

Town of Franklin

355 East Central Street
Franklin, Massachusetts 02038-1352



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

PLANNING BOARD

January 22, 2024 Meeting Minutes

Chair Gregory Rondeau called the above-captioned meeting held in the Town Council Chambers at 355 East Central Street, Franklin, MA, to order this date at 7:00 PM. The public had the option of dialing into the meeting using the provided phone number or participating by copying the provided link. Members in attendance: Gregory Rondeau, Chair; Beth Wierling, Vice Chair; Jay Mello; Christopher Stickney (via Zoom). Members absent: Jennifer Williams, Clerk. Also present: Michael Maglio, Town Engineer; Amy Love, Planner; Gary James, BETA Group (via Zoom).

7:00 PM Commencement/General Business

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

A. 81-P ANR: Oxford Road

Ms. Love reviewed that the applicant submitted a Form A application for an 81-P Plan review to accompany the plan of land for Prospect Street dated November 6, 2023, and submitted to DPCD on January 10, 2024. The site is located in the Rural Residential I zoning district requiring 40,000 sq. ft. lot size and 175 ft. frontage. The applicant is proposing to create three buildable lots as shown on the plan of land that are Lots 187, 188, and 189. The applicants meet all requirements for an 81-P Approval Not Required.

Chair Rondeau asked about the curb cut on Lot 189. Ms. Love said that per the requirements, they do not need to show that at this time; they just need to meet the requirements of the lot size. Mr. Maglio reviewed that a permit through DPW would be required for that.

Motion to Endorse the 81-P ANR for Oxford Road. Wierling. Second: Mello. Vote: 3-0 (3-Yes; 0-No). (Mr. Stickney did not vote).

B. Lot Release: 36 Greystone

Ms. Love said that the Planning Board released Lot 8 on June 29, 2015; however, the decision was never recorded with the Registry of Deeds which is required. She stated that before the Planning Board is the Form G which is a certificate of release.

Motion to Release 36 Greystone. Wierling. Second: Rondeau. Vote: 3-0 (3-Yes; 0-No). (Mr. Stickney did not vote).

7:00 PM PUBLIC HEARING – Continued

15 Liberty Way

Site Plan Application

Documents presented to the Planning Board are on file.

TO BE CONTINUED

Chair Rondeau stated that the applicant requested a continuance. Ms. Love suggested February 5, 2024.

Motion to Continue 15 Liberty Way, Site Plan Application, to February 5, 2024. Wierling. Second: Mello. Vote: 3-0 (3-Yes; 0-No). (Mr. Stickney did not vote).

7:00 PM **PUBLIC HEARING** – *Initial*
 25 Forge Parkway
 Site Plan Application
 Documents presented to the Planning Board are on file.

Motion to Waive the reading. Wierling. Second: Rondeau. Vote: 3-0 (3-Yes; 0-No). (Mr. Stickney did not vote).

Ms. Love reviewed that the applicant provided a revised Site Plan. She said they were already in front of the Planning Board in the fall with an addition with additional drainage and parking in the rear of the site. She said the proposed project includes the construction of 25 parking spaces along the southern area of the site. The applicant received approval from the Conservation Commission. Review letters have been received from BETA, DPW, and Fire. She noted that the applicant is providing cape cod berm and submitted a landscaping plan. She said that DPCD defers to BETA and the Town Engineer for stormwater management.

Mr. Maglio stated that he reviewed the plan. He explained that there appears to be a discrepancy on the detail for OCS-2 with two different elevations provided for the top of weir. The plans call out for HDPE drainage pipe; however, the Planning Board typically requires reinforced concrete pipe for on-site drainage systems. He said that the previously approved proposed parking expansion at the rear of the site calls for asphalt berm around the perimeter which matches the remainder of the existing site with the exception of the main driveway entrance and along the front entrance to the existing building. The newly proposed parking area at the front of the site and the reconstructed curb along the front of the building entrance also proposes asphalt berm; however, as noted above, these areas currently have granite curbing.

Mr. James said that he had about the same comments as Mr. Maglio. He said that regarding the proposed evergreens on the landscape plan, he requested they move them out to maintain the site distance looking to the east. He said the biggest issue he sees is that the building is going to become more visible from the street.

Mr. Brian Jones of Allen & Major Associates, representing the applicant, said they provide the civil engineering, land surveying, and landscape architecture for the project. He stated that Mr. Tom Clark, one of the owners, was present tonight. He said they went through all the comments from the town engineer and BETA. He said that he agrees with all the comments and has made the changes already. He discussed that regarding the HDPE pipe versus RCP, they had been granted a waiver for the previous site plan approval, and they ask for that again. He discussed the location of the requested use of HDPE. He stated that the building is very attractive, so making the building more visible is a benefit.

