

**FREEMPORT PLANNING &
DEVELOPMENT REVIEW BOARD**
October 22, 2019 Special Meeting Minutes

I. Meeting Called to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm in Council Chambers of Freeport City Hall.

Board members present: John Konopacki (Chair), Steve Thomas (Vice-Chair) and Ricky Fannin.

Staff present: Latilda Neel/Planning Director, Clay Adkinson/City Attorney and Alex Rouchaleau/City Engineer.

II. Invocation / Pledge of Allegiance

The Invocation was given by Neel, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

III. Development Approval – Verandas Phase II

Planning Director Neel introduced the proposed development.

Development Summary:

Parcel Number(s): 10-1S-19-23000-007-0000/000-00A0
Location: west side of 331 Business on Palm Shadow Way
Acreage: 43.76 overall acres in the Verandas development
Development: 4 townhomes, 144 apartment units and 2500sf clubhouse/leasing office.
FLUM designation: UD (Urban Development)
Zoning Designation: R-3 (High Density Residential)
Technical Staff approval: 9/16/19

Project Engineer Curtis Smith addressed the Board. Smith stated that after the Board turned down the project variance request, the number of units were reduced, and the number of parking spaces was increased to meet the requirements of the Land Development Code.

Project Owner/JAB Developer Jody Allen addressed the Board.

- Fencing between townhomes and apartments for privacy
- Separate amenities
- Same metal roofs
- Similar color scheme

Board discussion:

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Board Member Fannin: was the townhome community marketed as potentially having apartments in the same development?

JAB Owner Allen: the apartments have not been marketed at all because they haven't been approved yet. There has never been an official plan for Phase II.

Board Member Thomas: our company looked into developing Phase II; when we did our due diligence, Phase II had no approvals; it was a blank slate.

Public comments on the project:

Bob & Jennifer Mims: against apartments. Do not want apartments next to townhomes; will affect value of townhomes.

Melissa Bergeron-Neeb: opposed to apartments. Concerned with traffic design and safety of existing Phase I of Verandas.

Tiffany Milbry: bought a townhome in Verandas Phase I in 2014. Was not told there would be apartments in Phase II. Was told by realtors and builders that Phase II would be more townhomes. Safety concerns with traffic; effect on neighborhood children.

Michael Barron: new owner in Verandas Phase I. Lack of integrity with new owners of Phase I; issues with townhome; landscaping issues in Phase I; intends to invest in the community.

Jeff & Lori Walz: 2nd residents in Phase I. Was told by realtors/builders that Phase II would be more townhomes. Has issues with Mr. Allen and the HOA CAM Manager; the HOA board has been taken over by JAB.

Rebuttal by Allen: Phase II was a blank slate. He has tried to communicate with Jennifer Mims but has gotten no response. His company has funded the clean-up of the project; the repair and start-up of the community pool, repair of the irrigation system. He is not responsible for whatever assumptions were made and circulated about the development of Phase II prior to his purchase of the project.

Rebuttal by Bob Mims: there are no combination townhome/apartment developments in the tri-county area. The HOA is stacked against the

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townhome owners in Phase I. Townhome rentals are different than apartment rentals.

Rebuttal by Jennifer Mims: was previous president of the HOA. Represents 7 owners in addition to the townhomes she owns herself. The townhomes are long-term leases; minimum of a year.

Rebuttal by Melissa Bergeron-Neeb: wants more curb appeal in Phase I; doesn't like the current landscaping. The HOA does whatever they want; reiterated her traffic concerns.

Robin (?): 2 schools across the street from Verandas. Apartments draw crime and drugs.

Board discussion:

Chair Konopacki: The HOA matters are civil; not under the purview of the Board. The City of Freeport is growing and needs affordable housing. Traffic flow may be a problem.

Board Member Fannin: the project was marketed as if apartments were not a possibility. There is only one entrance due to action by a previous city council.

Planning Director Neel: The original side entrance onto Sunflower Lane was eliminated by the city council that approved the original Phase I.

Board Member Thomas: Phase II had no development approval at all

Curtis Smith: the infrastructure is being improved by JLAB; water lines, sewer lines and lift stations.

Board Action:

Thomas made a motion to approve. Konopacki stepped down as Chair (gavel handed to Fannin) and seconded the motion.

Thomas amended his motion to request for the council to reconsider the 2nd (side) entrance at Sunflower Lane. Konopacki amended his second.

Vote: 2: 1 (Fannin voted nay). Motion carried.

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Konopacki resumed as Chair.

Planning Director Neel announced that this development proposal would be heard by the City Council on Thursday, October 24, 2019; that meeting begins at 6:30 pm in this same location.

IV. Public Comment -none

V. Adjournment

Chair Konopacki called for a motion to adjourn. Thomas motioned to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 6:54 p.m.