

**Freeport Planning Board**  
**Freeport Town Hall Council Chambers**  
**Wednesday, April 24, 2019**  
**6:00 pm**

PRESENT: Sam Kapala (Chairperson), Robert Ball, Aaron Cannan, and Lonny Winrich. Anna Child was present as an observing member. Jamel Torres and Greg Savona were excused.  
Mr. Kapala called the meeting to order at 6:08 p.m.

1. Informational exchange

Ms. Larson informed the public that today was free movie night for Freeport residents at the Nordica Theatre. This is part of the TIF for the theatre. She also welcomed Anna Child as the new Planning Board member.

This is Ms. Larson's last meeting. She wanted to talk about some potential applications that are coming in; two would allow higher density residential; one in the Commercial III District and the other in the Commercial IV District. Her inclination on this is that there would probably be a desire to have an open space requirement. She was thinking that for a commercial subdivision, 20% may be appropriate. She asked if the Board wanted to hold a public hearing in June or if people wanted to wait. The Board decided that they wanted to wait to have additional discussion and maybe until there is a new planner in place. Mr. Ball and Mr. Cannan noted concerns for higher density and traffic in the area. Ms. Larson noted that this would be something that the MDOT would be looking at more seriously. Ms. Larson thinks it will be on the agenda and there will be some urgency. She thinks there will be a solid proposal for the Board to consider in June. The Board could decide in June if they want to have a July meeting. There would be no May meeting as the Board is meeting tonight.

Mr. Kapala noted that the application period for the Town Planner position is still open.

Mr. Kapala introduced the next item. He noted that there would be a recess after the public hearing.

2. Commercial 1 District - Public Hearing - Proposed amendments Sec. 409.D.6, to discuss eliminating the limitation on the number of overhead doors that are allowed on sides of buildings visible from Route One. The proposal also includes amendments to Sec. 527.E Front Landscaped Setbacks to include landscaping to soften the look of overhead doors.

Mr. Cannan / Mr. Winrich moved to open the public hearing. Vote: 4 Ayes / 0 Nays.

Mr. Kapala gave a brief overview of the item.

Ms. Larson referenced the proposed amendment to Section 527.F. There is a handout with some changes to that wording to note that "...this may be accomplished through the use of color, material or form."

Keith McBride, FEDC, thinks this is a good thing to take on as the requirement is strict now. Development in this district is more service oriented than it was anticipated and there could be more uses if the Ordinance is updated. He thinks it would be helpful to have a standard that one would know what is being expected for them going into a project. It makes it complicated when someone is not sure

what they can propose, and they come in and ask for some leeway. Some push the gray areas and others want predictability when they come in. It will be good to have a standard based on not just on looks and that can be consistent between Boards. The Project Review Board as it sits today could interpret the language differently between projects and between Boards as there is turnover. Predictability and consistency are key.

Mr. Ball stated that the Board said that aesthetics should not play a major role in a commercial district. He asked how the area was designed. Ms. Larson stated that there is definitely a concern about aesthetics. There are a lot of metal buildings, but past Boards did not want to see a building with a lot of overhead doors. It is intended to be a little bit different for those right on the road.

Andrew Arsenault, resident on Route One, said that there needs to be some aesthetics. There was past fears about businesses with too many overhead doors but now buildings are at weird angles to allow two overhead doors. He gave the example for the recent Casco Bay Ford project. Another issue that needs to be looked at is the desire to have the parking in the rear of structures which results in the front not facing the main road and people looking at the actual rear of the building. This will also encourage developers to make the façade facing the road to look better.

Mr. Kapala noted that the standard would still fall to the Project Review Board to determine what does and does not stand out. Mr. Cannan noted that some parcels in this District are not visible from the road, but the standards of 527 would apply. Ms. Larson quoted Section 527.B.1. She feels that if the Board wants to take on something bigger, they should table this and take this on when a new planner is in place. Mr. Kapala asked if there were any applications waiting for this.

Becky Doten, property owner, noted that she would be on the agenda if this amendment passes.

Scott Dugas, property owner on Route One, thinks the limitation on one overhead door is hard to make work. He supports the change.

Mr. Winrich / Mr. Ball moved to close the public hearing. Vote: 4 Ayes / 0 Nays

Mr. Winrich asked if they wanted to accept the changes to 527.f. Mr. Kapala stated that it is good to have some clarification there. It is not ideal and maybe we could accept it and re-visit when they look at the overall standards. Mr. Cannan noted that there is too much subjectivity which is what they are hearing and an overall look at the standards in the future would be a good topic. Mr. Kapala stated that they would look at it as re-written and re-visit it later. The change would allow more overhead doors to face the street and allow the Project Review Board to have discretion as to how they look. Mr. Cannan stated that there does need to be some predictability.

