



Planning Board Minutes – September 25, 2018

A meeting of the Town of Freetown **Planning Board** was held on September 25, 2018 at the Freetown Town Hall 3 N Main St Freetown, MA **Present:** Mark Rogers, Debra Robbins, Robert Jose, Jim Frates, Keven Desmarais

Meeting called to order at 6:10 PM

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J. Brown

Public Hearing

Chairman Desmarais entertained a motion to waive the reading of the public hearing notice, Ms. Robbins sustained and Mr. Jose seconded. The motion passes unanimously.

Chairman Desmarais explained Article 22 which, if accepted, would change the table of use to allow truck stops in the STOD (Science and Technology Overlay District) by special permit. Chairman Desmarais added that this is a housekeeping measure in order to have the table of use match up with what

Mr. Jose stated that when the definition for Truck Stop was added to the by-laws the Board discussed putting it outside of the center of town. Mr. Jose also explained that it was an oversight not to put it in the table of use at the same time that the definition was added. Mr. Jose stated that he thought this would be a good way to get truck traffic away from the center of town.

Chairman Desmarais entertained a motion that the Planning Board recommend for adoption at Town Meeting the change to the Table Use for the STOD from No to Special Permit for Truck Stops, Mr. Jose sustained, and Ms. Robbins seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Gary Mendes asked where the STOD is. Mr. Jose responded that it's where Amazon and Innovation Way is. Mr. Mendes asked why the board wants to change it. Chairman Desmarais explained that having a truck stop there would pull truck traffic from the center of town into an area that's on the other side of a highway where warehouses are already located. Mr. Mendes said that Assonet is getting industrialized really fast. Mr. Frates said that trucking is a major problem all over the country and that one of the reasons it's a problem in Freetown is because Freetown is located right off a highway. Mr. Mendes mentioned that there a lot of pros and cons. Chairman Desmarais said that he didn't believe there were a lot of cons. Chairman Desmarais added that the idea is if the town can somehow accommodate a use that is already present then they can try and control it. Mr. Mendes asked if the number of trucks will be limited. Chairman Desmarais responded that it is based on the special permit rules and design standards. Chairman Desmarais said that they did not want a similar thing like the dump over the border of Dartmouth where Freetown gets all the negative impacts and none of the positive ones. Mr. Mendes asked why Freetown would want to invite truck traffic into town. Mr. Jose responded that people asked not to have truck stops in the center of town and that this a reflection of what the voters want.

Chairman Desmarais explained Article 21 which, if accepted, would change the Adult Retirement community minimum lot size restrictions from ten to five acres for properties that are serviced by

municipal water and/or sewer. Chairman Desmarais stated that for the past couple years the Planning Board has been working on a Housing Production Plan to try and figure out ways to make town more affordable. Chairman Desmarais said that one way is to allow smaller lots and to identify ways to help the over 55 population in town. Chairman Desmarais added that the Adult Retirement Community bylaw has been around for probably 10 years. Mr. Mendes asked what the density would be. Chairman Desmarais replied that there is no set density but it's based on setbacks and other building requirements. Mr. Mendes mentioned that people are going to think that you'll be trying to put adult retirement communities everywhere putting more strain on police, fire, and public services. Chairman Desmarais replied that the board has had seniors coming to them for years asking for this. Mr. Frates added that he wasn't sure how much the change from 10 acres to 5 acres will result in more units. Chairman Desmarais said that it's areas where subdivisions won't go in. Mr. Frates stated that the 55+ population is an asset to Freetown. Mr. Jose explained that the state requires the town to have a certain amount of low income housing and what this is doing is bumping up the affordable housing but keeping people in town.

Mr. Jose made a motion to approve the article as read, Ms. Robbins seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Desmarais explained Article 23 which, if accepted, would rezone certain parcels from their current zoning to Open Space & Recreation. Mr. Mendes stated that Open Space is what Freetown is known for.

Mr. Jose made a motion to approve article as read, Ms. Robbins seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Mike McCue asked if anything has been struck or added from the list of parcels that would be rezoned. Chairman Desmarais replied that nothing has been changed.

Chairman Desmarais explained that the proposed article allowing limited development on lots in the Assonet Bay Shores Overlay District has been removed from consideration. Mr. Jose mentioned that since this would be a major zoning change that the board should take a while to discuss it and not rush it. Mr. Jose added that he sees it as zoning relief. Ms. Robbins asked what 'intent of owner' means. Mr. McCue explained that is someone purposely combined their lot they would not be granted an exception. Mr. McCue added that the idea is to give people who had their lots combined due to the law relief, since they did not do it on purpose. Ms. Robbins asked why it was buildings would be limited to 1 ½ stories. Mr. McCue said that it was done to have smaller house sizes. Mr. Frates said he's not sure they should be limiting house sizes. Chairman Desmarais replied that limiting house sizes helps affordability.

Chairman Desmarais entertained a motion to close the public hearing, Mr. Jose sustained and Ms. Robbins seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Discussion of Chace/Parker Estates Subdivision Release Request

Chairman Desmarais entertained a motion that they release the bond for the Chace/Parker estate subdivision, Mr. Jose sustained, and Ms. Robbins seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Jose made a motion to adjourn, Ms. Robbins seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:25.

Respectfully submitted,

Christopher McKay

Planning Technician