Mr. James stated that he had no issues with the Cultec system.

Mr. Jones stated that they met with the Conservation Commission and their Order of Conditions was amended to reflect these drawings.

Mr. Mello clarified that Chair Rondeau was comfortable with the HDPE drainage across the entirety of the site. Chair Rondeau said providing they had enough cover because typically we do not, but with the connections it is tough with RCP.

Ms. Wierling noted the fire department's comment regarding turning movements. Mr. Jones said they prepared a turning movement document which he provided to the Planning Board members.

Chair Rondeau said that for trees they are all set for sight distances, they will do granite curbing in the front to match the rest, the HDPE pipe has been resolved, and then this paperwork. He said he would make a motion to close the hearing with those amendments, and then they will vote on it at the next meeting.

Ms. Wierling said that if the hearing is closed, the applicant will not be able to submit the updated plans. Chair Rondeau said that they will keep the hearing open, get all the information, and close it and vote it on the same night.

Mr. Stickney noted that they are adding the warehouse to the back, and it will have eight storage doors, but the plan does not call out trailer parking. He asked if there was going to be trailers on site and will it not be in the way of snow removal traffic. Chair Rondeau said that was on the previous renderings where the storage of the trailers would be. He asked the applicant to make sure that is on the drawings.

Motion to Continue 25 Forge Parkway, Site Plan Application, to February 5, 2024. Rondeau. Second: Mello. Vote: 3-0 (3-Yes; 0-No). (Mr. Stickney did not vote).

7:00 PM **PUBLIC HEARING** – *Continued*
Uncas Avenue
Special Permit & Site Plan Application
Documents presented to the Planning Board are on file.

Ms. Love stated that the last time the applicant was before the Planning Board was November 20, 2023. She reviewed that the Planning Board expressed concerns about the common driveways. She said the applicant has since changed the plans for individual driveways for each lot. She said the Planning Board expressed concerns that there is no turn around at the end of the street for trash trucks and delivery trucks. She said the Planning Board requested a full traffic study to include recent developments in the area. She said the applicant submitted a traffic study and BETA reviewed it. She noted that this is only for two lots, so every lot would have to come back for a special permit in the future.

Mr. Maglio said they had a conversation with the applicant's engineer about the drainage design. He reviewed that based on how it is designed, there are no impacts to the drainage system. He said that he defers to BETA on the traffic review.

Mr. James said another person from BETA will be reviewing the traffic.

Chair Rondeau stated that they cannot vote tonight as they only have two members present tonight that can vote on this that were here from the previous meeting. He requested a brief update tonight and a full report at the next meeting.

Mr. Rob Truax of GLM Engineering stated that Mr. Bill Scully (via Zoom) from the traffic consultant can answer questions on the report. He stated that at the last meeting the traffic study was the last item.

Mr. Scully stated that they were paid by the applicant initially to get a handle on the difference in traffic generation from the duplex-type project to the triplex-type project. He stated that was documented to the Planning Board back in December; then, they were asked to do a traffic study with a better handle on going from 18 units to 27 units. He said they met with Ms. Love and BETA and conducted some traffic

counts and site reconnaissance in mid-December. They documented all that in a report dated January 2, 2024. He said that they determined the difference between the 18 units and 27 units is fairly small and pretty minimal. He reviewed the routes the traffic would take.

Mr. Jeff Maxtutis of BETA (via Zoom) stated that they reviewed the traffic impact analysis from January 2, 2024. He said they performed the scope of work, and it was done according to standards. He discussed that the trip generation from the project is very low volume. He said the project would not change level service at any of the intersections. He said the trip generation is so low, it would be hard to detect an impact on existing conditions.

Ms. Kathryn Tower, 54 King Street, said she reviewed the reports from online. She said that the project on the agenda for later this evening was not included in the traffic review and that project is 388 parking spaces which will flow through the area and impact the traffic. She asked why it was not included in the most recent study. Ms. Wierling said it is not an approved project yet. Ms. Tower discussed that residents in the area use Lewis Street, and she did not see that addressed for the traffic study. She asked about the drainage system. She said that there is a large pond that is about 17 in. deep behind her house. She said she does not know if the drainage system needs to be reevaluated. Chair Rondeau requested the applicant take a look at the water. Mr. Truax said regarding drainage, they looked at the project as a whole. Ms. Tower asked if they were planning a bus route through the neighborhood now to accommodate any children. She said the fire department was supposed to make a comment, and she did not see anything in the materials; she noted it was about the width of the road. Chair Rondeau said they can have the fire department take a look at it again.

