

MINUTES
FREEPORT TOWN COUNCIL MEETING #17-23
TOWN COUNCIL CHAMBERS, 30 MAIN STREET, FREEPORT
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, 2023
Executive Session 5:00-6:30 PM
Regular Council Meeting starting at 6:30 PM

	PRESENT	ABSENT	EXCUSED
Councilor Chair Daniel Piltch, 25 Quarry Lane	X		
Council Vice Chair, John Egan, 38 Curtis Road	X		
Councilor Matthew Pillsbury, 36 Todd Brook Rd	X		
Councilor Chip Lawrence, 93 Hunter Road	X		
Councilor Darrel Fournier, 3 Fournier Drive	X		
Councilor Jake Daniele, 264 Pownal Road	X		
Councilor Edward Bradley, 242 Flying Point Road	X		

EXECUTIVE SESSION

ITEM # 149-23 To consider action relative to an Executive Session with the Town Attorney pursuant to 1 M.R.S.A. § 405(6)(a) pertaining to a Personnel matter. Baker Tilly will be present to discuss the Town Manager search.

MOTION: That the Town Council enter Executive Session. (Piltch & Egan) **VOTE:** (6-Ayes)(0-Nays)

Councilor Pillsbury arrived at 5:11 pm.

MOTION: That the Town Council exit Executive Session. (Piltch & Lawrence) **VOTE:** (7-Ayes)(0-Nays)(1-Abstain Fournier)

FIRST ORDER OF BUSINESS: Pledge of Allegiance

Everyone stood for the Pledge of Allegiance

SECOND ORDER OF BUSINESS: To waive the reading of the minutes of Meeting #16-23 held on August 1, 2023 and to accept the minutes as printed.

MOVED AND SECONDED: : To waive the reading of the minutes of Meeting #16-23 held on August 1, 2023 and to accept the minutes as printed. (Bradley & Lawrence) **VOTE:** (6-Ayes)(0-Nays)(1-Abstain Fournier)

THIRD ORDER OF BUSINESS: Announcements (15 minutes)

- The [Friends of the Freeport Community Library](#)'s annual Book Sale will be held September 21st – 24th in the library meeting room. Donations will be accepted at the library starting Tuesday, September 5th through September 19th. Proceeds help support programming and museum passes at your library.

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- You can now use your FCL card at select Minerva libraries and check out materials in person. Your card must be in good standing and the library must be a participant of the Minerva Shared Borrowing Group. Give us a call or stop by for more info.
- The library has a new face on staff. Jamie McAlpine has joined us part time at the main desk – please say hello next time you visit!
- We have immediate critical openings on the Board of Appeals. The Board meets the first Monday, 6 pm at Town Hall. The Board of Appeals hears and decides on appeals to administrative decisions of the Codes Enforcement Officer and land use decisions of the Project Review Board. We are also seeking people to serve on the Cable Regulatory Board and Board of Assessment Review.

FOURTH ORDER OF BUSINESS: Information Exchange (15 minutes)

Councilor Egan: Mountain Bike Trails at Hedgehog Mountain: An informal group of biking enthusiasts held a meeting organized by Sam Kapala to bring up the idea of trying to create and improve mountain biking opportunities at Hedgehog Mountain which avoid the summit. They identified where a few trails could be built including a small pump track. The next effort will be for this small group to meet with the Conservation Commission who would match up those ideas with the management plan. This would be directly in the node of the bike connectivity that is going to happen from downtown to our various amenities on the west side of the highway.

Chair Pilch: Hate Incidents: We have had four incidents of hate motivated vandalism in town some in bathrooms and some in public parking lots. They've been since covered up but it's disturbing that they occurred. We had a racially motivated incident last November outside of Antonia's. He took the statement that we issued then and modified it to be less specific and address incidents in general. The Town Council statement on racial justice, if they support it, would be:

Hate crime is intolerable and has no place in our town. We whole heartedly condemn any attempt to intimidate, threaten or otherwise harm someone based on their race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender disability or sexual orientation. Our town contains tolerant individuals who are accepting and welcoming towards residents and visitors of all kinds. When we uncover racism, we will continue to act swiftly and morally to bring justice and prevent any further instances from occurring. Everyone who sets foot in Freeport as a resident or visitor deserves to be treated with respect and fairness. We take pride in looking out for each other. In the past, our Police Department has acted promptly and thoroughly to investigate incidents related to hate crimes. They have worked with prosecutors at the State and County levels to initiate the filing of civil rights and criminal charges. Our law enforcement officers share our belief that Freeport should be a safe place for all and will continue to work diligently in the support of this goal. While we may like to imagine that our town is free of racism and other hate crimes, times like these remind us there is still work to be done. We need to continue to educate, enlighten and empower our neighbors to speak out against racism and to speak up when it rears its head.

The Chair clarified these were not racially motivated events, they were hate based vandalism and graffiti. This will get posted on our website on behalf of the Council.

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Councilor Fournier: Is frustrated with the District Attorneys that won't prosecute. If we want to curb vandalism we need a D.A. that will support our Police Department. He supports the statement. We need to follow up with the D.A. to prosecute vandalism and other non-violent crimes. We are seeing an increase in that because no one is held accountable.

Councilor Bradley: An alternative may be to create a penalty for hate crimes in our town. We can make it a violation of a town ordinance with a significant penalty attached so we don't have to rely on a D.A. We could enforce it ourselves. It's a process we have to consider. The last statement didn't stop this incident and this statement won't stop the next one until there is a consequence.

Town Manager: After talking to the Police Chief, one thing that is not mentioned is when there are cases where they suspect its use, they collaborate with the School Resource Officer and the school to reach out to the peoples and families and handle it through education together as a partnership, which is a first step.

Could we refer to Ordinance Committee? Yes.

Chair Piltch: For people who are interested in pursuing this, you can reach out to the Council. We have a Social and Racial Equity Committee that we established a year ago. We have been reaching out to the civil rights team at the high school and will be talking with them to make sure they are aware of the issues and doing what they can to educate the next generation of people to be aware of it.

FIFTH ORDER OF BUSINESS: Town Manager's Report (15 minutes)

We have our first refillable water station outside the restrooms here at Town Hall. This is something that our Sustainability Committee wanted. It was the doing of Brent Moon as one of the last tasks for us.

Changes to staffing: We are having a mandatory customer service training for all our staff on September 13th. We will have limited coverage at that time. There was an issue at the Library which will cause a delayed opening of 1 hour on that day. On Thursday, September 13th the Library will open at 11 a.m. instead of 10 a.m.

The Clerk's Office will be closed on September 12th due to a staff shortage. We do apologize, we don't like to close a department for a day, but when we have a skeleton crew sometimes we have to do it. There are many services you can do online. For people with nomination papers out, the deadline to return them is on the 12th. You can still return them on the 12th but if you have questions or concerns we encourage you to do that before the 12th. The clerks will be reaching out to anyone who hasn't returned their papers to inform them.

