

Morristown/Morrisville Planning Council

PO Box 748 / Morrisville, VT 05661

Phone (802) 888-6373

Meeting Minutes of September 9, 2014

Planning Council Present: Andrea Caldwell, Paul Griswold (Chair), Max Paine, Tom Snipp & Mark Struhsacker.

Planning Council Absent: Etienne Hancock & Yvette Mason

Staff: Planning Director Todd Thomas

Guests: The School Board and Tracy Wrend

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order in the library of the Morrisville elementary school at approximately 5:00 P.M.

Discussion: School Board meeting regarding capital budget – the Morristown Planning Council met with the School Board to discuss capital budget. Chair Griswold provided an overview of the Council's work over the last few years. Mr. Griswold cited the new industrial park along with other new development in the town. He said that this work was contributing to population growth in the town which would impact the school system. Mr. Griswold said that he believed the Planning Council to be the ideal body to coordinate capital spending between the school, town and village. He added that the Council's informal advisory role in this matter should help all three organizations obtain voter approval for projects and most importantly help them communicate amongst themselves. The School Board members discussed how the Planning Council might help them get the word out for their ballot issues. Mr. Thomas highlighted that the Planning Council wrote a grant to bring Front Porch Forum to town and has easy access to public service announcements on the radio thanks to Member Struhsacker. Mr. Thomas added that the Planning Council likely speaks to a different subset of voters than the School Board does, which could help bring more people to the table. The School Board, via a unanimous vote, voted to share capital information and communicate with the Planning Council regarding large capital items. The Planning Council thanked the School Board for its time and willingness to work with them.

Discussion: Business/Professional Office in Industrial Zone – Mr. Thomas explained that he received a request to add the Business/Professional Office use to the Industrial Zone. Mr. Thomas explained that developments in this area such as Curves Gym were permitted in the past under the Commercial Use that was taken out of the Industrial Zone last year. Mr. Thomas explained that Business/Professional Office use has never been an allowed use in this zone. Council members discussed if they wanted to see office space added to the Industrial Zone or if they desired to see industrially zoned lands kept for industrial uses. Mr. Thomas explained that the parcel in question was on Houle Avenue. Member Griswold remarked that he had seen the proposed site plan for the office space on Houle Avenue and it met none of the setbacks. Mr. Thomas explained that the Industrial Zone's 25 foot wide side setbacks being transposed onto the small lots on Houle Avenue will make redevelopment of these individual lots problematic, as most parcels on the street are only 102 feet wide. Mr. Thomas added that he was unsure why

the Planning Commission at the time added industrial zoning, with its larger setbacks, to a section of town (like Houle Avenue) with small lots. Council members and Mr. Thomas speculated that the intent of this past zoning change may have been for an industrial company to buy multiple lots and combine them together during redevelopment. Member Griswold said that new housing is not allowed in the Industrial Zone and that he does not see any difference between a residential use and Business/Professional Office use in this zone. He opined that neither use should be allowed in the Industrial Zone. Member Snipp and the other Council members agreed. Mr. Thomas said that he would proceed with the pending October 7th zoning change as planned and he would not include adding the Business/Professional Office use to the Industrial Zone within the warning.

Discussion: ReSOURCE Nepveu Bldg grant support letter – Mr. Thomas presented the Council with a draft letter of support for ReSOURCE, a non-profit organization seeking grant funding to redevelop the Nepveu Building. Council members asked Mr. Thomas what the project entailed. Mr. Thomas said that, as he understood it, ReSOURCE was submitting a five-year lease to be ground-floor tenants in the Nepveu Building and that the lease had an option to buy the building out-right after five years. When questioned about the purchase price, Mr. Thomas added that he understood the price of the purchase option to be \$800,000. Council members opined that this extremely high purchase price would make this project a very tough go. Mr. Thomas said that all that was before the Council was a letter support for ReSOURCE's attempt to raise this funding. The Council unanimously approved the proposed letter. Mr. Thomas said he would send it to Jim Curran at ReSOURCE in the morning.

Approve prior meeting minutes – The meeting minutes from August 19, 2014 were tabled until a quorum of members present on that night were present to vote.

The meeting adjourned at 6:00 PM – submitted by Todd Thomas, Planning Director