Mr. Truax said the subdivision was already approved, and that is not what we are here for tonight. He said we are here for the individual lots, not the roadway. Ms. Tower said that on the site plans all the ledge is marked out and some is behind her house. She asked about blasting and drilling. Chair Rondeau said blasting goes through the fire department. Mr. Truax said that if they run into ledge doing the foundations, they will probably have to do some blasting. Chair Rondeau said if they do, it will be done through the fire department as the applicant will have to pull permits. Ms. Tower asked if the Planning Board would like to see the pictures of the water. Chair Rondeau and Mr. Truax both commented and said that it is a basin and 17 in. of water does not seem excessive. Ms. Tower explained where the water is. Mr. Truax said it seems like a low area. Chair Rondeau explained the required drainage pre- and post-development. Mr. Maglio reviewed the detention basins and said he would check it out.

Ms. Donna Paradis, 9 Cook Street, said this is near the retention pond, and she has water in her basement. She said it is a concern for her and the neighborhood. She discussed the traffic that is going to end up going on Hill Avenue and said it was a concern.

Ms. Wierling said their purpose is to review the two lots, but she is thinking that in the future there could be more lots coming, so how do we just look at the two lots and not the project as a whole. She said she is looking at it from the perspective of traffic. She said she would like explanation regarding the future build conditions. She said it seems as there are only small incrementable traffic increases reported, but she is concerned about future conditions. She read aloud comment #6 capacity analysis results and said they do not seem reasonable to her.

Mr. Maxtutis said the queue lines are long, but that is an existing condition. He said level service E is common for unsignalized intersections to operate like that.

Mr. Scully explained the traffic and said they can certainly make a do not block the box, but that is up to the Town, or no left turn during peak hours. He reviewed that the level of service does not change with the project whether it is the duplexes or the triplexes. He said they would have a sidewalk on their site

which will connect with the sidewalk on Uncas which gets people to Central Street. He said if people walk, they may end up with less traffic than projected.

Audience member asked if there were any traffic studies done regarding the right turn at the end of King Street onto Rt. 140. Mr. Scully discussed that the studies were based on signal timing as it is today.

Mr. Cobi Frongillo, 140 Maple Street, stated that he expressed his support for this project. He said this is the exact type of project that we need of bringing small units. He said when you are living downtown and walking distance from places, that is the biggest reduction on vehicle miles travelled. He said this seems like the type of project that we should be supporting and making work.

Motion to Continue Uncas Avenue, Special Permit & Site Plan Application, to February 5, 2024. Rondeau. Second: Wierling. Vote: 3-0 (3-Yes; 0-No). (Mr. Stickney did not vote.)

Mr. Truax asked which Planning Board members could and could not vote on this item. Chair Rondeau stated that only he, Ms. Wierling, and Ms. Williams could vote on this item; however, Ms. Williams is not in attendance tonight.

7:00 PM **PUBLIC HEARING** – *Continued*
10 Kenwood Circle
Site Plan Modification
Documents presented to the Planning Board are on file.

Ms. Love stated that the last time the applicant was before the Planning Board, they were asked to have an engineer review the circulation, the parking, and the best way to accommodate the cars that are being parked on the site as well as picking up the packages. She said that BETA and the traffic engineer have gone back and forth. She said she thought it was important to give the Planning Board an update.

Mr. Edward Cannon, attorney on behalf of the applicant; Jack Mills of OnTrac (via Zoom); Mr. Ian Kelly of OnTrac (via Zoom); and Mr. Jeffrey Dirk of Vanasse & Associates (VAI) (via Zoom) addressed the Planning Board. Mr. Cannon said that BETA did a very thorough job in December. He said VAI responded to that in January. He said they would like to get the Planning Board's feedback.

Mr. Dennis Flynn of BETA (via Zoom) reviewed a few items that he said were noted and responded to. He said that not all of the items of the revised plan had been implemented and maybe they were waiting for some feedback from the Planning Board. He explained that BETA noticed some of the onsite parking appeared full at 7 AM on December 6 when they were there.

Mr. Dirk said they had made some specific recommendations to the applicant to implement some changes regarding signs and pavement markings. He discussed offsite parking and ways to make sure people are not parking on the street. He said since those improvements needed to take place within the right of way, it is not something they wanted to implement without the Planning Board's approval. He discussed items with respect to the circulation within the project site. He discussed stacking lanes/queuing lanes parallel to Kenwood Circle to be able to stage vehicles before sending them internal to the building to be loaded; that has not been implemented. He discussed some internal changes as to how they manage vehicles. He said he thinks they fully value Mr. Flynn's recommendations that the two traffic engineers go back and work together on this to come up with a plan.