It's been a busy summer in Freeport. We have had multiple events that have drawn large crowds. We unfortunately, have also had 2 structure fires with significant damage to residential dwellings. We had an RV that was a total loss and an excavator that caused a fire. All of these were within August. These are substantial events for a small town.

We put out a RFP for the Comprehensive Plan update. They received four quotes. They will be putting together an interview committee made up of Planning Board members, staff, Project Review Board members and 2 councilors. Councilor Egan and Lawrence volunteered to serve.

Asylum Seekers: There was a group of asylum seekers that were brought to Freeport from Portland. They were being housed at the Portland Expo. The City of Portland has rented some hotel rooms in Freeport for these clients. These are all General Assistance clients. The plan is that they will find housing

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within the year. There were 37 families moved to Freeport. That is 147 individuals with 67 school age children that are planning to enroll in Freeport. Portland has been working with the RSU to accept those students. Food and meals are provided by Portland and they are having a shuttle service two days per week to and from Portland. They do have staff on sight to help people find permanent places to live. What's the cost to Freeport? Right now, the costs of food and housing are being covered by the City of Portland through General Assistance (GA) which also means the State provides a portion of that. We have been working with Freeport Community Services (FCS), but at this time the Town of Freeport is not writing checks for any direct services.

Councilor Bradley: Why is this Portland's responsibility solely? They were here before and now they are back. Our effort seems to be to keep hands up and money out of their use. Personally, he feels we should be sharing the responsibility for asylum seekers if they're in our town. We are supporting them through the schools which have a large burden, but the town isn't doing anything. There was discussion about ARPA money we sent to FCS going in that direction but that got resolved in a way that didn't spend that money. Why doesn't Freeport step up to help. He would like to explore ways for Freeport to contribute to the burden. He doesn't know what that should be, but nothing is wrong.

Town Manager: We are waiting to see if there are needs that aren't being met. Last time we gave ARPA money to Quality Housing Coalition which could be used for them should they help these people with housing. We haven't had any direct requests come in. We are trying to schedule a meeting with Council leadership, FCS, the school Superintendent. After that meeting she will give an update to let you know of any identified needs that Freeport can help with.

Councilor Bradley: Identified needs means a need that is unmet. He's talking about the needs that are being met and a way for the town to support those requests.

Councilor Lawrence: We are supporting through the 67 children attending the Freeport school system. The RSU will get that burden, but it's our tax dollars (along with Pownal and Durham). Our property tax base is not going to support this need or this burden. If they are going to our schools, that's one way we are stepping up. It all municipal money.

Councilor Fournier: Freeport was caught off guard with this. The RSU has their hands full getting ready for this influx of new students. We support asylum seekers in ways people don't see with our Fire Rescue, Police and other people there supporting them. It's a bigger State problem. How do we address this? He's like to see open lines of communication in the future so we have an opportunity to put a plan together before things like this happen.

Chair Piltch: Portland is responsible for them because they were residents of Portland. Their General Assistance will be reimbursed by the State for 70% of their GA. They signed a contract with a hotel that happens to be located in Freeport. At no time did they come to Freeport to say they want them to become residents of Freeport.

Public Safety sign is leaning. The Town Engineer has been working to get that fixed. He did just hear back from a contractor. The Chair is afraid the sign will fall and get damaged.

SIXTH ORDER OF BUSINESS: Public Comment Period – (30 Minutes)
(Non-Agenda Items Only)

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Ella Tabasky (employed in Freeport): In the past four months, she has encountered 2 disturbing incidents of hateful graffiti within a one block radius of her work. One at 100 Main Street which included the “N” word and a swastika. The other was at a parking lot at Middle and Bow Street that included the “N” word tagged 3 times. In both instances, the response from law enforcement and property owners to cover the hate speech was alarmingly slow. She covered the most recent graffiti after waiting weeks for the first incident to be handled correctly. She hopes to raise awareness and urging the town and community members to take action against these hateful acts. Racists graffiti is not just vandalism, it’s a stain on the very fabric of our communities. It sends the message that bigotry and prejudice are allowed to fester here. She implores the council to take this seriously. Hate should have no place in Freeport. It’s the responsibility of our community leaders to make sure our town remains safe and inclusive for everyone. She recommends the following actions:

1. Direct the Social and Racial Equity Committee (SREC) to convene as soon as possible to discuss these issues and create a multi-pronged approach to interrupting this hateful rhetoric.
2. Engage in public awareness campaigns that promote unity, diversity and understand in our community.
3. Encourage businesses and community members to report any suspicious activities promptly and ensure they have the tools to cover up hateful messages as quickly as possible.
4. Ensuring that future police reporting is streamlined so the Council and Town Manager are notified of hate crimes in a timely fashion.
5. Collaborate with local organizations and schools to educate the youth about the importance of tolerance and inclusivity.

Let’s make Freeport a place where all are welcome. She urged the council to take the lead in this endeavor and demonstrate that we are a community that stands against racism and bigotry in all its forms.

The next meeting of the SREC is next Wednesday, September 13, 2023.

Anne Marisic-Freeport resident: She is here in support of Ella’s testimony. On March 30, 2022, she noticed graffiti on the bridge that goes over the train tracks on Main Street. In large letters it said “N” word, FU. She reported to the police who said they would take care of it, but nothing was done. She called two more times and was told there was dispute over who owned that space. There needs to be a quicker way of resolving this. It was finally painted over April 27, 2022. For a full month it was visible to everyone on the Amtrak. With incidents of increased bigotry in the town she’s concerned about the trajectory of this culture and the people in this town. She appreciates that the town has more cultural variety. She supports the suggestions we can take that Ella provided.

Coren Wheeler- Freeport resident: There was similar vandalism at the schools last year. She is here to support Ella. Her concern is for the safety of the children. We have welcomed new Mainers. The staff and students have been welcoming and kind at school. The civil rights team has been established at Pownal Elementary and the High School. She is here to ask that we all work together and communicate well to ensure that the hate speech, vandalism and intolerance for groups of people is unacceptable.

The Chair offered to follow up with them.

Councilor Pillsbury: Are there gaps from when we are notified of an incident in town and our ability to remove it? What’s our policy? Are there things we can do better with that?

Chair Piltch: The incidents we have had have been on private property. We can take the report and notify the property owner. The public vs private property is always going to be an issue. It would be easier if its town owned as we can dispatch our staff to remove. Visit Freeport is keen to jump on things

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like this, as it's not a good look for our town. We can look into creating a quick response kit (paint, sand blaster rental coupon, and other tools that business owners can use).

Town Manager : The police need to have the incidents reported in a timely fashion. In the winter, graffiti may be covered by snow. The further out, the harder it is for them to investigate. It's also important to accurately explain to the dispatcher the incident so it can be identified.

Councilor Daniele: He likes the idea of a patch kit ready to go. It's actionable. We can let the public know we have resources available.

