

**MORRISTOWN/MORRISVILLE
PLANNING COMMISSION
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Minutes of November 4, 2003

Members Present: Bruce Tomlinson, Bill Bourne, Sam Guy, John Meyer, Kelly Rogers

Members Absent: Bill Henchy

Recorder: Mark Leonard, Zoning Administrator (ZA)

Guests: Mike Stafford, Steve Rae (Chair, Morristown Conservation Commission), Heidi Krantz, Julia Compagna

Sam called the meeting to order at 7:07 PM. The minutes of October 7, 2003 were reviewed and approved on a motion by Bruce, seconded by John.

Heidi Krantz (Morristown Community Coordinator) presented the findings of the Morristown/Morrisville Market Analysis that had been conducted under a Community Development Block Grant. The analysis identified four market niches the town could serve: recreational activity retail businesses, services (social, medical, professional), retail shopping alternatives to Stowe stores, and eating & entertainment establishments. The need to fill the void left by Ames was clearly identified. The town also needs an organized marketing effort to attract businesses and customers. In the village downtown area, the study strongly recommends keeping the town offices in the central village and addresses perceived sidewalk and parking deficiencies.

Mike Stafford (Morristown Trails Committee) updated the Commission on ongoing discussions between the Village Trustees and Town Select Board regarding the village sewer system. Discussions have focused on developing a formula for allocating sewer capacity for new system users and for cost-sharing capital costs for system expansion. Heidi noted a need to have a process in place for dealing with system issues before problems come up. The Trustees have adopted a new rate schedule that more equitably charges town users. Mike stated that both bodies (Select Board & Trustees) wanted to see more Planning Commission involvement in system expansion planning. Several members expressed the feeling that the legislative bodies need to make an expansion decision that the Planning Commission could use to make appropriate zoning changes in those areas affected by the expansion.

Steve Rae (Chair, Morristown Conservation Commission) reported on the October 28, 2003 public forum on Conservation and Trails. About 50 people attended the forum. Steve reviewed survey results from the forum. Prevailing views expressed a desire to locate additional new housing in or close to village; no one favored more housing along Route 100. Overwhelming support was given to downtown enhancement efforts. There was a strong negative view of expanding development west of town toward Lake Lamoille, with a more positive view of growth on north end of town along Route 15. Respondents supported zoning as a tool for preserving "rural character" of Morristown. Several comments favored cluster development as a means of minimizing sprawl and maintaining open spaces. Trails users focused on safety and accessibility. Support was voiced for a recreation trail down to Stowe and another along Lamoille River (parallel to Route 15).

The ZA discussed changes to the Town Road Policy as they pertain to the zoning bylaws. He proposed drafting a change to Section IV (specifications), paragraph 1 addressing road width requirements. The proposed change, delineating the traveled roadway as being twenty-four feet wide, from the edge of one shoulder to the edge of the opposite shoulder, would be reviewed by the town emergency services (police, fire, and rescue) and town highway department before being submitted to the Select Board, along with any other changes to the road policy.

The ZA updated proposed bylaw changes discussed at the previous Planning Commission meeting. The proposal to make structures less than 300 square feet exempt from permit requirements, subject to applicable setbacks, was changed to structures less than 150 square feet. This would encompass most small sheds and additions which typically fall well within the setbacks and which requiring a permit for their construction does not serve a useful municipal purpose. The proposed change dealing with trailers was revised to limit the restriction on placement of trailers to unregistered storage trailers only, not to include boat or other recreational-type trailers. The ZA will provide copies of the Underhill and West Windsor zoning bylaws on ponds for discussion at the next meeting.

A motion by Bill B, seconded by John, to use Planning Commission funds for Christmas wreaths and garlands for the gazebo on Main Street (not to exceed \$100) was unanimously approved. Heidi Krantz will organize community service youths to decorate the gazebo on December 4, 2003. Planning Commissioners were invited to participate.

The next planning commission meeting will be on December 2, 2003. If available for review, the Conservation Commission's proposal for a new zoning district for the upland areas of town will be discussed.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mark Leonard, Recorder

Minutes approved on: 12/2/03