Chair Rondeau said that he wants to see if the area on the right side of the site where there could be additional parking could be pursued. He said he wants to see a drawing with the circulation, stacking,

queuing, and signage. He said this will help everyone make a decision. He said he is not in favor of parking on the street.

Mr. Cannon explained that OnTrac is a tenant, and they do not own the building. He explained that the applicant is happy to put in any signage that the Planning Board recommends. He said he is confident this would be ready for the next meeting.

Motion to Continue 10 Kenwood Circle, Site Plan Modification, to February 26, 2024. Rondeau. Second: Wierling. Vote: 3-0 (3-Yes; 0-No). (Mr. Stickney did not vote.)

Chair Rondeau stated that regarding Uncas Avenue, he wanted to make a note regarding the receipt of a letter from Ms. Muccaroni to put it in the documentation.

7:00 PM **General Business (continued)**

C. Meeting Minutes: December 4 & December 18, 2023

Motion to Approve the Meeting Minutes for December 4, 2023. Rondeau. Second: Wierling. Vote: 3-0 (3-Yes; 0-No). (Mr. Stickney did not vote.)

Motion to Approve the Meeting Minutes for December 18, 2023. Rondeau. Second: Wierling. Vote: 3-0 (3-Yes; 0-No). (Mr. Stickney did not vote.)

Chair Rondeau called for a five-minute recess.

D. Friendly 40B: 444 East Central Street

Mr. Edward Cannon, attorney on behalf of the applicant Tag Central, LLC; Mr. A. J. Alevizos of TAG Central, LLC; Mr. Carlton Quinn of Allen & Major Associates; Mr. Brian O'Connor of Cube 3; and Mr. Mr. Jeffrey Dirk of Vanasse & Associates (VAI) (via Zoom) addressed the Planning Board.

Mr. Cannon reviewed that the site is the Stobbart's Nurseries site. He said the applicant has been through Tech Review. He said it is a 15-acre site. He said the proposed is for 265 units in five buildings that will be three or four stories (40 ft. to 50 ft.) in height with 25 percent affordable units. He said they would have 1.35 parking per unit. He said there is a great need for this type of housing in town. He said there are water resources that are part of the site. He said a key component of the project is to clean up this area.

Mr. O'Connor showed the plans and explained the layout of the site. He pointed out and reviewed that the stream is a defining element in the plan. He said the clubhouse is the social center of the community. He noted the proposed parking space areas. He said they wanted to make sure they were taking advantage of the water views. He discussed the location of the buildings and said it reduces the visual impact. He said there was a deliberate attempt to create two communities and a sense of relationship between the buildings. He said they tried to create a New England style in the architecture of the building. He showed and reviewed pictures of sample projects.

Mr. Quinn reviewed five pages of requested waivers which were provided in the meeting packet documentation titled *Waiver Requests as of December 21, 2023*. He noted the list will most likely change as they go through the process.

Mr. Dirk reviewed his Preliminary Transportation Impact Assessment Summary regarding traffic impacts as detailed in his letter dated December 21, 2024, which was provided in the meeting packet. He

discussed site location map, trip generation, peak times, recommendations for site access and circulation, recommendations for offsite, and a transportation demand management program.

Ms. Love said this is the second application received for a Friendly 40B process that the Town established. She stated the process was developed to gather feedback on a concept plan from the Planning Board. She said the applicant has been to Tech Review. She discussed that the applicant has been asked to move their main drive away from the veterinarian/medical building driveway which they have done. She suggested the clubhouse be closer to the street and parking behind it. She noted that the Planning Board may want to consider the 56-unit building located on the east side and closet to an abutter be three-stories. She suggested the applicant go to Design Review.

Mr. Maglio said that as this is conceptual, he has only a few comments. He said that regarding the municipal sewer system in the area, with a project this big, they will need to work with the Water & Sewer Department and the consultants to make sure that the downstream sewer pump station has the capacity as opposed to maintaining a temporary holding tank on site that they could pump off hours. He pointed out that this section of East Central Street is under MassDOT jurisdiction. He noted concern about the intersection of King Street and Chestnut Street.

Planning Board members asked questions and made comments. Mr. Mello said he is generally supportive of housing projects. He said this provides a fair amount of accessibility. He said his concern is for the homes already there. He suggested using elevation on the site to hide the buildings or ways to make the buildings look smaller. He said the parking requirement of 1.35 seems low, and 1.5 would seem a little better.