SEVENTH ORDER OF BUSINESS: To take action on the following items of business as read by the Council Chairperson:

ITEM # 150-23 To consider action relative to adopting the September 5, 2023 Consent Agenda.

The Chair reviewed the items on the Consent Agenda.

Councilor Danielle asked whether the vacancies on the Appeals Board were resignations or if these were regular term expirations. We have both. The Clerk has created a colorful information sheet on each committee which will start being posted to encourage board and committee participation.

BE IT ORDERED: That the September 5, 2023 Consent Agenda be adopted.
MOVED AND SECONDED: (Pillsbury & Lawrence) **VOTE:** (7-Ayes)(0-Nays)

(Council Chair Piltch) (5 minutes)

ITEM # 151-23 To consider action relative to setting a public hearing regarding a proposed consent agreement between the Town of Freeport, Gregory and Deborah Link and Hardy Farm Investments, Inc. for a property located at 4 Dixon Road (Tax Assessor Map 1, Lot 6-1) and for the purpose of enforcing and resolving violations of the following municipal ordinances – Chapter 65 – Shoreland Zoning Ordinance, Chapter 21 – Freeport Zoning Ordinance, Chapter 16 – Flood Plain Management Ordinance, and Chapter 61 – Short-Term Rental Registration Ordinance.

Town Manager: This was before the Council previously before Mr. Joseph left. The Links have a property on the water in South Freeport. They came into permit some work and short-term rental and it was discovered that there are quite a few violations. Most, if not all, were purchased and they were unaware. Typically, they would get a notice of violation, but the Town is trying to work with them. Mr. Joseph had been working on a consent agreement that would allow some of those things to remain. We have been working with the Code Officer and two attorneys to come up with a draft. It is in the Shoreland Zone, so DEP was included upfront. Although DEP is separate, and they will have final say on what they do for enforcement, we wanted to make sure we were coming up with something DEP would go along with. There are things in there that if they get damaged, they will be allowed to let them stay but they can't be replaced. You have draft language before you less the fees that she thinks the legal fees are \$5,000. You can also add civil penalties. In the past the council may have included legal fees. In this case, we want to be careful because it wasn't the Links that created the penalties, they did buy some of it. The Links and attorneys will be present at the Public Hearing. We can assess a penalty, but then suspend

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it as long as they comply with the other requirements. We have done that for other violations. She can get a comparison number from the Code Officer. It's like a performance guarantee.

Councilor Daniele: We can make payment plans right.

Number 11 is a large list of violations. There were some permits going way back. Almost all of those were part of the acquisition. Unfortunately, with the permitting we did have staff down there over the years walking over the paved area and stuff like that. He doesn't see anything here that is dramatically different from the thrust of what they had tentatively work out previously. DEP also had changes we needed to make.

BE IT ORDERED: That a public hearing be set for September 19, 2023 at the Town Council meeting starting at 6 pm in Town Council Chambers, 30 Main Street, regarding a proposed consent agreement between the Town of Freeport, Gregory and Deborah Link and Hardy Farm Investments, Inc. for a property located at 4 Dixon Road (Tax Assessor Map 1, Lot 6-1) and for the purpose of enforcing and resolving violations of the following municipal ordinances – Chapter 65 – Shoreland Zoning Ordinance, Chapter 21 – Freeport Zoning Ordinance, Chapter 16 – Flood Plain Management Ordinance, and Chapter 61 – Short-Term Rental Registration Ordinance. **MOVED AND SECONDED:** (Fournier & Lawrence) **VOTE:** (7-Ayes)(0-Nays)

(Caroline Pelletier, Town Manager)(15 minutes)

ITEM # 152-23 To consider action relative to Automobile Graveyard and Junkyard Renewals.

Town Clerk: This is D.A.B. Inc. annual renewal for the Junkyard Permit. It's been there a long time and Nick Adams, Code Officer supports. These are not easy properties to maintain. In Councilor Egan's time on the Council, Mr. Bolduc has never had a violation.

BE IT ORDERED: That the following Automobile Graveyard and Junkyard Renewals be approved.

1. David Bolduc d/b/a/ D.A.B. INC. 13 Allen Range Rd, Freeport

MOVED AND SECONDED: (Lawrence & Fournier) **VOTE:** (7-Ayes)(0-Nays)

(Town Clerk, Christine Wolfe)(5 minutes)

ITEM # 153-23 To consider action relative to signing the Election Warrant for the November 7, 2023 Annual Election.

Town Clerk: This is the legal requirement to call for the election of officers that are elected annually. The Chair listed the positions that are available for election in November.

BE IT ORDERED: That the Election Warrant calling the November 7, 2023 Annual Election be signed. **MOVED AND SECONDED:** (Daniele & Lawrence) **VOTE:** (7-Ayes)(0-Nays)

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(Town Clerk, Christine Wolfe)(5 minutes)

ITEM # 154-23 To consider action relative to establishing a Central Core District Working Group.

The motivation for starting this group came out of the workshop they had August 22 at the initiative of the Housing Committee that also included the Planning Board, Project Review Board and Council. There was discussion about what we can and should do to encourage housing and development in general. A lot of attention was focused on the Design Review Ordinance and other land use ordinances and challenges we have in developing property in town. The sentiment was let's do something and let's do it quickly. There is some low hanging fruit we can address and some gnarly issues we can dive into. A group of them met after the workshop to try to figure out the right mechanism was. Where they landed was that it was helpful in the past to have a group that represented the Planning Board, Project Review Board, Council and handful of other interested parties that don't usually workshop together. The intent was to get a representative from each group, keep it small and move quickly. The idea is to establish the Central Core District Working Group to focus on downtown area and areas surrounding downtown to encourage not just housing, but to encourage more predictable and efficient processes that are fair and equitable to new development and existing residents.

The names they landed on are as follows:

- Caroline, Town Planner
- Brett Richardson, FEDC/Housing Task Force
- Sam Kapala, Planning Board
- Ford Reiche, Project Review Board
- John Egan, Councilor
- Dan Piltch, Councilor
- Guy Blanchard, Freeport Historical Society
- Susan Nourse, member of the public
- Linda Berger, Social Racial Equity Committee
- Developer (tbd)
- Resident/property owner (from one of the Design Review Districts)

Councilor Bradley: the impetus for this was the PRB ordinance being fixed. Is that the message to this group that the first item they are to address is a quick fix based on their knowledge and review of the standards of that ordinance to correct the standards to make them less subjective and to refine the process to make it expeditious?

Chair Piltch: The council had previously set aside money to hire a consultant to help rewrite the Design Review Ordinance. We don't want to wait for that to happen. There are some things they know they can fix quickly early on a lot of which are in Design Review. This group will probably stay together when we hire that consultant and offer to be a working group for the consultant. We can use this group to interview this consultant and vet the ideas. We are hoping this diverse group will represent the many various opinions of our community, so we can bring something forward quicker for consideration. We know that to do a complete overhaul we are going to need prescriptive standards or drawings that are a specialty that we would need a professional to help us through.

