

**Town of Freetown
Planning Board**

Minutes of the Tuesday, February 20, 2024 Meeting
Held at the Multi-Purpose Senior Center, 227 Chace Road

Present: David Crose, Christopher Mello, and Steven Tripp

Absent: James Frates and Chad Carvalho

Call to Order: David Crose called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Discussion and Vote on Recommendations for Amending the PMUD by SRPEDD

Mr. Crose recapped last meeting. The Board wanted to see the lot size increased from 40,000 to 70,000-square feet. The lot size change was adequate except that there are two single-family house lots that would be land locked. Changes could always be made at a later time, if needed. The Board agreed to the lot size of 70,000 in order for the process to continue moving forward.

Discussion and Take Action Relative to the FY25 Budget

Victoria Alfaro explained the proposed budget. She went over a few line items. The Town Planner position is not being funded at this time. The Planning & Land Use Administrator and Senior Clerk positions are Union positions, which are contractual and can not be adjusted. The Union negotiations are ongoing and the salary line item could change once finalized. Both positions are fully paid out of the Planning Board budget. Covid pay is no longer funded. The overtime and comp time line is budgeted. Longevity does not apply at this time. Software support fees were lowered. The planning consulting line item is used when grant funds run out and more funds are needed. Advertising line item stayed the same. Postage was reduced due to electronic communication. The in-state travel stayed the same for mileage reimbursements. Overall, the budget increased approximately \$2,000 but could change after the Union negotiations are finalized.

Mrs. Alfaro further discussed online permitting with the Board. A grant was submitted for funding to utilize online permitting. In the chance that the grant was not granted, the Board could submit an article for the Town meeting to request funds.

A motion was made by Steven Tripp, seconded by Christopher Mello, to approve the proposed budget as submitted. The motion carried unanimously.

Discussion and Take Action on Stormwater Permit Application

The rules and regulations and by-law had been approved. The stormwater permit application would need to be approved before it could be utilized. Mr. Crose had a question about the fees and how the acres would be distinguished from one fee to the next. He suggested to make a change to use the wording up to.

A motion was made by Christopher Mello, seconded by Steven Tripp, to approve the stormwater permit application with the modification to add "up to" language in the fees section. The motion carried unanimously.

Discussion and Vote on South Main Street Bridge Replacement Options Study

Mr. Crose suggested to discuss the options and comment on them but to make a vote at a later time. The Board further discussed option three, the layover. The sewer line project would need to be considered since it would affect the bridge area. Mr. Crose wanted more clarification on the differences between the options. Mrs. Alfaro would reach out to GPI and gather more information about the differences and options then provide it to the Board.

Discussion on Accessory Apartment By-law

Mr. Crose explained that Westport's by-law is geared more toward what the Board is doing. The current by-law is repetitive and people have to come back often. According to Westport's by-law, attached accessory apartments are by-right and detached are by special permit. The changes to the by-law would be an additional housing opportunity in the Town. The individual homeowner would have the control of the options of who it could occupy it. An accessory apartment would cause assessed value to increase. The changes would make it so that people would apply for the permits and then it would be inspected to make sure that the accessory apartments are safe to standards. Mr. Crose had questions about the language and meanings of owner percentages and closed external staircase. Mr. Mello commented that 900 square feet was small and suggested

that it be at least 1,000 square feet. Freetown's current by-law is 1,000 square feet. Mrs. Alfaro mentioned that the detached garage could be by-right. Mr. Crose asked if particular zones should be excluded. He suggested that it could be excluded in the areas that the current by-law already stated. The Board discussed if Airbnb's would be allowed. Mrs. Alfaro explained that it could be a separate by-law but as of right now, anything that is not listed in the table of use, would require a special permit. The next steps would be to draft the accessory apartment by-law.

Meeting Adjourned

A motion was made by Christopher Mello, seconded by Steven Tripp, to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried unanimously, and the meeting was adjourned at 6:41 p.m.

This is a True Record by me.

Attest: _____
Nicole DeMoranville, Senior Clerk