



TOWN OF FREEPORT, MAINE

Planning Department

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TO: FREEPORT PROJECT REVIEW BOARD
FROM: CAROLINE PELLETIER, TOWN PLANNER
RE: STAFF REPORT
DATE: WEDNESDAY, MAY 20, 2020

46 Main Street – Exterior Building Modifications	
Property Location:	Tax Assessor Map 11, Lot 120
Zoning Information:	Village Commercial 1 (VC-1) and Design Review I – Class C
Review Type(s):	Design Review Certificate
Waivers Requested:	None

Background: The applicant is seeking approval of a Design Review Certificate for exterior building modifications to their property at 46 Main Street. The applicant had to upgrade the electrical service to the building (located on the Mill Street façade). The existing enclosure was removed and will be replaced with a similar, but larger structure. It will not extend any further into the setback than the existing enclosure. The new enclosure will be about seven feet in width and seven feet in height. It will be sided in wood, with louvers on the front and cedar shingles on the roof. It will be painted to match the remainder of the building. An existing mechanical vent in the area has also been relocated. One bush has been removed from the abutting landscaped area and is not proposed to be replaced.

Process: Per Article V.8.7 of the Freeport Design Review Ordinance, this application is before the Board as a Design Review Certificate is required for “Any material change in the exterior appearance of existing Class C buildings by addition, reconstruction or alteration, if subject to view from a public street or public right of way within the Districts;”

Design Review Ordinance: Chapter 22 Section VII.C.

- 1. Scale of the Building.** The scale of a building depends on its overall size, the mass of it in relationship to the open space around it, and the sizes of its doors, windows, porches and balconies. The scale gives a building "presence"; that is, it makes it seem big or small, awkward or graceful, overpowering or unimportant. The scale of a building should be visually compatible with its site and with its neighborhood.

The scale of the building will not be altered. Based upon this information, the Board finds that this standard has been met.

- 2. Height.** A sudden dramatic change in building height can have a jarring effect on the streetscape, i.e., the way the whole street looks. A tall building can shade its neighbors and/or the street. The height of buildings should be visually compatible with the heights of the buildings in the neighborhood.

The height of the building will not be altered. Based upon this information, the Board finds that this

standard has been met.

3. **Proportion of Building's Front Facade.** The "first impression" a building gives is that of its front facade, the side of the building, which faces the most frequently used public way. The relationship of the width to the height of the front facade should be visually compatible with that of its neighbors.

The proportions of the front façade will not be altered. Based upon this information, the Board finds that this standard has been met.

4. **Rhythm of Solids to Voids in Front Facades.** When you look at any facade of a building, you see openings such as doors or windows (voids) in the wall surface (solid). Usually the voids appear as dark areas, almost holes, in the solid and they are quite noticeable, setting up a pattern or rhythm. The pattern of solids and voids in the front facade of a new or altered building should be visually compatible with that of its neighbors.

The rhythm of solids to voids in the front façade will be retained and the meter enclosure will be replaced in the existing location, just slightly larger. No changes to the location of nearby windows are proposed. Based upon this information, the Board finds that this standard has been met.

5. **Proportions of Opening within the Facility.** Windows and doors come in a variety of shapes and sizes; even rectangular window and door openings can appear quite different depending on their dimensions. The relationship of the height of windows and doors to their width should be visually compatible with the architectural style of the building and with that of its neighbors.

Proportions of openings within the facility will remain unchanged. Based upon this information, the Board finds that this standard has been met.

6. **Roof Shapes.** A roof can have a dramatic impact on the appearance of a building. The shape and proportion of the roof should be visually compatible with the architectural style of the building and with those of neighboring buildings.

The roof shape of the building will not be altered. Based upon this information, the Board finds that this standard has been met.

7. **Relationship of Facade Materials.** The facades of a building are what give it character, and the character varies depending on the materials of which the facades are made and their texture. In Freeport, many different materials are used on facades - clapboards, shingles, patterned shingles, brick - depending on the architectural style of the building. The facades of a building, particularly the front facade, should be visually compatible with those of other buildings around it.

The new enclosure will be about seven feet in width and seven feet in height. It will be sided in wood, with louvers on the front and cedar shingles on the roof. It will be painted to match the remainder of the building. Based upon this information, the Board finds that this standard has been met.

8. Rhythm of Spaces to Building on Streets. The building itself is not the only thing you see when you look at it; you are also aware of the space where the building is not, i.e., the open space which is around the building. Looking along a street, the buildings and open spaces set up a rhythm. The rhythm of spaces to buildings should be considered when determining visual compatibility, whether it is between buildings or between buildings and the street (setback).

The rhythm of spaces to building on the street will not be altered. Based upon this information, the Board finds that this standard has been met.

9. Site Features. The size, placement and materials of walks, walls, fences, signs, driveways and parking areas may have a visual impact on a building. These features should be visually compatible with the building and neighboring buildings.

The existing enclosure was removed and will be replaced with a similar, but larger structure. It will not extend any further into the setback than the existing enclosure. The new enclosure will be about seven feet in width and seven feet in height. One bush has been removed from the abutting landscaped area and is not proposed to be replaced. Based upon this information, the Board finds that this standard has been met.

