

**FRANKLIN PLANNING BOARD
PUBLIC MEETING
June 23, 2021 6:00 p.m.
City Hall, Council chambers**

Minutes

Call to Order: Chairman Libertore called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m. EDT

Attendance - Present: Councilor Jo Brown; Chairman David Libertore; Tim Flaherty; Kathy Lauer-Rago; Ted Starkweather; James DeBernardo, seated for voting purposes; Planning Director Richard Lewis. **Absent:** Mayor Olivia Zink; Christine Sheedy; Christine Dzujna; David Testerman; Donna Tully; Rob Sargent

Pledge of Allegiance

Approval of Minutes from 5/12/2021 and 5/26/2021. Councilor Brown made a motion to accept the minutes from 5/12/2021, seconded by Member Flaherty. **Motion passed 5-0-0.** Member Lauer-Rago made a motion to accept the minutes from 5/26/2021, seconded by Councilor Brown. **Motion passed 5-0-0.**

New Business:

- ☐ **P 21-06:** Francis LeBlanc, Jr. and Chantel Miller, owners, are seeking approval to open a licensed daycare. The property is located at 4 Freedom Drive, Map/Lot 116-101-00, in the RS zoning district. A variance has already been granted from the Zoning Board of Adjustment.

Ms. Miller introduced herself and gave a brief overview of the difference between licensed and non-licensed daycare and how it will allow her to have up to six children, or up to ten children if she hires help. Director Lewis addressed that his memo to the Board outlines that this is the only residential district in the City that does not currently allow daycares, and that the Zoning Board of Adjustment has already approved the variance.

Chairman Libertore opened the application to public comment; there was none. Public comment was closed and brought back to the Board for comment; there was none. Member Flaherty made a motion to approve the application, seconded by Councilor Brown. **Motion passed 5-0-0.**

- ☐ **P21-07:** Sean Foden, owner of Foden Floors, LLC, is seeking a site-plan approval and Special Use Permit to convert a single-family house into a 4-unit house. The property is located at 71 View Street, Map/Lot 118-095-00, in the R3 zoning district.

Ben Osgood from Ranger Engineering gave a presentation/overview of the plan to convert a single-family house into a 4-unit rental property. He discussed the parking, drainage, lot description, municipal water/sewer services.

Director Lewis explained the lot shortage for a 4-unit property and his concerns about the amount of development on a small lot. Member Flaherty brought up the possibility of a 3-unit property that would not require a variance and asked if that had been considered. Mr. Osgood explained that they felt it was not economical to renovate the property for only three units.

Member Lauer-Rago confirmed which house was involved and questioned that there is currently no driveway and where will the parking be for eight cars. Mr. Osgood explained they will add two driveways with room for six cars on one side and two cars on the other. Member Lauer-Rago addressed the narrow road and questioned if there would be room for cars to turn around in the driveway. Mr. Osgood confirmed that there would not be room to turn around and cars would need to back into the road.

Chairman Libertore asked how many bedrooms these units would have. Mr. Osgood confirmed that they are two-bedroom units, one unit has potential for a third bedroom.

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Member Flaherty asked several questions about the plans for a dumpster/trash removal, are the utilities individual or shared and curb cuts for the two driveways. Mr. Osgood responded that there will be trash receptacles behind each unit, they will have shared water/sewer but individual electricity, and they have not yet applied for the permit for curb cuts with Municipal Services.

Chairman Libertore opened the hearing to public comment. Three abutters spoke against the application.

Wanda Redfield expressed concerns about the narrowness of the road and the additional traffic that four units would bring, the equipment on the road during construction and the potential for more children on the road.

Ryan Wattendorf echoed the concerns about the width of the road and the extra traffic and added that he bought his house because it was all single-family homes and he objects to having an apartment building on the street.

Michael Garnett shared the concerns about the narrow road, added traffic and feels the house is not large enough to accommodate four units.

Kaitlyn Nash (daughter of applicant) responded to the concerns that the units are each 850+ square feet, they feel it is an opportunity to address the housing shortage and made assurances that all tenants are thoroughly screened to ensure they are decent people.

Member Flaherty asked if the construction of the units included the barn on the property and Chairman Libertore asked about the total square footage involved. Ms. Nash confirmed that the barn is one of the planned units and it is a total of 2700 square feet. She walked through the entire design plan.

Councilor Brown expressed concerns about the many undesirable tenants and absentee landlords throughout the city. Ms. Nash responded that they live and work in the City and take pride in the properties they own and in the community.