Mr. Winrich / Mr. Cannan moved to order that the Planning Board recommends that the Town Council adopted the proposed amendments (add changes) as the architectural and landscaping standards for buildings and projects will allow new construction and redevelopment to blend in with the character of the District. The Board further finds that the proposed amendments are consistent with the Comprehensive plan to allow a wide variety of uses that provide the goods and services needed. Vote: 4 Ayes / 0 Nays

The Board took a recess to acknowledge Ms. Larson and her years of service to the Planning Board and Town of Freeport. The meeting reconvened at 6:56 p.m.

### 3. Continued discussion of Draft Parking Lot Redevelopment Overlay District

Ms. Larson gave background on the project. She referenced a revised map that was available tonight. She explained the difference between the two districts, which was primarily the number of stories. She suggested that a definition of the number of stories should be added. Changes were made to the process section. The process would involve a conceptual review, final review and as built. The language notes the sections that do and do not apply in terms of review. Ms. Larson explained the details of the language. She thinks this is a streamlined approach. This would be an overlay district which would either add to and/or take away from what is underneath. Other uses could be added if the Board feels it is appropriate. There would be no minimum lot size or land per dwelling unit requirement. There are parking and landscaping requirements and design elements. Mac Collins, architect is here tonight to talk about design. This language does away from Design Review and would reflect designs of today. Mr. Collins has been charged with coming up with something simple enough to allow for creativity in building design. She would like Mr. Collins to hear from the Board as to what is important.

Mr. Ball asked about subdivision approval kicking in for three or more units. Ms. Larson stated that is established by State law, so we cannot say that it does not apply. We can say that for Design Review. Mr. Ball would like to see the redundancy streamlined. Ms. Larson noted that it would all go to the Project Review Board and they occur concurrently. There are some things in subdivision review that require review and letters from other agencies such as the State. By making it clear that these are minor subdivisions, all the standards still need to be met, but the process is simpler. Freeport has supported this conceptual phase as that is early on before they do engineering and get in to big money.

Mr. Winrich asked about the standard for entrances, noting a wording change that each side of the building facing the public road needs to have one principle entrance.

There was discussion about the Design Elements; Ms. Larson stated she has gotten feedback that the language regarding design character under number one should remain. This is saying that it would not be subject to Design Review. She asked Mr. Collins for his opinion. He thinks it is worth saying something about the community's sense of self. Mr. Collins noted the need to look at quality. Ms. Larson noted that energy efficiency is important.

The Board went through the draft language to comment. Mr. Kapala likes the expedited review process and that it does not need to trigger Design Review. Mr. Cannan agrees, but noted that they need to look at the definitions and one being the word "story". Mr. Kapala also suggested adding a height maximum.

Mr. Collins did an outline on design. Mr. Ball said that the Board needs to come to an agreement on character. Mr. Collins suggested that the definitions of the building codes could be used.

There was discussion of short-term rental units and limitations, definition needs and how it would be enforced. Ms. Larson noted that this District does already allow for hotels, so we could strike it. Ms. Larson is inclined to have them delete it.

Guy Quattrucci was presented and noted that the Board touched upon some of his comments. He appreciates the comments regarding culture and characters while considering something more contemporary. It sounds like they are trying to create sustainable and successful development and getting what it wants in a market driven development. He hopes they have a deliberative process that invites the public in to participate. He's interested in the expedited process as opposed to the standard process and any unintended consequences there may be. He thinks maybe the expedited process could

be in a second phase as this is a newer concept for Freeport. He wonders if what this is, will result in what this part of Freeport will want to look like moving forward as it may be more modern and contemporary. One of the confusing things about the language was about the design character and the diversity of housing types as the two standards may fight with each other.

Mr. Collins will work on the outline and it will be given to the Board to review. Ms. Larson will make some changes to the language and the Board will get everything back for the June meeting. She may or may not be here to guide the Board through this. She thinks the next meeting on this should be a public hearing. She thinks they are close enough to maybe take action on the language. If they need to make changes that are substantial, they may need to have another public hearing. The Planner will help them make the decision on public hearings. It was noted that everyone in the district was notified.

4. Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 8:39 p.m.

Recorded by Caroline Crean Pelletier