Ms. Wierling said she is generally supportive of housing projects. She said what she does not like for housing projects is when someone takes a site and maximizes it for profit. She asked what is the reasoning for having four floors and asked if they can do the project with three. Mr. Alevizos said it was to get enough units on the site to make the project work from an economic standpoint. He noted interest rates and construction costs. Ms. Wierling said she looks at projects as to how is this going to fit into our community long term. She said she hopes people want to take the train and walk to get to services and downtown, but she is skeptical. She discussed how she drives on that section of street and there is a lot of traffic. She said we need housing, but what kind of creative way can they find to make it financially work for a developer and work for the community. She said regarding the four-floors, why cannot it be three. She said it looks like it will be close to abutters. She said she would like it decreased a little bit.

Mr. Mello said some elevations would go along way to see the abutting properties and the street. Ms. Wierling requested a shadow study for the four-story building to see the shadow cast onto the abutters. Mr. Mello asked about the tree line and where it could be kept near the abutters.

Mr. Stickney said he thinks the parking ratio is too low. He noted that Station 117 has a greater parking ratio. He said he has concerns over the heights of the buildings and shadows to the homes that are already there.

Chair Rondeau said his comments included the heights of the buildings, buildings proximity to tree lines, parking, sewer capacity of the pump station, sufficient water to feed this place, and as there will be 50 kids he would like to see a drop off area as the entrance does not accommodate that. He noted 30 free standing garages should be on the drawings. Mr. Alevizos said they intend to put in free standing garages similar to Station 117. Chair Rondeau discussed the traffic and the 1,500 vehicles which do not include all the delivery trucks all day long. He said that Ms. Williams submitted a letter with her comments, and he wanted that submitted into the documentation. Ms. Wierling summarized aloud some of the comments from Ms. Williams's letter which she said were similar to what other Planning Board members discussed.

Mr. Alevizos stated they meet with the Conservation Commission on Thursday. Ms. Wierling asked for the impervious coverage amount. Mr. Stickney stated that the color choices/color scheme for the exterior design should be reviewed. He noted there should be sufficient area for a bus to turn around.

Mr. Mark Minnichelli, 31 Longfellow Drive, said he supports this type of project. He said the 67 affordable housing units will make a difference and make Franklin more affordable. He noted the wetlands on the site. He said he has concerns about the closeness of the structures to the existing wetlands. He discussed bicycling in the area is difficult. He discussed a cycling-friendly project.

Chair Rondeau said that 40Bs go through the Zoning Board of Appeals, and the ZBA is the ultimate vote; the Planning Board does not have much say.

Ms. Love said the town is at 10.9 percent of affordable housing. Ms. Wierling said this is technically a friendly 40B. She said she would like to work with everyone to make it a great project.

Mr. Alevizos said he looks forward to coordination with all the boards and committees for this project.

Chair Rondeau asked if they keep their projects or sell them. He said the Town would not like to see this come through and a year later be sold. Mr. Alevizos said it depends on the project; typically, we are long-term holders.

Mr. Alevizos said he was not aware of the Design Review process. Ms. Love said that it is not part of the Friendly 40B process; she said she just recommends that they go through a design review, and there is no fee to file with them. Mr. Alevizos asked if a comment letter from this meeting would be provided to them. Ms. Love reviewed the process. Mr. Alevizos proposed the Planning Board issue a comment letter with their feedback, and they can use that to prepare revised plans. Chair Rondeau said he thinks that would work and then the applicant can address the Planning Board's comments.

Mr. Cannon confirmed they would return again under General Business.

Motion to Adjourn the Planning Board Meeting. Rondeau. Second: Mello. Vote: 3-0 (3-Yes; 0-No).
(Mr. Stickney did not vote.)

Meeting adjourned at 9:04 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Judith Lizardi,
Recording Secretary

--Planning Board approved Minutes at March 11, 2024 meeting

Town of Franklin

355 East Central Street
Franklin, Massachusetts 02038-1352



Phone: (508) 520-4907
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PLANNING BOARD

Missed Meeting Certification

I, Jennifer Williams, member of the Franklin Planning Board, do hereby certify that I have examined all evidence, including a video recording thereto, of the Planning Board meeting held on (date) 1/22/24 for the following project:

Project name: 25 Forge Pkwy

Applicant: _____

Application type: Site Plan

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

Signature: _____

Town of Franklin

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PLANNING BOARD

Missed Meeting Certification

I, Jennifer Williams, member of the Franklin Planning Board, do hereby certify that I have examined all evidence, including a video recording thereto, of the Planning Board meeting held on (date) 1/22/24 for the following project:

Project name: Uncas Ave

Applicant: _____

Application type: Special Permit

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

Signature: 