Councilor Bradley: During the Tuesday discussion the Principle Group Rep that was participating suggested that a significant percentage of the things you are talking about are available due to the

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Principle Groups work and all we need to do is access it. The question is not to create another unfocused never-ending process that leads us quickly to a couple things then takes over the comprehensive planning for the Planning Board and becomes an off the street gang for planning. Tuesday seemed like an abrupt departure from everything to get away from the exemption idea and to do something rapidly based on information we currently have, and these are the right people to do it. You expect that before the election to come back with recommendations on how to fix that, then we can move on with handling things like 22 Main Street with that refined repaired Design Review Ordinance. Is that fair? Yes.

The small group that got together already has some ideas. There will be tricky issues in there and some of them are going to have to wait. This group feels like there are changes we can make now in the meantime.

Councilor Egan: He thinks the make up of the group will be quick to set aside torturous issues for a better process. This is a straight ahead, easy issue where they can change it to take the subjectivity out of it and put a specification in it. There are a lot of examples available. He thinks that will be the ability to get tangible results quickly.

Town Manager : At Tuesday's meeting we were very focused on the commercial core, the center of Freeport, and housing and Design Review. When we talk about Design Review we're really talking about down near the Concord Brook Condos near Desert Road all the way past Kendall Lane and offshoots of that. While we are talking of more of that. Although it impacts housing, it also impacts people who want to change windows or doors. The RFP is for a bigger issue not just housing around a couple blocks on Main Street. It's a bigger thing. This group will come back to you with things that will help housing and positively impact the people of downtown.

Councilor Fournier: If this group is formed will it assist on the directions they have given her as a Town Planner in rerouting our ordinances to make them more efficient, more friendly and easier to achieve, or will it hinder?

Town Manager: We think this group functions well and gives a good product, we think they have the right expertise to move onto other ordinances. We have a lot going on right now. We have the Comp Plan. We have major ordinance changes with LD2003 legislation. We have a group that Chip was on that was working on some process mapping. Step one focus is Design Review. We could go on to other ordinances. There are other people and businesses that want to get involved. It's not just important for the members of this group to show up for meetings but go back to their committees and share what is going on.

Councilor Fournier: He would like to add another position to the group to include a resident that lives in this particular area. He'd like to see one more, other than Sam who chairs the Planning Board.

Sam Kapala lives in the jackpot. He has Zoning and then he has an overlay district, the color overlay district in Design Review, so he's experienced them all.

Councilor Fournier: He's also concerned with the 18 months term. The model they used for the Sewer District was a great model. He suggests trying this for 6 months to see how it goes. If it's successful we can extend the term of the group.

Councilor Bradley: The short time frame for the Sewer Committee added urgency to them once it was set up which was helpful. They had a 6-month timeframe. He asked if they had developers in mind for the

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group. Councilor Egan hasn't contacted them yet so he didn't want to identify them. Councilor Bradley suggested the developer Pettulip.

Councilor Lawrence asked if this is looking at the Overlay Zones too.

The RFP is for Design Review. Once we get through that, part of the RFP was going to be looking at the Overlay. The reduced setbacks can easily get absorbed to Zoning. So, they do see the Overlay getting absorbed into this.

Six months would put us into March when we will have budgets to deal with. The Chair's hope is that the group does something very quickly before the election. Then give the group more time to bring back something that we might act on when they have some more time. He suggests a 12-month term. If they are hitting homeruns, they can support an extension. We also will have a new board after the election and he doesn't want to tie their hands.

Councilor Pillsbury: We are going to have the Housing Committee and now this committee and there are still some gaps to a comprehensive plan for targeting what types of housing we need and the plan to get it. How do we bring all these pieces together? Ultimately, we are trying to have a plan for the development of appropriate amounts and types of housing, changes to ordinance and processes and looking at how to incentivize options that we want. How do we bring it together? This is just going to focus on ordinance and review process. We've had the other recommendations from the Housing Committee that have value. There is still a missing piece. Otherwise we are a few months down the road and it's not like we'll be delivered with a magic solution. How do we bring it to conclusion to move our town forward?

Councilor Lawrence: This is the first piece. You've got to get the zoning done and get the ability to be able to build and then we can go to the what are we going to build. We know what we need to build. We need houses that people can buy and now we don't have that.

Councilor Pillsbury: What if there are changes to ordinance that spur the ability for us to develop more multi family or more densely populated home. What if we need to change lot sizes. This is our chance to look at that. How do we tie in a general direction we're going to and what we want to incentivize instead of having to do this, come up with a different plan and then have to revise ordinances again?

Town Manager: You are going to revise ordinances again because we are about to start a comprehensive planning process. We might identify areas we want to increase our density or do things to encourage more housing beyond what we do today, or we may change our growth areas. To amend our ordinances, they have to be aligned with our Comprehensive Plan. We will have those changes, we are going to want different things. It will be an 18-24-month process, so it's further out. What other conversations or recommendations that the Housing Committee made should we be looking at. Who's going to do that in the meantime? We also have LD2003 changes to the Council in October/November that will create additional housing opportunities in Freeport whether that be more flexibility on Accessory Building Units, which we allow today. Some lots will be able to have three or four dwellings instead of one. You are going to have an affordable housing density bonus coming online that in certain areas they can get 2.5 times the density that we can get today by making affordable units. She has concerns that there were recommendations made by the Housing Committee that aren't related to this that are still sitting there. Some members of our community feel like we still need to have conversations about what types of housing it is that we really want.

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Councilor Egan: A lot of the data that Councilor Pillbury was speaking of is not that far below the surface. There's a lot of good data out there now with Maine Housing and also Federal sources. With the pressure in Maine, more service and constituent groups are digging into that data and producing data, so the realtor group and developers group have a large membership so they can pay for that data. Brett Richardson was able to find a number of data points on comparing wage rates to housing affordability and illustrating the gap in a visual fashion. From the meetings he sat in on, part of the conversation about how fast and how bold to get with recommendations on affordability was tied into what the Town Manager was just saying. We can tackle that then redo it again during the Comprehensive Plan but more specifically we can put that as one of the keystones for the Comprehensive Plan vendor to focus on that as one of the key issues in the Comp Plan. He's hopeful this group will produce tangible results and he would be fine with a 6 months focus.

BE IT ORDERED: That a Central Core District Working Group be established, to exist for a period of ~~18~~ 6 months, to collaboratively study the processes relating to planning, development and preservation in Freeport's central core districts, and to make recommendations to the Town Council for actions the Town could take and policies the Town could establish to encourage more predictable and efficient processes that are fair and equitable to new development and to existing residents.

