Morristown/Morrisville Planning Commission
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Meeting Minutes of November 5, 2013

Planning Commission Members Present: Andrea Caldwell, Paul Griswold (Chair), Etienne Hancock, Yvette Mason, Max Paine & Mark Struhsacker
Planning Commission Members Absent: Tom Snipp
Staff: Todd Thomas, Zoning Administrator & Planner
Guests: Selectboard Chair Bob Beeman

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at approximately 7:00 P.M.

Discussion: AT&T New Cell Tower Proposals – Zoning Administrator Thomas related his meeting from the prior week with AT&T regarding the installation of new cell towers on the Stowe-Morristown line near Route 100 and off Needle Eye Road. Mr. Thomas said that he stressed the language in the Town Plan about respecting the silhouette of the ridgeline during the meeting. He added that the representative from AT&T seemed amenable to working with the Town on this issue. Mr. Thomas informed that Commission that AT&T would be taking the §248A Public Service Board route to permit these two new cell towers, which meant there would be no local zoning or Act 250 proceeding. He added that the Commission can be a party to the Public Service Board proceedings and that this Board will pay some deference to the language in the Town Plan and project specific comments. Member Hancock asked Mr. Thomas if he could obtain a coverage map from AT&T and find out if we were likely to see requests for more cell towers from competing carriers. Mr. Thomas said that he would work on these requests.

Discussion: Business Enterprise Zone review and changes – The Commission began the Business Enterprise (BE) Zone discussion by debating if outdoor storage should remain prohibited in the revised zoning. The Commission ultimately decided that all outdoor storage and displays in the zone must be on the sides and rear of the building and shall remain behind the front façade thereof. The Commission then reviewed a proposal to split the BE Zone by placing the northern section along Bridge Street in the INN Zone. The Commission agreed with this proposed change and determined that the BE Zone should be limited to the open lands of the Bishop Marshall school and the parcels to the south with Route 100 frontage. The Commission also agreed that the Cadys Falls section of the BE Zone should be placed in the INN Zone, along with the lands off Bridge Street. Mr. Thomas said that he would make this change and bring it before the Commission at its next meeting.

The Commission then began reviewing the proposed uses in the draft zone. The Commission agreed to move some exiting uses from Conditional to Permitted and also eliminated other uses from the proposed zoning, such as the Business Services use. The Commission decided that it would like to split the uses of Wholesale Distribution and Manufacturing between Permitted and Conditional Uses based on the size of the proposed building. The Commission agreed to start to split the uses between Permitted and Conditional at a 20,000sf building footprint threshold. Selectboard Member Beeman said that he thought a 20,000sf footprint was too small a threshold. The Commission agreed to study what this size threshold should be at its next meeting. Mr. Thomas said that he would provide the Commission with the footprint size of some prominent buildings in Town at its next meeting.

The Commission also discussed correcting the Development Class restrictions in the BE Zone so they were in-line with where municipal sewer and water infrastructure could reasonably be extended to. The Commission agreed to require Class 1 Development east of Ryder Brook and north of Morristown Corners Road in the INN and BE Zones, and allow Class 2 and Class 3 development elsewhere. Mr. Thomas said that he would make such changes in both zones and present a revised version of the draft zones that corresponded to the evening's discussion at the next Commission meeting.

Approve prior meeting minutes – Member Caldwell moved to approve the October 22 meeting minutes. A vote of 5-0-1 with Member Paine abstaining affirmed the motion.

Discussion (agenda addendum): Planning Director job classification – Mr. Thomas left the room and the Commission discussed a proposal to create a "Planning Director" under 24 VSA §4321. The Commission discussed the proposal and unanimously agreed to recommend such a change to the Selectboard & Village Trustees.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 8:45 PM – submitted by Todd Thomas, ZA