, Lot 7). The property is subject to an Agricultural Preservation Restriction (APR) with the state; there is a house on the property that the state APR committee had exempted from the greater parcel in the 1980's according to the applicant. The plan depicting the building envelope was never recorded, so the entire parcel still shows as one piece on the Freetown Assessor's database. Mr. Chamberlain is looking to remedy this via ANR separating the house lot from the remainder. The Chairman pointed out that the plan does not show the required 100ft diameter circle that touches the frontage and stays wholly on the proposed lot, required by our zoning bylaws. The Board could endorse the plan, but it would now create a non-conforming lot with a zoning violation. Mr. Chamberlain stated he will withdraw the plan and consult with the APR Board to determine the best method going forward.

The Board discuss the newly available District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA) funds announced by SRPEDD. After some discussion, the Board concluded that the Planning Technician's recommendation, which was also presented to Selectmen, should be submitted for consideration. The request will be for assistance in completing a Housing Production Plan draft as well as identifying best practices for the submittal of a Community Compact Cabinet application.

The Board discussed a number of possible Town Meeting articles. The first article concerned setting hours of operation of businesses. After some discussion, the general consensus was that businesses open to public traffic in the Business, General, or Village Business districts would have set hours by right, and anything outside of that timeframe would require a special permit. The Planning Technician will craft something for definitive for a review. The Board discussed the issue of recreational marijuana in regard to its zoning in a Town Meeting article. Mr. Desmarais and the Planning Technician had both attended a briefing about the new law led by Atty. Barbara St. Andre of KP Law. The main takeaway was that initial regulations have not yet been promulgated; and may not be until March 15, 2018. Additionally, the legislature is proposing no less than 22 amendments to the ballot statute that passed, so it impossible to say what the final statute and requirements will look like. Meanwhile, the Cannabis Control Commission has a deadline of April 1, 2018 by which to begin accepting applications from businesses with prior medical marijuana experience. If local rules and regulations and/or zoning bylaws are not crafted by that time, it was inferred that a retail marijuana shop could locate wherever any other type of retail was allowed in town. The Chairman stated that he strongly believes the Town should work on crafting a temporary moratorium on the siting of recreational marijuana facilities to be in effect until June 30, 2018 or the Town passes such measures, whichever is first. Additionally, he stated there are basic decisions that need to be determined by the Selectmen as to whether to limit certain types of establishments, the number of establishments, etc. Depending upon what they wish to do, this could involve a ballot question during an election; ultimately their standards would instruct the Planning Board on how to proceed with any zoning amendments. The Board also instructed the Planning Technician to look into a bylaw to curtail the truck parking that has popped up on vacant lots.

The Board reviewed the draft of the Annual Town Report and approved it with a minor verbage change.

Meeting adjourned at 7:30 PM

Respectfully Submitted

Lauren Moreau, Planning Technician

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