BE IT FURTHER ORDERED: That the following individuals be appointed to the Central Core District Group:

- Caroline, Town Planner
- Brett Richardson, FEDC/Housing Task Force
- Sam Kapala, Planning Board
- Ford Reiche, Project Review Board
- John Egan, Councilor
- Dan Piltch, Councilor
- Guy Blanchard, Freeport Historical Society
- Susan Nourse, member of the public
- Linda Berger, Social Racial Equity Committee
- Developer (tbd)
- Resident/property owner (from one of the Design Review Districts)

MOVED AND SECONDED: (Bradley & Egan) **VOTE:** (7-Ayes)(0-Nays)

(Council Chair Piltch)(10 minutes)

ITEM # 155-23 To consider action relative to a Resolution Recognizing the efforts put into the 4th of July activities.

This resolution comes out of an effort led by the Town Manager, Tawni Whitney and Council members to address the decision that was made not to hold fireworks. The effort came together quickly with a lot of good faith and energy and effort. Fireworks were held successfully on the Fourth. This Resolution includes everyone that worked on the Fourth of July. The plaque will be presented to Pine Tree Academy at a later date.

BE IT RESOLVED:

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WHEREAS: The Town of Freeport has a long-standing tradition of enjoying community events on the 4th of July each year, including such activities as a parade, fireworks, and other community events;

WHEREAS: Through the efforts of coordinator, Michelle Barker of Bath Savings Institution, the 4th of July parade was a smashing success with great participation and attendance from our residents and community groups;

WHEREAS: Through the efforts and sponsorship of L.L.Bean, many community members and visitors enjoyed the opportunity to participate in the annual road race and family fun run/walk and attend a free summer concert in Discovery Park;

WHEREAS: The annual fireworks were not scheduled to occur this year, as a host site was needed just a few weeks before the 4th of July holiday;

WHEREAS: Pine Tree Academy, a school system in our community, having stepped up to support and advance the best interest of the Town of Freeport, willingly worked with the town to quickly provide the launch site for the fireworks display, thereby acknowledging the needs of the community as important as their own;

WHEREAS: A number of organizations and businesses soon to be known as the “Freeport Fire Crackers” (L.L. Bean, Bath Savings, Bradley Family Foundation, Buck’s Naked BBQ, Derosier’s, Desert of Maine, Freeport Chamber of Commerce, Freeport Oyster Bar, Maine Beer Company, Mast Landing Brewing, The Met and Spartan Sea Farms) quickly and generously contributed cash donations to support annual fireworks display;

WHEREAS: Together through the actions, efforts and contributions of our community, the Town of Freeport was able to move forward to continue with such important community traditions on the 4th of July holiday;

WHEREAS: The Town Council thereby recognizes the above-mentioned school, businesses, organizations and individuals for their outstanding contributions to the citizens of the Town of Freeport.

MOVED AND SECONDED: (Bradley & Lawrence) **VOTE:** (7-Ayes)(0-Nays)

(Caroline Pelletier, Town Manager)(10 minutes)

MOTION: To change the order of the Other Business Items to move #4 to #1. **MOVED AND SECONDED:** (Piltch & Daniele) **VOTE:** (7-Ayes)(0-Nays)

OTHER BUSINESS:

1. Discussion of August 22, 2023 workshop recommendations from the Housing Committee (Councilor Egan)(20 minutes)

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Councilor Egan: We've already covered a lot of what was a result of the August 22 workshop, which was to create the Core District Working Group. The recommendations of the Housing Committee were bold and assertive to spark the conversation to get some action, which they got and to encourage some broad thinking about how to rewrite some of the things that are actually systematically holding us back from realizing what may be some good projects in downtown. There is the list of recommendations in the information packets. Councilor Pillsbury had pointed out that affordability metrics need to be front and center on the recommendations.

Councilor Bradley That Tuesday meeting was in response partly to the dilemma created by 22 Main and we kept it off the discussion. Is there anything going on with 22 Main that the public should know about. Either progress or application or development that can be explained tonight.

Town Manager: The Board of Appeals reversed the decision and we have not been notified that it's been appealed to court. They are past the 45-day appeal deadline. The Town Manager has had limited contact with the developer, but she believes he does not plan to continue. It's beyond us now. The Town of Freeport has not heard from the Moser family about the lot at 22 Main.

2. Discussion of Affordable Housing Tax Increment Financing for Varney Heights (Brett Richardson)(20 minutes)

Brett Richardson, Executive Director FEDC: FEDC's role when it comes to TIF requests are to be a gatherer of information and to take the first look at the request and then make a recommendation to council. Tom Gooch, the developer, and Matt Peters, from Freeport Housing Trust, are here tonight to present. The reason they are approaching it with an abbreviated timeline is that these gentlemen here have an opportunity to put an application into Maine Housing which would allow the ability to attract funding to Freeport to support affordable housing for individuals 55 and older. They are not going to hit the TIF request as part of that scoring process, the town can put in place a TIF District if they wish before the Maine Housing Committee will make their decision, so it'll have some influence there. Brett laid out their goals for this evening's presentation.

Matt Peters, Freeport Housing Trust (FHT): The Housing Trust is a 501c3 nonprofit whose mission is to provide and support the addition of affordable housing in Freeport and adjacent communities. They own 8 properties, totaling 183 apartments. Most recently they acquired Quarry Ridge which was 34 apartments. The council did approve an Affordable Housing TIF to support the acquisition and work there for 50% of the property taxes. The last development that was completed was in 2012 with the 55 plus community at Oakleaf II. The council at that time supported an Affordable Housing TIF of 50% to help with operations of that property.

The developer, Tim Gooch, is working in partnership with the Trust to be codevelopers in this work. Tim's role will be leading the development portion from now until the construction is completed. The Trust will be supporting him through the different application processes, oversight and ultimately after the start of construction, the Trust will be the majority owner in that property with a buyout option over time. The operate these properties for the benefit of the community and the residents. That's a big value in making sure affordable housing stays affordable over the long term.

Varney Heights: located across the road from Varney Square which is 30 apartments that the Trust currently owns. The proposal is for 42 apartments in one three story building. They are going to use a

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building similar to one Tim just built in Augusta. The reasons are for cost efficiency, reduction of risk from construction management and pricing standpoint as well as reduction in architecture fees.

The big benefit: There are gaps in our affordable housing infrastructure. We have a waiting list at Oakleaf II, which is similar to what this new building would be. For the apartments coming online, the residents have income thresholds, so your income would need to be a certain level to be able to afford these rents. These are not rental assisted apartments. These apartments will not be for residents with very limited incomes. In order to be able to construct the building, it requires that we charge rents that include utilities, maintenance and property management. One bedroom will be \$1,300 with two bedrooms being \$1,600. This building will be 3 stories with elevators, so residents can age in place. This location is close to Shaw's, several banks and the Breez bus stop. This development meets a lot of the goals stated in the comprehensive plan.

