MEMORANDUM

To: Kevin Fay
From: Linda Krause, Planner
Date: 4/20/2013
Subject: Proposed Town of Frye Island Parking Facility

Discussion:

The Town of Frye Island has proposed construction of a parking lot on the east side of Cape Road at the intersection with Ferry Landing Road and Quarry Cove Road. The stated use of the lot is to create parking which is intended to alleviate perceived traffic safety issues created by the queuing of cars along Cape Road as they wait for the ferry to Frye Island. It is envisioned that some ferry customers will leave their cars in the Raymond lot and will either walk or ride golf carts across on the ferry, thus reducing the demand on the car ferry service and reducing the ferry queue.

The initial proposed parking lot application has been modified in response to concerns from Raymond residents and property owners that the parking facility is inappropriate for the low-density, heavily wooded, residential area in which it would be located. Reductions have been proposed in the total number of parking spaces and in the security lighting provided. Raymond neighbors of the proposed facility are concerned that the redesigned structure is only an initial step in the construction of a much larger parking facility, with the possibility of other structural development on the site.

I have been requested, in my capacity as a professional land use planner, to determine whether there are additional land use tools which could be offered by neighbors that could be helpful in assuring that future development of the site is not detrimental to the character of the surrounding area. As such, I have examined Raymond's two basic sets of land use regulations that deal with uses and conditions of such activities:

- The first is the Land Use Ordinance of the Town of Raymond, which provides standards for parking areas throughout the town. At some point, Raymond may want to look again at its parking standards, including aisle layout, buffering, lighting and landscaping. However, any modifications to those parking standards could potentially affect development throughout the town, and could have an impact far greater than is necessary to deal with the issue of the facility as proposed by Frye Island.
- The second set of regulations is the Raymond Shoreland Zoning Provisions. Addressing the issue of large parking lots through the Shoreland Zone is consistent with the purpose statement of the Zone. The statement of purposes of the Zone include control of sites, placement of structures and land uses; conservation of the natural beauty and open space of the area; and maintenance of safe and healthful conditions.

Many permitted uses in the Shoreland Zone require parking areas, some of significant size. Commercial and governmental recreational uses provide direct water access for both residents and visitors. By their very nature, commercial or public access to the water for swimming or boating requires orderly parking areas.

However, the proposed Frye Island parking lot differs from other water-dependent uses in that direct water access is not the purpose of the parking. Rather, the parking area is designed to alleviate congestion on the basic means of access to the Town of Frye Island, as well as car traffic on the Island itself. This is a satellite lot for persons seeking another destination. Because the Town of Frye Island infrastructure is inadequate, an effort is being made to siphon off vehicle traffic to mitigate the problem. The proposed lot is a "stand alone" facility, an accessory use without a principal use at hand. The parking lot is no one's ultimate destination.

One approach to lessening the probable impact of what is basically an urban-type parking use in a low-density, rural residential area would be to prohibit stand-alone parking without a principal use on site. This could be accomplished by adding a statement that parking areas are not permitted unless accessory to a permitted principal use located on the same or contiguous property. To prevent abuse of this provision, a statement could be added that parking shall be the minimum amount necessary to service the principal use, to be determined by the Planning Board. This would also have the effect of eliminating unnecessary impervious surface coverage, which would aid in preserving water quality.

Large stand-alone parking lots – without a principal use – should not be allowed in Residential areas in the Shoreland Zoning District. Parking is an accessory use, not a principal use, and the size and scope of a parking area is usually determined by the use to which it is accessory. Recreational facilities of the Town of Raymond should be the only exception. If the Town of Frye Island were to propose a specific principal use for the parking site – such as a town office or other such facility – it should be reviewed within the use category for the principal use. It is not a municipal use of the town of Raymond, and it should be made clear within the ordinances that "municipal" uses are those of the Town of Raymond only. Specifically, Table 1: Land Uses in the Shoreland Zone, Item 15 E., includes "Municipal" uses. This section could be clarified to make it clear that the intended uses are those of the Town of <u>Raymond</u>, not any other municipality.

As Frye Island tries to address the issue of traffic congestion due to inadequate ferry capacity, other problems are likely to be created. The small number of proposed parking spaces compared to the present housing stock on Frye Island (not including the potential build out that could increase that housing stock significantly) will mean that only a small portion of potential ferry users will be able to use the lot. It is likely that cars parked in the lot will remain there for extended periods of time, while Frye Islanders use golf carts for their transportation on the Island. If the lot is full of cars, those spaces will be unavailable to people that arrive at times when queues are most likely to occur. Instead of just cars lining up along Raymond Cape Road, traffic will also consist of pedestrians and golf carts crossing Raymond Cape Road, drop-off of luggage and provisions, and possibly cars circling in search of a parking space. It is sensible to anticipate that a demand for additional spaces will happen sooner rather than later. How

big would the parking lot need to be in order to serve the function for which it is being proposed? This congested situation will only be exacerbated as build-out occurs.

Traffic congestion and traffic safety will be a principal concern with the new lot. Golf carts and pedestrians crossing Cape Road, drop-offs (since golf cart cargo capacity is limited), continuing queuing along Cape Road, poor sight lines, and long term vehicle storage will all be issues. As the demand for additional parking spaces grows, the impact of security lighting, lack of buffering, and increased runoff, possibly contaminated by pollutants from long term vehicle parking, will all have an adverse impact on the character of this part of Raymond. Frye Island will address its infrastructure shortcomings by creating a burden on the neighboring town of Raymond.

Proposed Amendments:

Proposed amendments to Shoreland Zoning Ordinance are as follows:

Add the following text:

1. **Clarify Table 1 (on page 13): Land Uses in the Shoreland Zone, item 15 – Municipal with a footnote (*) to read as follows.** ***"* Municipal uses" mean those of the Town of Raymond only*****.**

2. **Clarify Table 1 (on page 13): Land Uses in the Shoreland Area, Item 27 – Parking Facilities, to add "*Parking facilities are permitted only as accessory to a permitted principal use located on the same property or on a immediately contiguous property.*"**

3. **Add a paragraph to Table 1 (on page 13): Land Uses in the Shoreland Area, Item 27. Parking Facilities, as follows: "*Parking areas are not permitted except as accessory to a permitted principal use. The Planning Board may limit parking areas to the minimum number of spaces necessary to serve the principal use.*"**