

Town of Franklin

355 East Central Street
Franklin, Massachusetts 02038-1352



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

PLANNING BOARD

March 11, 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; Jennifer Williams, Clerk; Jay Mello (via Zoom); Christopher Stickney; Mark Mucciarone, associate member (via Zoom). Members absent: None. Also present: Michael Maglio, Town Engineer; Amy Love, Planner.

7:00 PM Commencement/General Business

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

A. Decision: 10 Kenwood Circle

Ms. Love reviewed that the Planning Board closed the public hearing at the February 26, 2024, meeting. She reviewed the proposed Special Conditions: 1. There will be no parking on Kenwood Circle. The applicant will work with DPW to install signs 2. All complaints and calls will be monitored. If there are several complaints, the applicant agrees to provide a traffic study for the Town's consultant to review within 12 months of approval. 3. Applicant will comply with the traffic management plan (Site Plan) dated August 31, 2023.

Motion to Approve 10 Kenwood Circle with the following special conditions as noted: 1. There will be no parking on Kenwood Circle. The applicant will work with DPW to install signs 2. All complaints and calls will be monitored. If there are several complaints, the applicant agrees to provide a traffic study for the Town's consultant to review within 12 months of approval. 3. Applicant will comply with the traffic management plan (Site Plan) dated August 31, 2023. Wierling. Second: Williams.

Discussion: Mr. Edward Cannon, attorney on behalf of the applicant, commented on Special Condition #1. He said if it is possible to limit that to be no parking for OnTrac vehicles or any vehicles doing business with OnTrac. He said OnTrac does not want to be responsible for other businesses or the general public; otherwise, everything looks great. Ms. Wierling motioned to make a modification to Special Condition #1 that there will be no parking for OnTrac or OnTrac related vehicles on Kenwood Circle and the applicant will work with DPW to install the signs. No Second Made to the Amended Motion. Roll Call Vote: Rondeau-YES; Wierling-YES; Mello-YES; Stickney-YES; Williams-YES. Vote: 5-0 (5-Yes; 0-No).

B. Discussion: 40 Alpine Row

Ms. Love reviewed that the applicant is proposing a change in the façade at 40 Alpine Row. The changes are shown on the plan with the white facade. She included the previously approved façade along with the new proposed façade, which is in back of the plan and contains darker colors. She said the applicant has been in front of Design Review which has recommended to accept the proposed changes.

Ms. Williams said the height seems to have changed significantly. She noted changes regarding the elevations. She said that the old building, from what she can see, the roof went to 30 ft. above what they are calling 00 which she believes is street level; the new building proposed is much taller than that.

Mr. Marcel Alves, 8 Puffer Drive, Mendon, MA, applicant, addressed the Planning Board. He said he would defer the question to Robert Boynton who is the architect on the project.

Mr. Robert Boynton, 60 Phillips Street, Attleboro, MA, (via Zoom) said the proposed building is going to meet the zoning bylaw. He said it goes from the mean grade elevation to the mean roof elevation, so they will be within the zoning bylaw for that district.

Ms. Williams said this is different from what was approved in terms of height which is significantly higher than the residences across the street. She said she would have to look back at the bylaws that the mean roof height was supposed to be taken from street level or main entry level, not necessarily from the back of the building which looks like where it was taken from. She reviewed the height and said this is a taller building.

Ms. Wierling said she was not part of the Planning Board when this project was approved. She asked if it was by right or special permit. Ms. Love said it was just a site plan. Discussion commenced on the height when it was approved.

Mr. Boynton said he believes the previous building was a flat roof, and they have a mansard roof. Ms. Wierling reviewed the façade colors and asked what is the reasoning for the change in the roof line. Mr. Alves said they decided to change the roof lines because they felt that the previously approved plans were more like a downtown Boston building or seaport, and we are trying to accommodate within the architecture of the town which is why they changed the whole look of the building. Ms. Wierling asked how does that fit in with the rest of the area and how does it impact the residents. Mr. Alves said he would get back on that.