Affordable Housing TIF summary: The property pays full taxes to the town as determined by the Tax Assessor. They are proposing that half of the taxes they pay to the town go into one bucket and the other half go into the general fund. The separate bucket is then reimbursed back to the developer to help pay for operating costs. That lowers the tax burden which allows the property to borrow more money in order to be able to have enough money to start construction and complete the building. It's a gap filler. Over time, this 50% reimbursement reduces the risk of property mill rate increases as well as property appreciation increases to the property. If taxes were to increase disproportionately, they would have to increase rents. It allows them to mitigate the property tax risk. This stabilizes the rent. At Oakleaf II, they do not raise the rents as much as they're legally allowed to because they are collecting enough money that goes into a rainy-day fund. That helps them with long term asset management stability, makes the property more financially feasible and allows them to keep rents affordable. That's why the Affordable Housing TIF is an important tool and it's the easiest lever to help support affordable housing.

Summary: After conversations with FEDC and the Town Manager, they are looking for direction from the council to do a number of things:

1. to authorize the staff to start compiling and spending staff resources and time on compiling an Affordable Housing TIF application. It's allowing the Town Manager to understand that the council is in support of this project in general, so they can continue to work on that effort. At a later date, they want to return and have the council vote on the final package approval to be able to send to Maine Housing for the approval of the TIF application.
2. They are working on submitting a funding application for the bulk of the money to build these buildings. That is due towards the end of this month. As part of this application, they need some letters from the town in regard to growth management. This would acknowledge that the property is within the growth district, that they would be allowed to build a sidewalk and things like this.
3. Lastly, the current Zoning does not allow them to build the proposed project. They still have a lot of work there to make sure they are meeting all the site plan review. They intend to do that early 2024. The Planning team at the town is amending Zoning Ordinances to come into compliance on LD2003, it would be great to work in tandem with the Town so they don't have to come back and ask for changes after the fact to specifically fit their project. They can work together to make sure everything is aligned and integrated.

Councilor Egan: This is not a TIF that goes through the Department of Economic and Community Development like most of our TIF Districts do. We also have the opportunity, as a community, to work with Maine Housing and help the applicant get an Affordable Housing TIF designation for the property and it's faster and less restrictive process for the town then going through an Economic Development TIF. It's a different channel with the same net effect which is it creates an opportunity for us to help participate in the support of this project. We're contributing 50% of a future value. We have 100 % of zero right

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now so 50% of something in the future is more than 100% of zero. That's how we will support that. This will be new found value in the community and we're going to be supporting it directly with a property tax rebate. This allows the project to have a leaner operating budget therefore they can borrow more money from Maine Housing to get this project done. It's a process that is entirely contained at Maine Housing.

Brett Richardson: The town has an established TIF policy from 2010. FEDC discussed this on August 7th and found that this project is consistent with the TIF policy. It furthers the Comprehensive Plan. There's 150 positions open right now in Freeport and right now those workers can't find housing nearby, so it supports the economics as well. FEDC found this project advances the TIF policy, it is consistent with the TIF policy and this project won't happen without a town TIF because they won't get the Maine State Housing. It's tax revenue that we can generate, it's going to produce a new sidewalk on Varney Street and it will contribute to the Sewer District as well. FEDC supports this.

Councilor Fournier: how did we come up with 30 years? He supports a lesser time 15 to 20 years.

Matt Peters: 30 years-The Trust owns properties for a long time, so they are a long view organization. As he said about the asset management and keeping rents affordable, that's a reasonable time horizon for them. Secondly, they are submitting a 9% low income housing application to Maine Housing for a boatload of money. They might not be successful this year because we weren't able to get their TIF and Planning Board in place now. That's not abnormal in these deals. You have an idea, sometimes it works out the first year and other times not till the second or third year. Having the 30-year time horizon gives them an extra point in the application process. If they are not successful this year in receiving funding, then that would be beneficial for their application next year.

Councilor Egan: Maine Housing mortgage is also for 30 years so the rents are restricted for 30 years, so it's hard to tell the lender that the rents could go up in year 22 but you're still required to ..(didn't complete his words).

Councilor Bradley: Has anyone quantified the TIF contribution to this, projected? The total contribution is about \$720,000 over 30 years (\$24,000/year).

There is also a tax shift in addition. From the town's recent experience with the Concord Gully TIF, it was because of the school funding formula from the State, Freeport at that time (2020) was not eligible for the tax shift benefit on the education formula. That was because the valuation of the total property in town relative to other communities in the State. Because the State has been pumping a lot more money into the education system, that has brought the State mill rate down so Freeport is now eligible again to capture the tax shift benefit. He explained how these rates and ratios are established in this process. If you have the Concord Gully TIF calculations in your mind, this deal just got a little better for the town. In the long term, the more that we shelter revenues that will help us stay below that threshold again.

Chair Piltch: We are going to save \$486,000 in tax shift by more money to the schools and less county taxes to pay. We get the benefit of the \$486,000 in addition to the \$716,000 in new taxes we keep and we get 42 units for 55 and older and income limited. A one-person household needs to make less than \$50,000 and two person would need to make less than \$57,000. The amenities were listed.

Do we have unlimited TIFs for this mechanism?

The State limits the total value you can TIF at 5% and the total land you can TIF at 5%. We are well below that. However, Varney Road happens to be in the geography for the Transit Oriented Development TIF that we've talked about. The Transit Oriented TIF is exempt for the 5% value cap and the 5% land cap. If you think about the geography we are talking about which is downtown, a lot of the dense

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development, so if we're exempt and we TIF that, it's a good move from a financial standpoint and it doesn't impact our ability to do other projects outside of the area.

This requires a public hearing and vote. We do need to reach out to the Town Attorney for a credit enhancement agreement. The language should be almost identical to Quarry Ridge. We also need the full application.

The project can't be built until we change the zoning to comply with LD2003, receive funding and go through the financing process. He gave an estimated timeline of the process. We can set the public hearing once we have the documentation needed. We are unsure if we can do that in a 2-week time period to make the next agenda. This is something the council supports, and we would like to move forward. To have it ready for September 19th is the goal. Mr. Peters was asked to include an income requirement slide to the presentation he had for the council tonight. They will need letters from the town for the application by the end of the month.

3. Downtown Momentum Grant Program (FEDC Executive Director, Brett Richardson)(20 minutes)

Chair Piltch: Brett will be presenting an overview of the Downtown Momentum Grant Program. The town allocated some money for this. He's outlining the structure, if it goes well we will bring it back next meeting for adoption.

Brett Richardson, FEDC:

Last council meeting, he presented the Business Fit-up Grant Program that used \$60,000 of a total of \$100,000 that was allocated for this budget cycle. This program is looking at the other \$40,000 to hopefully make it easy for people to understand how access and participate and spend those dollars. The Business Fit Up Program was just about fitting up commercial spaces and activating dark spots into vibrant downtown destinations. This program is about public areas and bringing energy and amenities to public spaces. It's similar to the Business Fit-up Program with some tweaks. Instead of a property owner or business applying for these funds it gives an opportunity for a resident or organization to propose an idea. He gave examples. It is designed to implement the Downtown Vision. He has worked with the Finance Director on the details of the program to give the town a level of financial control. This is not a direct reimbursement like the Business Fit-up Program. If a resident wants to do a project they would have to find a contractor with tax ID and liability insurance. If it's an organization with a tax ID they could do the work themselves. There would be a committee that would include the Town Manager, Complete Streets representatives and the Downtown Vision strategy members. They had a good meeting with the Downtown Vision Taskforce recently and got some input and feedback. They thought that instead of one big cycle with the full amount, that it should be broken up quarterly. They propose using the quarterly approach but because by the time we are going to be doing our first cycle we will be halfway through the fiscal year, that instead of breaking the \$40,000 into four \$10,000, the first cycle would be for \$20,000. This could be an opportunity to engage underrepresented residents that don't typically come out and participate in these processes. He suggested including a youth resident on the committee.

