

Town of Franklin

355 East Central Street
Franklin, Massachusetts 02038-1352



Phone: (508) 520-4907
www.franklinma.gov

PLANNING BOARD

February 28, 2022 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; Beth Wierling, Clerk; Rick Power. Members absent: Jennifer Williams, Jay Mello, associate member. Also present: Amy Love, Planner; Michael Maglio, Town Engineer; Gary James, 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. Decision: Washington Street Flex Space

Motion to Approve Washington Street Flex Space. David. Second: Power. Vote: 4-0-0 (4-Yes; 0-No), with waivers and Special Conditions.

B. Endorsement: Olam Estates

Motion to Endorse Olam Estates. David. Second: Power. Vote: 4-0-0 (4-Yes; 0-No).

C. Street Recommendation: Brandywine and Charles Drive

Motion to Approve Street Recommendation for Brandywine and Charles Drive to Town Council. David. Second: Power. Vote: 4-0-0 (4-Yes; 0-No).

D. Limited Site Plan: 461 West Central Street – Outdoor Dining

Ms. Amanda Cavaliere of Guerriere & Halnon, Inc., on behalf of the applicant, reviewed the proposal for permanent outdoor seating. She stated that the applicant has had temporary outdoor seating for the past two years similar in size. She reviewed the provided plans and explained the location of the proposed outdoor seating. She stated that that screening would be arborvitae and a fence. She stated that the applicant is proposing 157 parking spaces; 188 spaces are required. The outdoor seating will be considered alternate seating, not in addition to.

Ms. Love confirmed that the applicant is before the Planning Board for permanent outdoor seating. She reviewed that temporary seating began due to the COVID-19 pandemic. For the applicant to secure permanent outdoor seating, a Site Plan is required because it affects the square footage of the site. She noted that the applicant submitted a Limited Site Plan for permanent outdoor seating and a previously approved Site Plan; parking calculations are provided on the plans.

Mr. David requested bollards be installed. Ms. Cavaliere stated it could be done. The applicant reviewed the handicapped spaces and stated that the arborvitaes would be in the ground. Mr. David requested that Ms. Cavaliere put the requested information on the drawing. The applicant stated that the current blocks would be replaced with the bollards. Chair Rondeau asked what triggers the inside and outside seating as eight parking spaces will be removed for the outdoor seating. The applicant reviewed that the outdoor seating has been done for the past two years. He stated that the parking was more than sufficient and was never an issue even if there was a function upstairs.

Motion to Approve Limited Site Plan for 461 West Central Street – Outdoor Dining. Rondeau. Second: Wierling. Vote: 4-0-0 (4-Yes; 0-No).

7:05 PM **PUBLIC HEARING** – *Initial*
72-94 East Central Street
Special Permit & Site Plan
Documents presented to the Planning Board are on file.

Motion to Waive the reading. Wierling. Second: David. Vote: 4-0-0 (4-Yes; 0-No).

Mr. Brad Chaffee, owner of Camford Property Group, reviewed the changes to the project and discussed the revised plans. He stated that the house in front of the building was removed, and they created a 15,000 sq. ft. green space. He stated that they have eliminated their request for a four-story special permit; they will build three stories. He stated that they added three units to the building. They are keeping the parking at 2.5 cars per unit; they will construct a mixed-use three-story building with 17 residential units and 1 commercial unit.

Ms. Love reviewed that the applicant is proposing to construct a mixed-use three-story building with 17 residential units and 1 commercial unit. She stated that letters have been received from J.S. Barbieri, Deputy Fire Chief; Mike Maglio, Town Engineer; and Gary James, BETA Group. She stated that the site allows for 54 units per the zoning bylaw; the applicant is proposing 17 units. The site requires 27 parking spaces; the applicant is proposing 42 parking spaces. She reviewed the history of the site. She stated that the applicant was denied on December 21, 2020, a Special Permit application for a five-story building with 13 residential units and 1 commercial unit. The applicant returned to the Planning Board on January 11, 2021, with revised concept plans. The Planning Board determined at this meeting that the new concept plans are a substantial change to the Special Permit. The applicant provided the revised plans to the Planning Board. She noted that stormwater and drainage did not change very much from the information provided at the last public hearing.

