PLANNING COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
OF JANUARY 24, 2023

Members: Joshua Goldstein, Etienne Hancock (Chair), John Meyer, and Tom Snipp

Absent:

ADMINISTRATION and STAFF: Planning Director Todd Thomas

PARTICIPANTS/GUESTS: Conservation Commission Co-Chair Ron Stancliff, Tim Magee, Tom Cloutier, Martin Green, Brian Hamor, Damon Lee, Barry Russo, Laura Streets, Bob Bortree, David Ring, Scott Thompson, Seth Costa, and Wally Reeve

---

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Hancock called the meeting to order in the Community Meeting Room of the Old Tegu Theatre at 43 Portland Street at approximately 5:00 P.M.

1. **Prior Council meeting minutes**

   Member Meyer moved to approve the January 10th meeting minutes. A vote of 4-0 affirmed the motion.

DISCUSS

1. **Smaller lot sizes in LDR Zone to incentivize more single-family homes & extension of MW&L services**

   Brian Hamor and Damon Lee joined the Planning Council to discuss their recently approved conservation subdivision on Beacon Hill. Zoning Administrator Thomas, using this Beacon Hill development as an example, spoke about how incentives such as direct infrastructure funding, tax stabilization, allowing townhouse style development, or smaller lot sizes could spur the development of more single-family homes town-wide in the portions of the Low Density Residential (LDR) Zones that can be reached by Village water and sewer services. Mr. Hamor and Mr. Lee said that they will break ground in the spring with smaller missing-middle houses on ¼ acre lots, but employing some of the aforementioned incentives could alter what a second or third phase of their development might look like. Member Goldstein expressed a desire to allow smaller lot sizes in the serviceable areas of the LDR Zone as part of the conservation subdivision bonus language. The Council agreed to discuss this item in more detail at a future meeting. Mr. Thomas was instructed to create a chart for that meeting that listed possible incentives sorted by items that included, and did not include, taxpayer funding.

2. **2023 zoning changes from DRB language issues**

   The Council discussed language interpretation issues from recent Development Review Board (DRB) meetings. From this discussion, it was agreed that the following revisions to §206 Design Criteria of the

Zoning Bylaws would be included as part of the fall 2023 zoning changes: Dwelling Unit Two-Family uses and the Medium Density Residential (MDR) Zone would be newly regulated, a new cladding rule would be created to hide J-channel joints, and the existing front porch and public entrance requirements would be revised to accommodate corner lot scenarios. Furthermore, it was agreed that zoning changes for minimum front setback in the MDR Zone (from 35 to 25 feet), a revision of the ground floor commercial space requirement in the Commercial Zone, guaranteeing access to public trail systems over private roads within conservation subdivisions, and a new definition for Public Entrance would also be proposed for the zoning change update in the fall 2023. Mr. Thomas was also instructed to re-revise proposed §206 Design Criteria rules for setbacks for road facing garage doors, and architectural repetition between dwelling units.

3. **Letter to Selectboard for 2 short-term rentals, or allow new STR construction, & rental registry**
   Mr. Thomas presented a draft response letter to Selectboard regarding their request during the 2022 zoning change approval process to allow a 2nd short-term rental opportunity that was not tied to the owner's primary property. The Council, by consensus, agreed that such a policy change would lead to the conversion of more of the town's existing housing stock into STRs, which would undercut the new STR zoning rules meant to preserve the availability and affordability of the town's housings stock. After a lengthy discussion, Mr. Thomas was directed to revise the draft letter to also emphasize the difficulty regulating the Selectboard proposal that would allow off-site STRs.

4. **Town Plan objective (bury utilities downtown)**
   Mr. Thomas and Member Goldstein spoke about their recent meeting with the Village Trustees where the Town Plan Objective of burying the utilities downtown was discussed. It was reported that the Trustees seemed open to creating such a standing committee and may provide some staff time and resulting expertise towards this effort. Mr. Thomas shared with the Council that they would need to have an initial meeting with Scott Johnstone, the Village Manager, in the coming weeks if the committee's creation was to become a reality.

5. **Candidates for open Planning Council seat**
   Tim Magee and Wally Reeve interviewed before the Planning Council regarding the open seat thereon. Mr. Reeve said that he would wait his turn and look to fill the next open seat after learning that Mr. Magee has attended nearly every Council meeting since May as a prospective board member. Upon a motion made by Member Meyer, the Planning Council unanimously recommended that Tim Magee be appointed to the open Planning Council seat. Mr. Thomas said that he would try to schedule both Legislative Bodies to vote on Mr. Magee's candidacy as soon as possible (hopefully before the next Council meeting on Valentine's Day).

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 7:35 PM, submitted by Todd Thomas, Planning Director

Please note all minutes are in Draft form and are subject to approval at the next Planning Council meeting.