Ms. Williams discussed the measurement of the height. She said she wants to understand how this is being perceived from the neighborhood. She said she wants to make sure it is not overwhelming in the feel of the neighborhood such as shadows being cast for an increase in height. She said she would like to see a comparison. She confirmed she would like to see an overlay of the street elevation.

Mr. Mello said he appreciates the effort; it did look a little out of place for the neighborhood, so he appreciates the white over the darker color. He said he would like to see the elevations. Mr. Mucciarone said he concurs with both Ms. Williams and Mr. Mello. Chair Rondeau said he appreciates the change, and it looks a lot cleaner to the downtown. He said he would like the documentation for the elevations.

Ms. Williams said in the previous submission it came up for the concern for balconies looking across the street and looking into neighbors' houses. She would also like to see a comparison of the balconies. Chair Rondeau said the backside does not matter; it should be initiated from the Alpine Road side to show the proportion to the neighbors across the street.

Mr. Boynton confirmed there is only landscaping and no sidewalk there along the front of the building. Mr. Mello said that is correct. Ms. Williams asked if the site plan itself was the same as it looks like the sidewalk may have been cut back. Mr. Boynton said they did not change the footprint from the previous design.

Discussion commenced on when to continue the meeting. It was confirmed that as this is General Business, no motion is needed. It was agreed to plan to continue on March 25, 2024.

Meeting Minutes: January 8, 22, & 31, 2024

Motion to Approve the Meeting Minutes for January 8, 22, & 31, 2024. Rondeau. Second: Williams. Roll Call Vote: Rondeau-YES; Wierling-YES; Mello-YES; Stickney-YES; Williams-YES. Vote: 5-0 (5-Yes; 0-No).

7:00 PM **PUBLIC HEARING** – *Continued*
100-110 East Central Street
Site Plan Application & Special Permit
Documents presented to the Planning Board are on file.

Ms. Love said the last time the applicant was before the Planning Board was February 5, 2024. She reviewed comments from that meeting which included the following: 1. Show on the plans compared height of new building to the existing buildings west of the site. Information was provided 2. Provide current house peak to new house peak. Information was provided 3. Provide latitude and longitude site views. She said she is not sure if that was included in the plans that were submitted. 4. Increase the size of the commercial unit. The size has been increased. 5. Provide height of retaining walls. Information was provided on sheet 10. Ms. Love noted the requested waivers: to allow the use of PVC and HPDE pipe for the roof drains and underground stormwater storage area; and to allow site lighting to extend past the property line. She said a letter has been received from the fire department that all the fire requirements have been met.

Mr. Brad Chaffee, owner/applicant, and Mr. Rick Goodreau of United Consultants (via Zoom) addressed the Planning Board. Mr. Chaffee said they received letters from various departments and BETA Group with no further comments. He said they closed with the Conservation Commission the other night. He noted the rendering and said they added a little patio to the front and increased the commercial size. He discussed the elevations of the building. He said they will be under the three-story threshold. He reviewed other requests from the Planning Board. He said he provided a traffic assessment letter. He said he met with a few abutters about drainage and their concerns.

Mr. Maglio said his letter was late, so it may not be in the meeting packet. He said he did not get a chance to look at the initial submission, but the most recent he looked through, and it looks like they addressed any comments he may have had in the initial set. He noted the applicant would need to apply for the typical DPW permits as normally done for work within the right of way through the DPW permits with the sidewalk and driveway entrances. Mr. Maglio said he had a conversation with Mr. Gary James of BETA on Friday about the project, and he thinks Mr. James said there were a couple of outstanding comments about notes that needed to be added to the plans such as clarification on details.

Chair Rondeau said he did not see the traffic report. Mr. Stickney said he appreciates the revisions. Ms. Williams clarified that she was looking for a transverse and longitudinal section which documents were provided. She noted the direction of the cast shadows.

Ms. Wierling asked about the traffic report provided. She requested BETA provide a general summary of what they think. Mr. Chaffee said he can speak about his traffic consultant's conclusion on trips. He said they approximate 92 vehicle trips on a typical weekday, 8 to 10 vehicle trips in the morning at peak hours which are considered 5:30 AM to 6:30 AM. He discussed the locations that were taken into account. He said they consider that minor. Ms. Wierling said for consistency of what they ask for all applicants, a review by BETA for traffic reports, that BETA should take a look at it. She said she appreciates the renderings and adding additional space for the commercial.

