

Morristown/Morrisville Planning Council
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Meeting Minutes of Tuesday 4 September 2018

Council Members Present: Allen Van Anda, Joshua Goldstein, Linda Greaves, Paul Griswold (Chair), Etienne Hancock, Max Paine, and Tom Snipp

Council Members Absent: None

Guests: Conservation Commission Chair Ron Stancliff, Conservation Commission Members Jim Pease and Kristen Connolly, Lorraine Paine, Bob Grundstein, Sharon and Bill Rowell, and their Realtor George Bambara

Staff: Planning Director Todd Thomas

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order in the Community Room of the Old Tegu Theatre, 43 Portland Street, at approximately 6:00 P.M.

Discussion: 13.8 Acre Greaves Farms parcel adjacent to 607 Washington Hwy –
The Council discussed the recent site-walk of the 13.8 acre Greaves Farms village parcel. The Council also discussed the zoning change proposal authored by Planning Director Thomas that brought some design criteria into the zone and only allowed multi-family housing therein as part of a Health Care Facility use. Members of the Conservation Commission spoke expressing opposition to any zoning change that would allow more density for this 13.8 acre parcel than what was currently allowed. Council Members came to a consensus that the Greave's zoning change request to revert to the old 4,000 ft² lot/density zoning was not needed as a conservation subdivision under the current zoning could actually lower the density to 2,000 ft² per dwelling unit for a total of 301 units on this parcel (when only 150 units was desired). It was clarified that if the requested zoning change was approved, that maximum density yield would double to 602 units of housing on the 13.8 acre parcel. That amount of density had no support on the Council or in the audience. Member Hancock and Member Van Anda worried about traffic impacts from this development, with a focus on improving to the intersections of Washington Highway with Maple Street, Congress Street, and Randolph Road. Concerns were expressed by members of the Conservation Commission about speeding on Washington Highway now that the stop sign was removed from its intersection with Congress Street. When Ms. Rowell pressed for having the proposed Health Care Facility restriction on the multi-family use eliminated, Member Goldstein reminded her that the Council was considering a zoning change for the entire Special Use / Hospital Zone and not just her 13.8 acre parcel. Member Hancock asked for a conservation subdivision fact sheet that could be given to applicants as Sharon Rowell said that she did not understand the concept. However, it was pointed out that the Greaves Farms just finished getting approvals for a conservation subdivision for the residential house lots currently for sale further up Washington Highway. Chair Griswold said that a definition may need to be added to the proposed zoning change for an assisted-living facility. Mr. Thomas said that he would tweak his proposal for further discussion at the next Council meeting.

Discussion: 2018 Legislative Body votes on the proposed zoning changes – The Council discussed the upcoming Trustee and Selectboard votes on the 2018 zoning

change package. Mr. Thomas explained that the Trustee vote was Wednesday night and the Selectboard vote would take place on Monday night.

Discussion: Council member priorities for the work year – Member Thomas said that he would like to look at the allowed density versus on-the-ground uses in the newly configured High Density Residential Zone. He said that since the multi-family use has been eliminated in large parts of the Village, it would be prudent to economize this use where it was allowed, ensuring that additional housing growth could occur in the core of the village. Member Goldstein and Member Van Anda said that they would like to tighten the building design criteria in the zoning bylaws. An example they cited would be to no longer allow vinyl siding on new construction. Member Griswold spoke about the reviewing the planning goals in statute and the 1% local option tax. The Council also spoke about requiring architectural differentiation as part of multi-family project. Mr. Thomas said he would set up future agenda items for these proposals.

Discussion: Business Enterprise vs Mixed Office Res zones – This discussion was tabled due to the late hour given the long discussions of the Greaves Farms parcel and the upcoming zoning change votes.

Prior meeting minutes – Upon a motion made by Member Hancock, the May 15th meeting minutes were approved by a vote of 4-0-3 with Members Goldstein, Van Anda, and Griswold abstaining. Upon a motion made by Member Goldstein, the August 7th meeting minutes were approved by a vote of 5-0-2, with Members Greaves, and Paine abstaining.

The meeting adjourned at 8:15 PM, submitted by Todd Thomas, Planning Director