Mr. Maglio stated that his comments were minor in nature essentially pointing out what permits would be needed as part of the work. He stated that he was curious about the proposed number of bedrooms per unit. He stated that depending on the proposed commercial use, an exterior grease trap may be required. He requested the applicant verify if the retaining wall at the back of the sidewalk will be removed along the entire frontage or if only portions of it are to be removed.

Mr. Rick Goodreau of United Consultants stated that they will incorporate Mr. Maglio's comments into the final design plans. As well, he thinks they are onboard with most of the changes indicated by Mr. James in his letter. Mr. James stated that he agreed with Mr. Goodreau that most of his comments were rather minor in nature. He asked about the AC units and the potential associated noise to determine if some noise buffers were needed. He noted that one end of the stormwater system was a little shallow. Mr. Chaffee stated that they have 5 two-bedroom units and 12 three-bedroom units.

Chair Rondeau asked if the green space would be deeded to the Town. Mr. Chaffee stated that he would be speaking with Town Attorney Mark Cerel. Ms. Wierling asked Chair Rondeau why he wanted the green space deeded to the Town. She asked if the applicant allowing its use by the Town could be a condition of approval rather than deeding it. Chair Rondeau stated that he would like to see it deeded; this project has gone so many different ways, he wants to make sure we get what is best for the Town. Ms. Love stated that this is a discussion she could run by the Town Attorney and the Town Administrator. The only issue of deeding something to the Town becomes the maintenance because now the Town has to take on the labor and maintenance of the grass and keeping it looking nice.

Ms. Wierling asked if on the previous plans there was any discussion about traffic generation. Ms. Love noted that the applicant had provided a traffic study. Ms. Wierling asked for some discussion about traffic generation be visited as it would be helpful. Discussion commenced on the previous traffic study. Mr. Goodreau stated that they can provide a summary of traffic trip generation for all the buildings. Mr. Chaffee stated that there are no children in the current two buildings. Ms. Wierling asked for the height of the building to be provided on the plans. Chair Rondeau stated that he received a call from an abutter who expressed concern about the size of the building. He asked if the building could be pulled a little forward as that would go a long way with the neighbor, if it is feasible. Mr. Chaffee stated that parking is important for this product. Mr. David asked about the parking spaces. Mr. Chaffee reviewed the parking spaces. Chair Rondeau noted the applicant is now integrating building three with the spaces from building one and building two. Mr. Goodreau confirmed that he will look at the traffic flow.

Mr. Shawn O'Neill, 70 East Central Street, discussed traffic and congestion in the parking lot. He stated that he is in and out all the time and he has never experienced that, so he does not think it is a concern. He stated that from personal experience, it has been the best place that he has ever lived.

Mr. Cobi Frongillo, 140 Maple Street, commended Mr. Chaffee on putting together a good proposal. He discussed how they got to the current park. He stated that the first rendering he ever saw of this was saving the beautiful white house and turning it into an event space. He stated that was shot down by the Planning Board. He stated that they came back and created a pop-up shop with activities and the Planning Board shot that down. He stated that his question to the Planning Board is why did we turn down positive projects to just end up with a grass hill, and is there an opportunity to revisit that with the new Planning Board. Chair Rondeau stated that this project has gone through many renditions. The Planning Board felt the latest proposal is what is best for the Town. He stated that the white house was not owned and he does not know if they purchased it yet. They have worked within four or five parcels to make one project out of it. He stated that what is before them currently is an agreement with this Planning Board, the former Planning Board, and the applicant about what is best suited for the site at this point. He stated that regarding the green space out front, the Planning Board wants to make sure that is going to happen; it is a good positive attribute.

