



January 11, 2023

Mr. Robert Jose, Chairman  
Freetown Planning Board  
3 North Main Street  
Assonet, MA 02702

**Re: 31 Innovation Way Parking Waiver Request**

Dear Chairman Jose and Members of the Planning Board,

Pursuant to the Town of Freetown General and Zoning By-Laws Article 11.23N, we respectfully request that we be placed on the agenda of January 17, 2023 Planning Board meeting so that the Board may vote to modify the Site Plan Review Decision for 31 Innovation Way.

Specifically, we request that the 31 Innovation Way Site Plan Review Decision, dated October 27, 2022, be modified to include an additional waiver. The Town of Freetown General and Zoning Bylaws Article 11.23H Parking states that “[p]arking areas should be located to the rear or side of buildings”. We request that the Board vote to waive this requirement so that the written decision is consistent with the project’s site layout, which shows employee and visitor parking at the front of the building.

**Background**

VMD Companies, LLC applied to the Freetown Planning Board for site plan review in July of 2022. The overall project consists of four industrial buildings on property that falls within the City of Fall River and the Town of Freetown. One of the four buildings, identified in the project plans as Building 3, is located at 31 Innovation Way, Freetown. The other three buildings are located in Fall River.

The project’s application for Site Plan Review in Freetown was dated July 27, 2022 and received by the Planning Board on July 28, 2022. A public hearing was opened on August 16, 2022 and closed on October 25, 2022. The Site Plan Review Decision was issued on October 27, 2022.

The Freetown Planning Board retained Environmental Partners Group, LLC as its peer reviewer. Environmental Partners issued its first peer review letter on September 28, 2022. Following responses from VMD’s project team, Environmental Partners issued a second letter dated November 9, 2022. VMD issued a revised set of project documents dated November 21, 2022. Environmental Partners issued a third letter dated December 15, 2022.



## Discussion

Environmental Partners' most recent letter acknowledges that most of its original comments have been addressed. It lists a handful of remaining technical items which our design team is in process of addressing. It also states that the design is not consistent with the Bylaw Article 11.23H requirement that parking areas be located to the rear or side of buildings.

We request that the Board vote to grant a waiver from the 11.23H restriction on front-yard parking so that we can satisfy the Environmental Partners open comment without dramatically changing the site layout.

Although the most recent plans include various technical adjustments made to satisfy stormwater and other requirements, the overall site layout has not changed substantially during the review process. The original layout showed visitor and employee parking between Innovation Way and the building, just as the updated layout shows. This is consistent with the approved layouts of the adjacent buildings on the Fall River side of the site. It is also consistent with the Amazon building across the street, which has employee and visitor parking between Innovation Way and the front of the building.

Bylaw Article 11.23N permits the Board to grant a modification to the Decision without reopening the public hearing if the proposed modification is not significant and is consistent with the previously approved site plan. We believe that these conditions apply. Granting the additional waiver would simply allow the site to be developed according to the overall layout that the Board has already reviewed and approved.

We look forward to discussing this with you on January 17<sup>th</sup>. Please contact me if you have any questions or require any additional information.

Sincerely,

Stephen Gallagher  
Director of Development

V.M.D. Companies, LLC.  
733 Turnpike St, Route 114  
North Andover, MA 01845  
sgallagher@vmdcompanies.com  
401.569.4416



Attachment: Site Layout Plan C-5.2 dated 11/21/22

cc: MBL Land Development & Permitting Corp.