



**FREEPORT PLANNING &
DEVELOPMENT REVIEW BOARD**

August 2, 2023 Regular Meeting Minutes
6:00 pm , City Council Chambers, Freeport City Hall

I. Meeting Called to Order

Meeting was called to order at 6:02pm by Vice Chairman Thomas.

Board members present were Steve Thomas, Manny Vital, and Lisa Robertson. Other city employees in attendance were City Attorney Clay Adkinson, City Manager Mark Martin, Senior Planner Samantha Graves, and Planning Director Latilda Hughes- Neel.

II. Meeting Minutes to be Approved

a. 07/12/2023 Regular Meeting Minutes

Board Member Lisa Robertson made a motion to accept the minutes as presented, seconded by Member Manny Vital. The minutes were approved by unanimous vote.

III. The Waters at Freeport MU PDP

Senior Planner Samantha Graves addressed the board members. She reviewed the specifics of the project and the variances being requested. She explained that this Mixed -Use project focuses commercial uses along US Hwy 331, transitioning to multi-family in the back which follows basic planning principles. The main entrance of the development will be on US Hwy 331, with 3 additional accesses on Marquis Way West. This development proposes a hotel, shopping center, sit-down standalone restaurant, and drive-through restaurant. The developer intends to bring “Next level” dining and commercial businesses to the City.

Planner Graves introduced David Smith from Innerlight Engineering and Prescott Bailey from the Stoa Group. Engineer Smith reviewed the conceptual plan for the Board members. He told the members that this site consists completely of uplands and contains no wetlands. He explained that the deviation request for a 10% reduction of parking is being requested so that the parking requirement can be based on an actual parking study which the developer will provide at the time of the Development Order application. He added that a traffic analysis had already been submitted. David Smith informed the members that the developer



will also be providing a right-of-way easement to the City in order to facilitate the extension of Marquis Way.

Board Member Manny Vital asked David Smith where the project was in relation to the entrance to Publix; Engineer Smith indicated the location of the entrance on the site plan.

Board Member Thomas asked which road was considered a collector; Marquis Way West is a collector road.

Prescott Bailey then presented the details of the concept. He explained that the developer wants to create a walkable community. The residences in the back will be high-end apartments with many amenities. The commercial in the front will consist of next level businesses and restaurants. He showed examples of the planned outdoor eating area and photos of other apartments that his company has built that are comparable to those planned. He added that they already have a commitment from Starbucks if this project is approved. The hotel planned is an 80 room “boutique” hotel. The developer is still in the process of talks with different hotels including Hilton, so the brand has not yet been determined. Prescott emphasized that the hotel will only be built if they can come to an agreement with the right brand that fits the concept; otherwise, it will be developed as more retail and restaurant space.

Board member Thomas asked if they own the property. Mr. Bailey stated that they have the property under contract, but the current owner also has a backup offer from someone who plans to build a gas station on the corner if this project is not approved.

Board member Vital asked if there was any retail planned; Prescott stated that there is retail planned and indicated on the plan where it would be located.

Vice Chairman Thomas called for Public Comments.

Kristy Bock, a resident who lives on Marquis Way, told the Board that she feels the area has grown too congested and that there is too much traffic. She feels that the proposed plan will not benefit the existing residents.

Bruce Merrill, another resident on Marquis Way, asked for clarification about the easement that the developer would be providing. David Smith clarified that it is a right-of-way easement. Mr. Merrill said he doesn't feel that a 10% reduction in parking is warranted. He added that he is also concerned about traffic.



Glen Wallenta, spouse of Kristy Bock, voiced his concerns about traffic as well.

There being no further public comment, Vice Chair Thomas closed the floor. Board member Lisa Robertson made a motion to recommend the proposal as presented to the City Council for approval; member Vital seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

IV. The Crossings at Freeport PDP

Senior Planner Graves again addressed the Board. The Crossings PDP was previously heard by the Planning Development and Review Board, and the Board voted to require more information from the developer. The first requirement was a detailed archeological assessment; the assessment was performed, and no archeological resources were found on the site. The second requirement was that a public meeting be held; this meeting was held on December 12, 2022. Planner Graves explained that some changes had been made to the plan in response to comments from the public, so the revised plan was being brought to the Board for review. She then introduced the design engineer Scott Jenkins to explain the changes.

Engineer Jenkins reviewed the changes to the plan. Landscape buffers have been increased and a privacy fence has been added along all rear lot lines that abut adjacent property. The easement area has been widened and the setbacks have been increased along Panda Drive.

Board member Manny Vitale asked for the projected timeline of the project; Jenkins replied that if approved, construction would probably start around the beginning of the year.

The board had no further questions and there were no public comments.

Board member Lisa Robertson made a motion to recommend the proposal to the City Council for approval; it was seconded by Member Vital. The motion carried unanimously.

V. Adjournment

There being no further discussion Chairman Louthain adjourned the meeting at 6:43pm.



Minutes prepared by Samantha Graves and adopted by the Freeport Planning & Development Review Board on _____.

Kevin Louthain, Chair

Attest:

Kathie Gatewood, City Clerk