

APPROVED 2/22/23

**FRANKLIN PLANNING BOARD
PUBLIC MEETING
December 14, 2022 6:00 p.m.
Franklin City Hall, Council Chambers**

Minutes

Call to Order: 6:00 p.m.

Attendance: Chairman Dave Liberatore, Tim Flaherty, Councilor Valerie Blake, Kathy Lauer-Rago, Christine Sheedy, Rob Sargent, Christine Dzujna, Alternate Councilor Ted Starkweather-not seated, Alternate Donna Tully-not seated. (Absent: Mayor Jo Brown, Alternate James DeBernardo). Staff present: Planning Director Seth Creighton; Planning and Zoning Administrative Assistant Judy Bibbins

Pledge of Allegiance

Approval of Minutes from 11/09/2022.

Member Dzujna made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Member Flaherty. **Motion carried 7-0-0.**

☐ New Business:

P22-13: Dillon's Custom Cabinetry, owner, is seeking site-plan approval for a 19,600 sq ft light manufacturing facility, and associated site improvements. The property is located at Commerce Drive, Map/Lot 102-403-03 in the I1 [Industrial] zoning district.

Member Flaherty made a motion to accept the application as complete, seconded by Councilor Blake. **Motion carried 7-0-0.**

Katherine Weiss from Bedford Design Consultants spoke on behalf of the application. She gave a thorough overview of the project including the survey, topography, driveways, roadways, extra space for the dust collector, layout of the building, sewer, drainage, water treatment, lighting and landscaping. She explained they were applying for a waiver for the 400' site distance of the road when exiting right out of the facility as there is no other direction to turn and oncoming traffic would not be an issue. She also covered the concerns brought up in the staff comments including the request for a turn-around to be built at the end of the road. She explained the applicant is looking for a compromise to that request due to the expense.

Councilor Starkweather asked about the north side of the roof draining into driveway and possible icing along the curbing. Ms. Weiss explained that the length of that curbing is less than the distance between drains in a roadway so they felt the risk was minimal. Director Creighton asked her to explain the pros and cons of the design and Councilor Starkweather's suggestion. Ms. Weiss explained the direction of the drainage.

Member Dzujna asked about signage and the possibility of putting a "Dead End" sign at the last driveway so traffic won't go past the driveway or will know not to turn left out of the driveway. Ms. Weiss said they had not considered it but they could do that or put a "One Way" sign coming out of the driveway. Chairman Liberatore expressed that he didn't think it was a concern as it would be minimal traffic.

Councilor Starkweather asked about the elevation of the man-door on the north side of the building and expressed concerns about icing near that as well. Director Creighton addressed the concerns about icing explaining that that door will be used minimally and he did not believe icing was a concern there. He also spoke to the need for a turn-

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around and the history of the development of Commerce Drive. The turn-around was shown on the original plan as a temporary feature but was never built. Municipal Services Department and Franklin Fire Department will need a turn around at the end of the road for their trucks but since the land was not developed, there has never been a plan or budget for it. He also explained how the road was built and the need for improvements and the estimated traffic. Ms. Weiss explained that the traffic numbers are a guess because there isn't a category for this exact type of use.

Chairman Liberatore stated that with another business there and two more lots, it should not be a burden on the applicant to put in the turn-around. He believed FBIDC (the original developer that created Commerce Drive) should be responsible. Member Flaherty asked for clarification as to why a turn-around was needed if trucks could go around the building. Director Creighton explained that the turn-around is for City trucks, plows, etc. He shared that much of the maintenance has been deferred as there was nothing up there. He could not speak to a compromise as unbudgeted expenditures are under the purview of City Council. Member Rago shared that if the City is encouraging new businesses, they have a responsibility to make sure the road is up to standard. Chairman Liberatore reiterated that he believes if FBIDC is selling the lots, they have a responsibility to make sure they are usable.

Ryan Dillon, applicant, spoke to the idea of putting in the turn-around himself. He expressed concerns about who would maintain it and that he didn't feel it was his responsibility but would contribute financially to it. Several other Board members expressed that the City and FBIDC, as well as the property owners, should work together to find a compromise. It was agreed that Mr. Dillon should not bear the entire cost.

Chairman Liberatore opened the hearing up to the public. City Councilor George Dzujna spoke and expressed that he felt that all three owners and FBIDC should be responsible for improvements to the road including the turn-around. With no further public comment, the hearing was closed and brought back to the Board.

Member Flaherty made a motion to approve the waiver for the road site distance: *"I move to approve the waiver request from Chapter 149-6.B because the design still allows for safe traffic movements."* Motion was seconded by Member Dzujna. **Motion carried 7-0-0.**

Member Flaherty made a motion to approve the site plan application: *"I move to approve the Site Plan application for Dillon Custom Cabinetry at Map-Lot 102-403-3, Commerce Drive. The approval is consistent with the draft decision provided by the Planning Director, with any amendments made by the Board and noted in the minutes/recording."* Motion was seconded by Member Dzujna. **Motion carried 7-0-0.**

Director Creighton said he would work with MSD, FFD, FBIDC, City Council and the applicant to find a solution to the road issues.

Councilor Blake and Member Dzujna excused themselves from the meeting due to a prior engagement. (6:55 p.m.)

Chairman Liberatore voiced concerns again that if we are trying to bring businesses into the City, it won't happen if we make the applicants pay for things the City or FBDC should pay for.

☐ Other Business:

Chairman Liberatore announced that he would not be at the January Meeting and since that is when Board positions are usually voted on, he wanted to take care of it at this meeting. He expressed a desire to remain as Chairman for another year. **A vote of 5-0-0 was taken in favor of it.**

☐ Planner Update:

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Director Creighton gave a quick update that the Board would see a draft of the Water Protection Ordinance in January.

☐ **Adjournment:**

Councilor Starkweather made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Member Flaherty. **Motion carried 7-0-0. Meeting adjourned at 7:02 p.m.**

- The next Planning Board regular meeting is scheduled for January 25, 2023 at 6:00 p.m. and the application deadline date is January 4, 2023.

Respectfully submitted,

Judy Bibbins

Planning & Zoning Administrative Assistant