

Town of Franklin

355 East Central Street
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PLANNING BOARD

February 6, 2023 Meeting Minutes

Chair Gregory Rondeau called the above-captioned meeting held in the Town Council Chambers at 355 East Central Street, Franklin, MA, to order this date at 7:00 PM. The public had the option of attending the meeting live at the Town Hall, dialing into the meeting using the provided phone number, or participating by copying the provided link. Members in attendance: Gregory Rondeau, Chair; William David, Vice Chair (via Zoom); Beth Wierling, Clerk; Rick Power; Jennifer Williams; Jay Mello, associate member. Members absent: None. Also present: Amy Love, Town Planner; Michael Maglio, Town Engineer; Matthew Crowley, BETA Group, Inc.

7:00 PM Commencement/General Business

Chair Rondeau reviewed the Zoom platform call-in phone number and the Zoom link which were provided on the meeting agenda. The meeting was audio and video recorded.

A. Limited Site Plan Modification: 160 Grove Street

Ms. Love stated that the applicant was before the Planning Board about one month ago with some field changes. The Planning Board requested that the applicant file a Limited Site Plan Modification with the changes. The applicant submitted an amended Site Plan narrative, amended Architectural narrative, and amended Limited Site Plan. She noted that BETA reviewed the plans and their comment letter is included in the meeting packet. She stated that a few questions were brought to her attention after the meeting as to whether this should be a special permit as well. Per Town Attorney Mark Cerel, since there is no change in the use, a Limited Site Plan filing is satisfactory; no special permit is required.

Mr. Maglio stated that we have no comments on what they are proposing. He stated that the applicant submitted a sewer extension application which will go before the Town Council.

Mr. Crowley stated that he provided a comment letter and the applicant addressed most items. He stated that detailed grading on the accessible ramps in the front of the building was requested. He noted that the applicant is providing 150 parking spaces and the special permit was for 138 spaces. The number of floors has been reduced from three to two; however, the overall height of the building is about the same. He requested the applicant confirm the height. He stated that the zoning table summary still indicates three stories instead of two.

Mr. David Choplinski, owner's representative, stated that if he can get the comments in writing, he will address them. He stated there is nothing that they have heard tonight that they cannot comply with.

Chair Rondeau stated that regarding the CO2 tank in the back parking lot, for safety purposes, he would like to push the tank in four or five feet and leave the bollards where they are. He stated that he would like to see a fence around the tank for safety. Mr. Choplinski stated that it is a regulation; they will have a 6 ft. fence around the tank, and they will do the bollards. Mr. David confirmed the applicant will be using 6 in. bollards.

Motion to Approve the Limited Site Plan Modification for 160 Grove Street. Rondeau. Conditions of Approval: To incorporate any outstanding conditions on the BETA memo dated February 1, 2023, along with adding spot grades to the plan for ADA ramps as noted in the discussion, and moving the CO2 tank, adding a fence, and surrounding it with bollards. Second: Williams. Roll Call Vote: Rondeau-Yes; David-Yes; Wierling-Yes; Williams-Yes; Power-Yes. Vote: 5-0 (5-Yes; 0-No).

B. Final Form H: Amego – Washington Street

Ms. Love stated that the applicant filed a Final Form H. She reviewed that the Planning Board approved a Site Plan for 76 Grove Street on June 17, 2019. The Planning Board approved a Partial Form H for the Site Plan on August 22, 2022. The only condition was to complete the list of outstanding items listed in BETA's review. She stated that BETA provided an observation report and submitted a comment letter.

Mr. Maglio stated that there is nothing outstanding.

Mr. Crowley reviewed that in August after a review of the site they had about 20 outstanding comments. BETA went out to the site again on January 30, 2023, and the overwhelming majority of items were addressed. He stated that one additional do not enter sign needs to be installed; the sign was on order and received and should be installed tomorrow.

Motion to Approve Final Form H: Amego – Washington Street. Rondeau. Second: Williams. Roll Call Vote: Rondeau-Yes; David-Yes; Wierling-Yes; Williams-Yes; Power-Yes. Vote: 5-0 (5-Yes; 0-No).

C. Street Acceptance: Maple Tree & Oak Tree Lanes

Ms. Love stated that the Town Council posted a public hearing on this for February 15, 2023. She stated that this is a subdivision from 1987. She stated that the Town has been slowly trying to take over old roadways that have never been accepted so they can improve the roadways.

Mr. Maglio stated that they have been trying to accept the unaccepted streets in Town. This subdivision was originally approved in 1987. He stated that everything has been done through the Town Attorney. He stated that for the process, it needs a recommendation from the Planning Board to accept it before it goes to Town Council.

Motion to Recommend to Town Council Street Acceptance: Maple Tree & Oak Tree Lanes. Rondeau. Second: Power. Roll Call Vote: Rondeau-Yes; David-Yes; Wierling-Yes; Williams-Yes; Power-Yes. Vote: 5-0 (5-Yes; 0-No).