Chair Rondeau discussed the location of the patio and asked the applicant to look into having some bollards so vehicles will not drive through. Mr. Mello noted one retaining wall was eliminated. He noted a concern about the rest of the retaining walls. Chair Rondeau said that was on his list. Mr. Mucciarone noted the commercial space was expanded and asked about dedicated parking spaces for that space. Mr. Chaffee said in front of 100 East Central Street was the most logical for that because it is the closest walking distance. He said residents would park in the rear.

Mr. Mucciarone asked about the parking for two spots for those with disabilities. Mr. Chaffee said it would be for both the residents and commercial space. Mr. Mucciarone said that he had a concern with the shared two spaces. He asked about lighting. Mr. Chaffee explained the photometric plan that was done and that it would be enough lighting in the area for the night. Ms. Wierling asked for the photometric plan to be provided in the new plan set.

Ms. Williams discussed the location of the two ADA parking spots. She asked if there could be a spot more visibly obvious for the commercial parking. Mr. Chaffee said he will probably have to dedicate spots. He discussed the challenges of the site due to the slopes. He said to try to put it in the front, he is not sure if he can do it for the grade. Ms. Williams asked about having signage indicating commercial patrons in the back. Mr. Chaffee said he is happy for recommendations. He explained the accessible access to the commercial space. Ms. Wierling asked about an accessible pathway. Chair Rondeau asked if they could look into a second ADA space for the residential space.

Chair Rondeau asked about the retaining walls that were going to be made out of stone and noted they would be 8 ft. to 14 ft. for the walls. He said he would like to see some additional information. He said BETA will want to review the installation with a structural engineer as well. He said he would like to see products up front as part of the drawings and be itemized. He said for the elevation, there is substantial height change from the existing to the proposed. He noted the neighbors and the height difference; he does not want to dwarf them. He asked for snow storage on the drawing. Mr. Goodreau said it was on page 5. Chair Rondeau said this is looking for 20 units, but it is only allowed for 10 units. He said he wanted everyone to think about that for the next meeting.

Ms. Wierling said she thinks there have been many housing approvals in town in locations that maybe are not the greatest locations for it, and she does not think this one is out of character, and she appreciates how this one has a design element that is mimicking surrounding buildings. She said the design elements on this project are not lost on her.

Motion to Continue 100-110 East Central Street, Site Plan Application & Special Permit, to April 8, 2024. Rondeau. Second: Wierling. Roll Call Vote: Rondeau-YES; Wierling-YES; Mello-YES; Stickney-YES; Williams-YES. Vote: 5-0-0 (5-Yes; 0-No).

7:00 PM **PUBLIC HEARING** – *Continued*
Maplegate Solar South
Site Plan Application
Documents presented to the Planning Board are on file.

Ms. Love said the applicant requested a continuance to March 25, 2024.

Motion to Continue Maplegate Solar South, Site Plan Application, to March 25, 2024. Wierling. Second: Rondeau. Roll Call Vote: Rondeau-YES; Wierling-YES; Mello-YES; Stickney-YES; Williams-YES. Vote: 5-0-0 (5-Yes; 0-No).

Chair and Member Comments

Ms. Williams said there is a Master Plan open house for everyone in the community at Dean College, 60 School Street, on Saturday, March 23, from 11 AM to 3 PM to give input on the Town's Master Plan. She said that all subcommittees will be there for an engagement session. There will be activities and refreshments. Ms. Love said more information is available on social media.

Motion to Adjourn the Planning Board Meeting. Wierling. Second: Williams. Roll Call Vote: Rondeau-YES; Wierling-YES; Mello-YES; Stickney-YES; Williams-YES. Vote: 5-0-0 (5-Yes; 0-No).

Meeting adjourned at 7:49 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Judith Lizardi,
Recording Secretary

--Planning Board approved minutes at May 6, 2024 meeting