

MORRISTOWN/MORRISVILLE PLANNING COMMISSION
P.O. BOX 748 / MORRISVILLE, VT 05661
Phone (802) 888-6373

Meeting Minutes of August 21, 2012

Present: Paul Griswold, Reeves Larson, John Meyer, Max Paine, & Mark Struhsacker
Members Absent: Tom Snipp
Staff: Todd Thomas, Zoning Administrator & Planner
Guests: Resident Etienne Hancock of George Street

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

Approve prior meeting minutes – Approval of the July 10, 2012 meeting minutes was tabled until the four members present at that meeting were all in attendance. Member Struhsacker moved to approve the August 7, 2012 meeting minutes. The motion was affirmed by a vote of 4-0-1, with member Larson abstaining.

Discussion: Housing Chapter of the Town Plan– ZA Thomas distributed the existing Housing Chapter of the Town Plan. The Commission reviewed the chapter and spent a considerable amount of time talking about density in the residential portions of the Village. It was decided that whatever zoning changes are made in the Village, the change should encourage increasing homeownership therein. Mr. Thomas said that the residential density allowed by the MDR zone, which is found on streets like Summer & Maple, actually encourages apartment conversions. He said that the typical lot size in this area is large enough to support a three family apartment building. He added that he believes the middling density in this area of the Village discourages homeownership. He opined that by allowing a three family home on most lots, the zoning is too permissive and discourages keeping existing houses as single-family homes, while also discouraging condo conversions because the zoning is not permissive enough to make a conversion financially feasible. Mr. Thomas said that the Commission should consider changing the residential density of this zone in either direction, which would likely encourage more ownership instead of the middling density that currently encourages apartment conversions. The Commission also discussed reviewing the zoning bylaws for regulating the location of future mobile home parks. The Commission discussed other forms of affordable housing and decided to retract certain statements of support for affordable housing and replace them with statements supporting ownership-based affordable housing. The Commission also discussed planned residential developments, commonly called conservation subdivisions or open space residential design. The Commission agreed to insert language into the Housing Chapter supporting conservation subdivisions.

Discussion: Town Plan update schedule - The commission decided to change the second meeting in September to the 11th, instead of the 18th.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 8:45 P.M.

Respectfully submitted by Todd Thomas, ZA