D. Discussion: Panther Way – Over 55 Development Study

Mr. Brad Chaffee, President of Camford Property Group, Inc., developer and builder at Panther Way; Mr. Gino Carlucci of PGC Associates, LLC; and Mr. Rick Goodreau of United Consultants addressed the Planning Board. Mr. Chaffee stated that his team met with the Town's tech review board to discuss a potential senior village project on Panther Way. He stated that it was well received by the tech. board so part of the next step is to present it to the Planning Board with the concept. He stated that he provided a study of demand for age restricted housing units in Franklin and a conceptual layout proposing 46 units of 55+ senior housing with a portion being offered as affordable housing. Mr. Carlucci reviewed the highlights of the study of the demand for new, age-restricted housing units in Franklin which was provided in the meeting packet. He discussed that in Franklin in 2021 there were approximately 33,000 residents with the largest group being in the 45 to 54 age group. In the next 20 years, those in that age group will be over 55 years old. He noted demographic and housing market characteristics in Franklin and the current and future demands for age-restricted senior housing. He discussed that focus is placed on affordable senior units, including units that are designated as affordable and accepted as eligible for inclusion on the Subsidized Housing Inventory by the Department of Housing and Community

Development (DHCD), and units with a market value that long-time residents in and around Franklin who are trying to downsize can afford. He discussed housing stock and housing units available. He discussed income statistics as outlined in the provided report. He discussed the increased demand for senior housing.

Ms. Love stated that Mr. Chaffee submitted a color rendering, cover letter, and senior housing market study. She reviewed that Mr. Chaffee is looking to move forward with an over 55 community on Panther Way. Per Section 185-48.D(1)(g), the Town of Franklin is limited to a number equivalent to 2.5 percent of the existing single-family residential housing units located in the town; Franklin is over 2.5 percent. Mr. Chaffee has submitted a study for the Planning Board to determine if there is a need for an over 55 development. She stated that the applicant will be required to file a full Site Plan and Special Permit for the project to move forward.

Planning Board members asked questions and made comments. Ms. Williams stated that she thinks there is a need in town and thinks it is great to start looking at this. She stated that she would have reservations about clear cutting a densely wooded site to create this type of development. Ms. Wierling indicated that there would need to be an open space and affordable component for this type of plan regarding the senior village bylaw. Mr. Chaffee reviewed that he had a landscape architect come up with this design. He stated that landscape is a big component of this; he does not plan on completely clear cutting. He discussed that the bus lot was not calculated in this. In response to Ms. Wierling's question about over 55 permitted units, Ms. Love stated that they have all been built except one on Chestnut Street that is 27 units. Ms. Wierling stated that there is a significant need for this type of housing. However, there should be more walking paths and open space. Mr. Chaffee explained the target audience, size of the bedrooms, and overall size of the units. He reviewed that the average cost would be mid 600s up to 700s, but it is a moving target with construction costs. He confirmed that the road would probably be over 600 ft. Mr. David noted that could be an issue. Chair Rondeau stated that he is not a fan of the road running parallel to the neighbors in the back. He agreed that there is a need for 55 and over housing.

7:00 PM **PUBLIC HEARING** – *Continued*
515 West Central Street
Site Plan Application
Documents presented to the Planning Board are on file.

Mr. Edward Cannon, attorney for the applicant Franklin Learning RE Inc.; Manoj Gandhi, applicant; and Ms. Amanda Cavaliere of Guerriere & Halnon, Inc. addressed the Planning Board. Mr. Cannon reviewed that the Planning Board wanted the plan to be cleaned up which was done. The Planning Board's traffic consultant rendered a traffic report, and Stonefield Engineering took a look at that. He reviewed that the Town's counsel, Attorney Brian Winner, used the report by MDM to generate the more comprehensive draft conditions which he hopes the Planning Board has taken a look at. He stated that Stonefield Engineering had a chance to digest the MDM report, responded to that, and came up with a traffic management plan. He stated that essentially, we understand the contents, and the data will bear it out once it gets operational and the traffic management plan is in place.

Attorney Brian Winner stated that he agreed with Mr. Cannon's comments. He reviewed that they are working on a draft decision. He stated that the Planning Board gave us some parameters at the last meeting. He stated that his approach is to not censor anything before it reaches the Planning Board, but to set the table with all the options and choices to be picked from so they can see everything that was recommended. The Planning Board can decide how they want it to be when voted. He stated that he can walk the Planning Board through the draft conditions. He discussed the traffic management plan, a phasing plan, benchmark along the time horizon to do some studying and generate some data to report

back to the Planning Board, when and how the Planning Board would require the applicant to return, and what to do about it.

Chair Rondeau stated an email was received this morning about the traffic report. He requested to speak to the traffic engineer; however, the traffic engineer was not available at tonight's meeting.