10. In addition to the requirements of the Freeport Sign Ordinance, signs in the Freeport Design Review District shall be reviewed for the following: materials, illumination, colors, lettering style, location on site or building, size and scale. Minor changes that do not alter the dimensions or lettering style of an existing sign need not be reviewed, i.e. personal name changes for professional offices, or changes in hours of operation. See Special Publication: "Sign Application Requirements".

No new signage is proposed. Based upon this information, the Board finds that this standard has been met.

Conclusion: Based on these facts the Board finds that this project meets the criteria and standards of the Design Review Ordinance.

Proposed Motion: Be it ordered that the Freeport Project Review Board approve the printed Findings of Fact and Design Review Certificate for GWB Freeport, LLC, for exterior building alterations at 46 Main Street (Tax Assessor Map 11, Lot 120), to be built substantially as proposed, application dated 04/27/2020, finding that it meets the standards of Freeport Design Review Ordinance, with the following Conditions of Approval:

- 1) This approval incorporates by reference all supporting plans that amend the previously approved plans submitted by the applicant and his/her representatives at Project Review Board meetings and hearings on the subject application to the extent that they are not in conflict with other stated conditions.

Habitat for Humanity Subdivision – US Route One / Old Brunswick Road	
Property Location:	Tax Assessor Map 18, Lot 15
Zoning Information:	Medium Density A (MD-A)
Review Type(s):	Residential Open Space Subdivision
Waivers Requested:	Underground Utilities, Stormwater Management

Background: The applicant recently purchased a vacant piece of land on Old Brunswick Road / US Route One and is presenting conceptual plans for a three-lot residential open-space subdivision. The parcel is 4.9 acres and is currently vacant and forested. Approximately three acres of open space is proposed. The applicant is proposing that access to the site would be from private individual driveways off of Old Brunswick Road. Driveway Entrance Permits from the Freeport Department of Public Works Would be required.

Wetland and vernal pool studies were completed by Albert Frick Associates, Inc.; a copy of this information will need to be submitted. Lots would be served by individual wells and septic systems. The location of passing test pits have been shown on the plan; test pit information would need to be submitted. Some of the test pit locations seem to be located far away from the proposed house locations; this is something the applicant might want to take another look at as the project moves forward.

The lots have been arranged to avoid wetland areas and minimize wetland impact. Some areas of steep slopes have been shown on the plan and are located on the lots, however the applicant has stated that they do not meet the Ordinance criteria for steep slopes and have therefore not been deducted in the Net Residential Acreage calculation.

Two waivers are requested; the first to allow above ground utilities and the second is to not require stormwater management.

In regards to utilities, Article 11.5.C.2K of the Freeport Subdivision Ordinance has the following standard: “k. Utilities. Utilities serving subdivisions shall be installed underground. The Board may approve overhead utilities when the applicant provides evidence that the increased costs of underground utilities will raise the costs of the housing beyond the market in that location. When utilities are installed underground, the subdivider shall install appropriate signs indicating the location of such utilities.” Additional information regarding the increased cost of providing underground utilities will need to be submitted for the Board to consider this request.

In regards to stormwater management, a waiver of Article 11.6 of the Freeport Subdivision Ordinance is requested. In addition, Stormwater Management is also governed by Section 529 of the Freeport Zoning Ordinance. Based upon the size and nature of the development, in addition to providing calculations, the treatment measures would probably be minimal and may include items such as a stone drip edge around houses and/or raingardens. This will most likely not be a waiver recommended by staff and is something we can have the Town Engineer give his formal opinion on as the project moves forward.

Process: This is considered a Subdivision-Minor (per Article III of the Freeport Subdivision Ordinance) and process would involve two levels of review – conceptual and final. Since this is conceptual review, the Board shall review the submission to determine if the information provides a clear understanding of the site and identifies opportunities and constraints that help determine how it should be used, areas

that are appropriate for conservation areas, and areas that are appropriate for development (refer to Article 5 of the Freeport Subdivision Ordinance). The Board shall also act on any requests for waivers at this time. This step is often completed in multiple meetings. Review of the Site Inventory Map and the Site Analysis and Conceptual Plan shall be considered complete upon a finding by the Project Review Board that the appropriate areas have been determined for development and for conservation or open space.

Sitewalk: Staff would recommend that the Board consider whether or not they want to have a sitewalk. If the Board does want to have a sitewalk, staff would recommend that the sitewalk occur prior to action on the conceptual plan and/or prior to the Board acting on any waiver requests. Given the current pandemic and requirements for social distancing, staff would recommend that the Board hold off on scheduling a sitewalk until it is safe to do so and when it is clearly permitted by the Governor. If the Board, does want to schedule a sitewalk, would they be comfortable making a motion to allow staff to schedule the walk when the time is appropriate? As usual, the sitewalk would need to be properly noticed and the public would be invited to attend.

Proposed Motion: Be it ordered that the Freeport Project Review Board table the review of the Site Inventory, Analysis and Conceptual Sketch Plan for Habitat for Humanity for a three lot residential open space subdivision on Old Brunswick Road / Route One (Tax Assessor Map 18, Lot 15) until after such time that the Board is able to conduct a sitewalk. Furthermore, the Board gives directive to Staff to schedule a sitewalk at such time when it is safe to do so and when it is clearly permitted by the Governor.