Resident of 72 East Central Street stated that the project at hand it something he is very interested in; it ties together the 70 and 72 East Central Street development into one development, and it is good for the downtown partnership to have something tied together. He stated that he has never had any parking issues, and it has been a positive experience.

Motion to Continue 72-94 East Central Street, Special Permit & Site Plan, to March 28, 2022. Wierling. Second: David. Vote: 4-0-0 (4-Yes; 0-No).

7:10 PM **PUBLIC HEARING** – *Continued*
Taj Estates – 230 East Central Street
Special Permit & Site Plan
Documents presented to the Planning Board are on file.

Mr. Richard Cornetta, attorney on behalf of the applicant Taj Estates of Franklin II LLC, and Ms. Amanda Cavaliere of Guerriere & Halnon, Inc. addressed the Planning Board. Mr. Cornetta noted that Mr. Jeffrey Dirk, traffic consultant of Vanasse & Associates, Inc., was attending the meeting via Zoom. He reviewed that the applicant is proposing to construct a three-story building with 41 residential units and an 825 sq. ft. commercial area. He stated that the traffic information would be provided at this meeting.

Mr. Dirk narrated his slideshow presentation titled Transportation Impact Assessment Summary which was provided in the Planning Board's meeting packet. He stated that he has provided responses to BETA's comments. He stated that the report was prepared in accordance with MassDOT's Transportation Impact Assessment (TIA) Guidelines. He stated that pre-COVID traffic volumes were used and adjusted to 2022 following MassDOT guidelines. He discussed that the analysis concluded that the project will not result in a significant impact/increase on motorist delays or vehicle queuing over existing or anticipated future conditions without the project, with the majority of the movements shown to continue to operate at acceptable levels. He stated that no apparent safety deficiencies were noted with respect to the motor vehicle crash history at the study area intersections, and lines of sight at the project site driveway intersection were found to exceed the recommended minimum distances for safe and efficient operation based on the appropriate approach speed. He reviewed the trip generation summary and noted there are both a residential and commercial component as shown on his chart. He reviewed that there are 314 daily trips over a 24-hour period. The morning peak period shows 36 trips; the evening peak period shows 38 trips. He discussed his recommendations regarding site access. The project site driveway and internal circulating drives should be 24 ft. in width and designed to accommodate the turning and maneuvering requirements of the largest anticipated responding emergency vehicle. Where perpendicular parking is proposed, the drive aisle behind the parking should be a minimum of 23 ft. in order to facilitate parking maneuvers. Vehicles exiting the project site should be placed under STOP-sign control with a marked STOP-line provided. All signs and pavement markings to be installed within the project site should conform to the applicable standards of the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD). Signs, landscaping, and snow accumulations within intersection sight triangle areas should be designed and maintained so as not to restrict lines of sight. He discussed his recommendations regarding off-site. The applicant will contribute \$5,000 to the Town for a post-development study of operating conditions at the intersection. He reviewed the Transportation Demand Management Program for the project. He stated a response letter has been provided to BETA regarding their comments. Ms. Love noted that Ms. Jaklyn Centracchio, BETA Project Manager, regarding the Traffic Impact Assessment (TIA), was attending the meeting via Zoom.

Mr. Maglio reviewed that based on the traffic report recommendations, operation of the traffic signal at King Street and East Central Street should be analyzed and an updated signal timing plan implemented after construction of the apartments. Ms. Wierling discussed the \$5,000 being put toward a study. She asked who would pay for any improvements that may need to be done if a study showed changes are needed. Mr. Maglio confirmed the \$5,000 would not go toward any major construction improvements. He stated that if something else were needed, the Town would be stuck with that. He stated that section was looked at a couple of years ago. He stated that what really needs to happen is an additional turn lane and widen the intersection; however, there is no way to really do that right now without acquiring one of the properties.