Chair Piltch: Can you add VC2 as well as VC1 so we can capture anything up to Mallett Drive?

Public spaces do not mean it has to be public property. As long as it's publicly accessible and high visibility it will qualify. There are also well-founded concerns as town staff is very busy. Maybe it's better if it's a privately controlled space as long as it's publicly accessible and has staff to make sure it's cleaned up and looking nice. That's something they will tackle as a committee.

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Chair Piltch: Any award over \$10,000 will have to come back to the Council. Do you want this to be as quick as can be and have the committee do as much as they can or does the council want to have more say in these small grants? They are typically \$2,500 to \$5,000.

Brett Richardson: That is another good point that came out of the Downtown Task Force. Let's not make each decision high stakes, let's spread it out and make it less of a big decision. Most grants will stay below the \$10,000 threshold.

4. Set Carbon Reduction Limits in Freeport (Sustainability Coordinator, Meddie Smith)(25 minutes)

Mandy MacPherson: Freeport Sustainability Advisory Board (FSAB) Co chair: FSAB and Greater Portland Council of Governments (CPCOG), town staff and the new Sustainability Coordinator have been working on the Climate Action Plan for Freeport.

Meddie Smith: Sustainability Coordinator: (Presentation included in minutes as separate attachment)

This planning effort is fulfilling the priorities that have been expressed in previous planning efforts. For example, the 2011 Comprehensive Plan's vision statement is pointing to some of the specific activities that would be included in a Climate Action Plan. As well, the Downtown Vision narrowing in on some specific actions that would typically be included. The planning effort we are working to develop are just creating a document and a structure and processes that reinforce priorities that the community has expressed over the years. We are closing in on starting the second phase. The first process, GPCOG was conducting baseline inventorying of two major categories. The first baseline is about where Freeport is vulnerable to changing climate and hazards like extreme storms or super-hot days that can be dangerous and other indirect hazards like more tick-borne diseases, economic disruption, ocean acidification. These hazards are impacting our community, but certain places will have the burden of these impacts more. The baseline inventory was to see who and where and what systems are more vulnerable to these impacts. The other part of the baseline was an emissions inventory. They looked at greenhouse emissions and where carbon pollution is emitted. They chose 2019 as a baseline year. The first phase of the project was diving into existing conditions and saying where do we want to go from here now that we know a little about where we are.

The next phase is about setting targets to reduce emissions. Climate Action planning is about tackling emissions at the source and setting a commitment to make changes over time. We are hoping to tie this up over the winter.

Setting Targets:

The changing climate is having impacts across our community; more flooding, higher heat days, sea level rise, etc. We can also model changes over time which show that show us how life may be different in a couple of decades. The point of setting targets is at its core to reduce carbon pollution that Freeport contributes. The point of that is to protect the people and places of Freeport. The targets are about setting clear quantifiable goals to measure against over time and illustrate progress.

Public Input & Education Opportunities:

We have been bringing this baseline information to the community for a few months. They have created a variety of ways for people to get engaged and listen. The Advisory Board has been hosting lectures through their annual series. They had a well-attended workshop in May. They have had surveying and an

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online board where people are presented with the information and they are able to vote on the issue of targets. They also had a display at the Library.

Greenhouse Gas Inventory:

132,392 is the total emissions for the community provided by GPCOG. This number is equivalent to the emissions from burning 730 cars worth of coal every year. That is the emissions for 2019 which is the baseline year for this inventory. Our numbers per person are higher than the State average. This is a destination where people come to along with a lot of commercial activity here. The inventory that GPCOG did zeroed in on the geographic boundaries of Freeport.

Councilor Bradley: They are not measuring emissions in Freeport. They are categorizing activity and then doing equivalencies. They used traffic data also. They used commercial and residential and movement from visitors was factored in.

They did look at farming. The percentage of emissions for that is low.

Passenger cars were the highest source of emissions in Freeport at 36% followed by commercial vehicles at 24%. Home energy use and business energy use makes up most of the rest with a small amount from waste generation.

Municipal Emissions:

These largely mirror the results of the community wide where the municipal fleet is making up the majority of emissions (73%), largely from diesel use. Buildings make up 26% largely from natural gas use. The municipal operations are only 1% of overall community emissions.

What is the percentage that visitors are responsible for? They are conscious of that point. The data analysis that GPCOG is using is not able to be separated completely.

Councilor Bradley: is there any quantification of the impact of solar on the municipal emissions? We have a solar array that produces a lot. Would those numbers be significantly different if the solar was not in place. It would depend if the solar was in place before or after 2019. That was when we bought it. The town has a subscription to buy electricity from a solar field.

Public Input Summary:

Survey question : In relation to the State, which target do you want the Town to adopt? They used a survey, workshop, library and online board to collect the data. There were 137 answers to this specific question. 59% would like to set more aggressive targets than the State. There was a range of answers and thoughts.

We have a population of 8,200 people with 137 responding. How do we increase these numbers to get more people involved?

Emission Reduction Target Comparison:

FSAB had some discussions to create a recommendation for an emissions reductions target. They were considering the public feedback, taking into consideration the different kind of scenarios modeled by using these different targets. The Advisory Board recommends reducing emissions by 65% from a 2019 baseline by 2030, reducing by 85% by 2040 and striving for net zero emissions by 2050. Additionally, a municipal operations target of net zero by 2040. These targets are in line with the internal climate agreement targets. They are higher than the State's targets, but less aggressive than a neighboring community.

Why did we pick 2019 as the baseline year? There is nothing magic about 2019 other than it is pre-pandemic disruption. 2022 data is not complete yet. They had struggled with which year to use for the baseline.

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Measuring Progress towards Targets:

You can set a target, but the point is to work towards it. Setting this target is signaling a commitment but measuring progress towards interim goals and in the end the broader 2050 goal is where the rubber meets the road. The town can conduct updates to this data set for example when the 2022 data becomes available and then every couple of years. If we set targets, the modeling can show us the key performance indicators. The metrics are like proxies for achieving progress towards specific ends. These can be tracked on an annual basis to demonstrate progress and that can help understand where to prioritize resources and celebrate success.