Ms. Cavaliere reviewed the cleaned up plan. She stated the roads were labelled as well as the private way and the areas that would be paved and the pervious paver area. She stated that there are 33 parking spaces. The cul de sac is shown on the plans.

Planning Board members asked questions and made comments. Ms. Williams stated that she would need more time to review the materials. She noted that there were discrepancies between the original Stonefield report and the new one by MDM; however, maybe the traffic management plan would address some of the discrepancies. Mr. Power discussed the flow and the parking spaces. Ms. Wierling stated that she still needs to review the materials and response that came in and does not feel comfortable with a decision before she has reviewed it. She noted that regarding the draft decision, if they decide after the nine-month period that there is an issue, they can review it again, but asked what happens after they review it and the enrollment increases, can they review it again. Mr. Cannon stated the intent is to give the Planning Board time to be able to evaluate it at full capacity. He stated that the owner will alert the Town when they get to 90 students and the clock starts ticking on the first evaluation period. He explained that the conditions can be adjusted to reflect another evaluation at full capacity.

Chair Rondeau stated that the access road is going to be pavers; he would like to see a fire department access gate. He stated that at the adjoining parcel going to the Wendy's, he would like to see a fence and not just a gate. He does not want people parking at Wendy's and dropping off and using it as a source to get to the school. He wants to keep the two sites separated. He stated that he saw the conditions will do one week of traffic; he would like to see two weeks of gathered information once the 90 threshold is reached. Mr. Cannon reviewed that the draft conditions need to be adjusted and explained the 90 threshold and 100 percent capacity. Mr. Winner stated that he and Mr. Cannon are on the same page that there should be data collection at 90 and full capacity, and some tweaking and fine tuning of the draft is needed. Mr. David asked about sending cars over the pervious pavers. Ms. Cavaliere discussed the pervious pavers and stated that they are suitable for fire truck capacity; they are not a small size paver, they are fairly heavy duty. Chair Rondeau stated that this is considered a fire access road and asked Mr. Maglio if there are any objections about using the access road in the back.

Mr. Maglio discussed the pervious pavers. He stated that he does not believe it is in the bylaw that it is not allowed, but he does not think the Planning Board has allowed it in the past for everyday use, only for emergency access. Ms. Cavaliere stated that to pave the access road they would have to go back to the Conservation Commission. The pervious pavers were in the original submittal to both Planning Board and Conservation Commission. Ms. Wierling asked if it was shown on the Conservation Commission plans as a full drive and on the Planning Board plans as an emergency access road. Chair Rondeau asked the applicant to look into this. Ms. Love stated that she spoke with the current conservation agent as to why it was pervious pavers; however, the current conservation agent was not the conservation agent at the time this went through Conservation Commission. Ms. Love stated that the current conservation agent said it was better for the mitigation and the impact to preserve the wetlands.

Mr. Maglio stated that the trash truck was to go through the Wendy's for exit. Ms. Williams requested an exact example of where this has been executed. Mr. Gandhi stated that Littleton is very similar with the parking spots and a facility with a 46,000 sq. ft. building with 26 parking spots is running fine. Also, Foxboro is very similar to this. Discussion commenced on the proposed parking spaces, facilities with similar layouts, traffic circulation, access, monitoring of the parking by staff, and a gate for the trash truck

exiting through Wendy's. Mr. David stated that a trash truck driver is not going to open the gate, go through the Wendy's, and then close the gate; the gate will remain open. He stated that from the beginning the trash truck was not going to exit through Wendy's. He explained the original trash truck plan. He asked for a no left turn sign at the bottom of the driveway onto Rt. 140. Mr. Maglio stated that is a state highway. He stated that he does not believe it was a condition, but it was discussed. Mr. Cannon stated that has been the site of the dumpster all along. He stated that the applicant will put in as a condition an electronic gate so staff can open and close it. Mr. David stated that if the trash truck goes through Wendy's, does that change their site plan as now they are letting something exit through another site. Mr. Cannon stated that the site was designed that way with the access easements. Mr. David stated that was for emergency access. Mr. Cannon stated that it was for all access and he can provide that information to the Planning Board.

Motion to Continue the public hearing for 515 West Central Street, Site Plan Application, to February 27, 2023. Wierling. Second: Williams. Roll Call Vote: Rondeau-Yes; David-Yes; Wierling-Yes; Williams-Yes; Power-Yes. Vote: 5-0 (5-Yes; 0-No).

Motion to Adjourn the Planning Board Meeting. Rondeau. Second: Williams. Roll Call Vote: Rondeau-Yes; David-Yes; Wierling-Yes; Williams-Yes; Power-Yes. Vote: 5-0 (5-Yes; 0-No).

Meeting adjourned at 8:20 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Judith Lizardi,
Recording Secretary

--Planning Board approved minutes at April 24, 2023 Meeting