Ms. Centracchio stated that she looked through Mr. Dirk's responses and they appear to be adequate. She stated that the \$5,000 was mentioned to take care of the main intersection. That amount would be sufficient to observe one intersection, collect additional traffic data, and put together a signal timing table that the on-call contractor could implement into the controller. Chair Rondeau asked if it would entail all three lights to coordinate them. Ms. Centracchio stated that would be insufficient to coordinate them. Mr. David stated that Route 140 is congested already. He stated that the \$5,000 would be helpful; however, we are talking

about 33 units. There are other projects current and proposed in the area. He stated that he really does not see money being needed to correct something as it should have already been corrected. He appreciates the traffic study; however, he does not see that this project is going to generate that big of a deal regarding that light considering what is already there.

Ms. Wierling stated that this project before the Planning Board is maxing everything out; we have to draw a line somewhere. She stated let's look at a plan that is going to be adequate for this site. She stated that the applicant needs to look at the site and provide a realistic project and not max everything out. She stated that she thinks it is insufficient at this point. Chair Rondeau stated that Ms. Centracchio should get back with Mr. Dirk. He stated that he thinks all these traffic studies tie all the projects together.

Mr. James commented that the applicant has their parking adjacent to the right of way; there is a requirement for screening. He stated that they have indicated that they feel there is enough vegetation; in his opinion they are still going to require a waiver. He commented on the sub-surface installation. He stated that the applicant requested to provide the test pit data prior to construction. He noted concern about the ledge whether blasting or hammering would be needed.

Chair Rondeau asked about the paper road. Mr. Cornetta stated that he had no updates; they are still in negotiations with the property owners.

Ms. Love stated that at the rear of the building there are two parking spaces within 10 ft. of the right of way; the applicant will require a waiver for these parking spaces. She stated that the applicant has provided 51 parking spaces; however, only 44 meet the zoning requirements. The applicant will require a waiver for parking since 7 spaces do not meet the required width. The building and parking area is at 78.8 percent impervious as 80 percent is permitted. The applicant is to provide documentation on the ownership of Hill Avenue. She stated that the question is who owns the street and is the applicant allowed to work in the right of way. She asked how the Planning Board will handle the traffic studies coming in for projects along Route 140. Planning Board members discussed the current road conditions.

Mr. Marc Rovani, representing his mother as a direct abutter at 240 East Central Street, stated the traffic report was pretty much useless. He stated that if a person sat at the location at 4:30 PM, they would see the traffic from King Street. He stated that nowhere on the study does it talk about pedestrian travel. He asked what happens when a pedestrian hits the light to cross as that adds to the traffic. As soon as a person presses the cross light, it throws off everything else. He noted that the applicant plans to clear cut the lot; however, another applicant before the Planning Board is required to put in green space and deed it to the Town. He asked where is the logic to this.

Mr. Mark Letourneau, 29 Hill Avenue, asked about pedestrian and bike travel and stated that the sidewalks there are horrible. He stated that the pedestrian crossing location at the CVS is very dangerous. He stated that the Town needs to do better with their sidewalks in Franklin.

Ms. Doris Madden, 9 Lewis Street, stated that her concern is the Lewis Street intersection. She stated that apparently, the traffic study looked at Rockland Trust, but no one looked at Lewis Street. There is a school bus stop on it. It is a dangerous area. She stated that leaving Lewis Street to make a left-hand turn to go uptown in the afternoon is almost impossible. She stated that regardless of whether the project is accepted or not, this is a serious issue. She stated that Lewis Street deserves a traffic study, in general.

Mr. Dirk responded to the Lewis Street traffic and stated that the volume associated with Lewis Street was included in the traffic analysis. He reiterated that they are less than 40 vehicles during the peak hours. He stated that it is an increase in traffic, but it is not going to be noticeable.