Example of What Achieving Targets Look Like:

How is like in Freeport going to change if we met that target. GPCOG has provided samples of what achieving targets looks like and they chose transportation because it is the highest emitting sector in Freeport. If we were meeting the 65% emissions reductions by 2030 target which is the recommendation, 23% of passenger cars would be electric by then. We would have reduced the total vehicles miles traveled by 6.5%. In seven years, one out of 5 cars will be electric. It's important to note that these changes and other ones the climate action plan would be tackling, are leveraging market transformation. A lot of companies creating cars in the US are going electric, so this might not be that hard to achieve. It's also supporting regional projects that have been working on this a long time, like multi-use paths and walkability and bikability. People are already working on that. It's not on all this climate action plan to meet that target, it is spread out over a lot of engaged groups in town.

In the analysis we can see that these two metrics (6.5% reduction in total miles traveled and 23% of passenger cars electrified by 2030) are only slightly ahead of what we would see if we were following the State's targets.

An example of the data we can expect to see is drilling down to a specific number such as the number of heat pumps installed. Most of these are heavier on implementing between now and 2030. It tapers off from 2030-2050. The easier stuff will happen and then they will encounter some harder to do things like electrifying larger commercial buildings. This will help us track progress.

The problem that this planning effort is trying to address is changing climate is impacting the people and places of Freeport; their health, well-being, safety and ability to bounce back after disasters or disruption. The solution is setting emission reduction targets to make a change and address a change in climate at the source. This plan is a process to leverage Federal funding which is becoming more abundant but difficult to access.

What can the Advisory Board do to help facilitate any decision making in the process of setting emission reduction process?

Councilor Bradley: to what extent have your emission targets taken into consideration other processes or other technologies that will reduce the effect of climate change? Nuclear or carbon extraction are two. The resistance we hear is you are putting all your money on one horse and that horse may not be the one that solves the problem. The argument is that you are extracting resources from other technologies, you picked a winner and left all the other technologies in the dust.

Meddie Smith: it's a very interesting challenge to be tackling. From this process, this isn't committing to anything. The climate action plan is meant to be the first step. The plan itself is meant to be updated as technologies or funding sources or community priorities shift, those would be captured in updates to the plan.

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Councilor Fournier: People are concerned they're going to be forced into electric vehicles. We have to kill that myth.

There are myths also that people will not be able to have gas fueled equipment such as leaf blowers, chain saws and lawn mowers. A lot of people want to help and we need to get the messaging out that it could be insulation, or window replacement or install heat pumps.

It's the job of the Council and Advisory Board to look at all this data and start to figure out ideas and communication so they can do it. EV cars are not for everyone.

Councilor Bradley spoke about the difficulty with the program to make electric appliances available to people to loan. There are issues with solar and heat pump installation due to contractor shortages.

Town Manager: We made a commitment and funded working on a Climate Action Plan. We've been working with GPCOG, we have all this baseline data. We're going to have a plan that's going to take the data and we'll identify our goals and implementation strategies as a community to make all sorts of efforts. As part of that plan, we've been asked by GPCOG to set these targets because these are going to feed into the what some of these goals and implementation strategies might be.

Meddy Smith: They hoped to get the planning effort done by December. They've done a lot of work collecting and analyzing the data so setting these targets will help them dive into that data. If they don't have the targets it drags things out and they won't be creating a data driven plan and would slow down the process.

November would probably be the Action Planning Workshop. Once you've set the targets you bring the community back in and start setting the priority actions to get to the targets.

Chair Piltch: Is this something we want to put on another agenda or should this have a workshop of its own?

Councilor Fournier: As of tonight, he would not support the plan because he hears that residents are scared to death of this. If we adopt this plan in November that does not set the policies moving forward on how we're going to achieve it. If new technology comes down the road, are we going to be open to that? To get public knowledge, maybe we do some mailings or a workshop. We always say what is the challenge to get the word out.

Councilor Lawrence: supports putting out a survey for more input. They can target the survey to address the public's concerns. Why can't you just work towards those targets and say "we'd like to hit these targets" and say here's how we can achieve it?

Town Manager: The Council is elected to make decisions on behalf of their constituents. They want some commitment from the town that we support this goal and some type of statement as to where we want to head as a community.

Chair Piltch: It's similar to what we did with the downtown. It's one thing to appoint a committee that wants to do stuff with downtown, it's another thing to say "this is our town's vision of what we want our downtown to be, so without our stamp on it, it just becomes a committee but it's not the town's goal.

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Town Manager: You take the wide variety of viewpoints from constituents, take that information and you can bring to the table to help set the goal that balances the need which you can't do when we're just going off a survey of 137.

Councilor Fournier: When we started working with GPCOG, he took that this would help us develop a plan that would be adopted by multiple communities. If we had adopted the plan, then we could go for federal funding for grants. That's where we have to say we want to move forward and just by saying what those numbers are initially, we're going to say yes, we are behind lowering that, please move forward and come up with another plan.

Councilor Daniele: That's what we are saying. We're not saying how to achieve that, we're saying it'll be great if we could reduce by 2030 to 65% and the town's behind it. He thinks that's all they want. We could do in short order.

Town Manager : The next community meeting in October will help us determine our goals, these are the things we need to do to get there and then would set how we're going to do it. There may be multiple ways. Setting these goals will help us look at reasonable implementation strategies.

Chair Piltch: We are not going to vote tonight, we all agree we need more input. We may be convening a group of citizens to meet the small group of Manager candidates. That might be a good time to have a discussion about setting goals. If we can't do that before the end of October, we'll just have it on a council agenda and encourage a conversation with the public about setting goals.

Councilor Fournier: We adopt just the goals, then send out a community survey about strategies to get there.

It's not a negative constraint, we want to get people excited and say "here's our goal" and make it exciting.

A mailer would be about \$4,000. We have a meeting in November, we could start publicizing now and get away from the mailer.

Communication is a problem, maybe we should do a more comprehensive mailer about town communication, so we don't have to do mailers.

If we could add to the communication the steps that we have taken that have resulted in emissions reductions and we could identify the current opportunities that are available for people who want them. Then develop a strategy to assist them from their desire. It's one thing to adopt a goal, it's another to buy a heat pump. He would like to see people have measured incentives, and people can decide how much time, effort and money they want to spend.

Chair Piltch: He suggests we set the goals and do a mailer and encourage as much communication as we can. We set these goals, now how do we get there and that's where we talk about not taking away your chainsaws and lawn mowers. What other ideas do we have. We can put it on the Oct 3rd agenda that's when we are going to do the goals. We have a donations mailer we do in December that could include the survey to get general feedback.

Robert Stevens (public comment): Spoke in favor of setting the goals and gave information on the benefits of setting them. The ultimate goal here is to set goals that can be pursued locally because that's all we can control. They need more commitment from the Council.

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Chair Piltch: We want to do the bike paths because they're helpful. There are actions that would support these goals. We'll put the goals on our agenda and then we'll have a good discussion around what are some other things we can do. They might include the bike paths being built or a hundred other things.

Motion to adjourn at 9:45 pm (Lawrence & Fournier)(7-Ayes)

END OF AGENDA (Estimated time of adjournment :00 PM)