Chairman Libertore confirmed they own the Hill Village Country Store and are Franklin residents. With no further public comments, he closed the public hearing and brought it back to the Board. He asked Director Lewis for an overview of the street. Director Lewis explained that the street is indeed narrow but, in his opinion, not exceedingly so. He also said the street does not tend to be a thru-street for traffic. Mr. Osgood pointed out that one advantage to a narrower street is that it tends to slow down the traffic. He also gave some statistics about traffic and the impact on the road.

Member Flaherty asked about the location of equipment/staging area during the construction. Mr. Osgood believed it would be minimal and will be on the property itself, not in the road. Since there is no excavation work to be done, it will only be smaller equipment and they will park on the grass.

Member Lauer-Rago expressed that in her opinion a 4-unit structure is too much for the property. She asked Director Lewis if a 3-unit building would require the variance. Lewis responded that no, it would not, but it would still require the Special Use Permit. Chairman Libertore asked what the next steps would be if approved. Lewis responded that they would need Zoning Board of Adjustment variance approval for the lot size shortage and secure a building permit.

Councilor Brown offered comments on the housing shortage, understood the concerns about undesirable tenants, and pointed out that the parking is off-street so as to not interfere with traffic flow. She asked that both sides be considered.

Member DeBernardo offered that, as he is in the construction field, there is always equipment involved in a project like this, no matter how small they feel the equipment is. Mr. Osgood responded that a condition of approval could be that the driveways are done first to be able to park the equipment there.

Director Lewis asked about the foundation of the barn. Mr. Osgood responded that it is the same as the house as they are attached.

Councilor Brown made a motion to approve the application. Motioned died for lack of a second.

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Member Lauer-Rago made a motion to deny the application; motion seconded by Member Flaherty. **Motion passed 3-2-0**

- ☐ **P21-08 – P21-12:** SQF, LLC and U.S. Cellular are seeking a site-plan approval to erect five (5) telecommunications poles housing antennae, radios, disconnects, and power meters in the public Right-of-Ways in the vicinity of the following properties: 59 West Bow Street, Map/Lot 117-296-00; 185 Sanborn Street, Map/Lot 133-119-00; 220 South Main Street, Map/Lot 099-058-00; 119 Central Street, Map/Lot 117-406-00; and 21 Edwards Street, Map/Lot 116-126-00.

Hannah Carlisle from Tilson Technologies gave a presentation on the areas of cell coverage issues and why the particular areas were chosen for the poles.

Member Flaherty asked if there would be any equipment mounted on the poles or is the equipment encased within. Ms. Carlisle confirmed that all equipment is encased and the wiring would be underground.

Chairman Libertore asked if any other carrier would be utilizing these poles. Ms. Carlisle responded that it is only U.S. Cellular at this time. Director Lewis asked what would happen if another carrier wanted to piggy-back on them. The response was that these are 4G poles, if another carrier wanted to utilize them it would mean increasing the height and adding equipment to them.

Member Starkweather expressed concerns that the installation not interfere with the sidewalks for snow removal. Chairman Libertore opened it up to public comment.

Dean Laughy expressed concerns about poles in general and any equipment that would be housed on them. He expressed concerns about the way the Eversource poles look around the City and questioned if abutters had been notified. Director Lewis confirmed that all of these poles are in the public Right-of-Way and all abutters had been notified. He added that City Council will also be notified if application is approved and will need to approve the installation as well.

Member Flaherty also expressed concerns about the poles ending up with equipment on them. Director Lewis confirmed that the poles will look like the photos given to them.

Public hearing was closed and there was no further discussion from the Board. Member Lauer-Rago made a motion to approve all five applications; motion seconded by Member Flaherty. **Motion passed 5-0-0.**

☐ **Old Business:** None

Public Comment: None

Other Business: None

Planner's Update: Director Lewis shared that he had spent most of the day with Seth Creighton who will be replacing him on July 1, 2021. He has given Seth multiple memos on current projects and updated him on the Cumberland Farms project regarding colors and design issues that came up at the Heritage Commission meeting. He expects Cumberland Farms to come before the Planning Board by August or September.

Member Flaherty thanked Director Lewis for all his years of service and dedication and expressed his wishes for a happy retirement.

Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 7:04 p.m.

- The next Planning Board regular meeting is scheduled for August 25, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. and the application dead line date is August 4, 2021.