Ms. Lorraine Rovani, 240 East Central Street, stated that in addition to everything else that has already been brought up, she is concerned about property values. She stated that she has been a daycare provider in Franklin for 40 years. The job requires her to be home and using her yard all day long. She stated that this is going to be a nightmare with all the construction, noise, dust, and clearing of at least 50 trees; she will not be able to be outside with the kids. She stated that she is concerned about the safety of the kids, and she is going to have to keep them inside. There will be a lack of privacy for her and the kids. She is concerned if blasting has to be done. She is concerned for the safety of the kids and that she has a fieldstone foundation. She stated that no one notified her about removing the wooden fence which belongs to her.

Mr. Craig Rovani, 10 Farrington Street, stated that Ms. Lorraine Rovani is his mother. He stated that the fence has been the assumed plot line for over 20 years. He stated that the applicant had a survey done. The stakes are on the inside of the fence on his mother's property and she loses about four feet including trees. He stated that the applicant has not discussed any of this with his mother. He stated that the balconies on the proposed building will overlook his mother's yard; the privacy will be gone. He discussed that his mother cannot move. He stated that the applicant is maxing this out for profit. He stated that his mother has a legal right and they are willing to fight it. He stated that if his mother gets the four feet, it will cut directly into the applicant's plan for parking.

Mr. Power stated that many comments regard the applicant putting in the apartments. If this were to be a restaurant, sub shop, or office building, it would not fix some of the issues with potential traffic. He stated that something is going in there.

Mr. Craig Rovani agreed that the applicant has the right to put something in there; but he asked do they have the right to destroy everything around it. He stated that there is not a single tree left and what he has known as the property line since he was a child, five feet is being taken. He stated that the applicant has not spoken to any of the neighbors.

Mr. Marc Rovani provided the Planning Board members with two pictures showing the property line and the survey stakes.

Chair Rondeau stated that there is work to be done: work with the neighbors, confirmation of lot lines, DPW, BETA, and traffic.

Mr. Cornetta stated that the project went before the Design Review Commission and they gave it some favorable comments. The applicant is to return to the Design Review Commission this week to provide some materials.

Motion to Continue Taj Estates, 230 East Central Street, Special Permit & Site Plan, to March 28, 2022. Power. Second: David. Vote: 4-0-0 (4-Yes; 0-No).

7:20 PM **PUBLIC HEARING** – Continued
 585 King Street
 Special Permit & Site Plan
 Documents presented to the Planning Board are on file.
 TO BE CONTINUED

Chair Rondeau noted that a continuance of the public hearing was requested.

Motion to Continue 585 King Street, Special Permit & Site Plan, to March 28, 2022. Wierling. Second: David. Vote: 4-0-0 (4-Yes; 0-No).

Ms. Love noted the Franklin for All public forum meeting regarding rezoning Franklin Center for economic growth and diverse housing opportunities is to be held in Council Chambers and on Zoom on March 7, 2022, at 7 PM. She reviewed the streets/areas involved.

Motion to Adjourn the Planning Board Meeting. Wierling. Second: David. Vote: 4-0-0 (4-Yes; 0-No).

Meeting adjourned at 8:31 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Judith Lizardi,
Recording Secretary

******Planning Board approved at the March 28, 2022 meeting.***

Town of Franklin

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PLANNING BOARD

Missed Meeting Certification


I, Jennifer Williams, member of the Franklin Planning Board, do hereby
certify that I have examined all evidence, including a video recording thereto,
of the Planning Board meeting held on (date) 2/28/22
for the following project:

Project name: 72-94 East Central Street

Applicant: 70 East Central St. LLC

Application type: SPECIAL PERMIT & SITE PLAN

This certification is pursuant to G.L. Chapter 39, Section 23D accepted by the Town Council by
Resolution 09-40 dated June 10, 2009.

Signature: 

Town of Franklin

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Franklin, Massachusetts 02038-1352



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for the following project:

Project name: Taj Estates - 230 East Central St.

Applicant: Taj Estates of Franklin II, LLC

Application type: Special Permit & Site Plan

This certification is pursuant to G.L. Chapter 39, Section 23D accepted by the Town Council by
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Signature: _____