

Morristown/Morrisville Planning Council

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Meeting Minutes of Tuesday 20 August 2019

Council Members Present: Allen Van Anda, Steven Foster, Joshua Goldstein, and Etienne Hancock,

Council Members Absent: Linda Greaves, and Tom Snipp

Guests: Bob Heanue, Ron Stancliff, Prudy Newton, Melissa Rose, David Campbell, Wally Reeve, Dan McLaughlin, Bob Budlinger, and Denise Trombley

Staff: Planning Director Todd Thomas

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

Prior meeting minutes – Approval of the April 23rd, May 7th and May 21st meeting minutes were tabled due to quorum issues. Member Van Anda moved to approve the July 16th meeting minutes. A vote of 3-0-1 (with Member Goldstein abstaining) affirmed the motion.

Discuss: Pinewood Estates residents that want Village (LDR) zoning – Prudy Newton of Pinewood Estates and Melissa Rose appeared before the Council requesting that the Low Density Residential Zone be extended up into Pinewood Estates. Ms. Newton explained that they would like to be able to build an infill house for her sister but she was being prevented from doing so by the existing 2 acre minimum lot size. Ms. Rose said that this area was no longer rural, located less than a mile from the VT Route 100 commercial corridor. David Campbell of Pinewood Estates decided that he was opposed to this zoning request because he does not want his neighborhood to change. Members Foster and Goldstein both said that the availability of Village water in the neighborhood made it a good candidate to receive village zoning in the future. Chairman Hancock said that he would like to wait at least a year before considering further zoning changes. Ms. Newton and Ms. Rose were invited to bring forth some indication that their proposed zoning change is supported by the majority of their neighborhood before the Council would reconsider this request.

Discuss: Zoning Change Legislative Body Vote (Waiver % & Short-Term Rentals) – Planning Director Thomas led the Board through proposed zoning changes showing that the waiver percentage was now 25% (from 15%) and that short-term rentals in the Town do not have to be owner occupied, while short-term rentals in the Village do have to be owner occupied. The Council also discussed the Selectboard request for a DRB process for non-owner occupied short-term rentals rather than just a prohibition. It was explained that the owner-occupied short term rentals were already subject to a Conditional Use DRB process. The Council confirmed that it is still of the belief that non-owner occupied short term rentals should not be allowed, so it does not want to offer a process by which they would likely be approved by the DRB.

Discuss: Smoothing out the recent zoning change along Jersey Heights – Mr. Thomas explained that the recent extension of High Density Residential (HDR) zoning along Jersey Heights created a conflict line where HDR zoning directly abuts Low Density Residential (LDR) zoning. The Council was presented with a very modest expansion of the Medium Density Residential (MDR) zone to buffer this conflict line. Jersey Way residents Wally Reeve and Bob Budliger said they were opposed to this new area of MDR Zoning. The Council decided to take no action regarding this proposal.

Discuss: Copley Municipal Parking Lot (agenda addendum) – Mr. Thomas asked that this agenda item be tabled until the next Council meeting, which will take place on September 17th.

Discuss: Upcoming work plan – Mr. Thomas said that he did not see the need for any new zoning changes at this time and that he thought it was a good time to pause and rewrite the town plan. The Council agreed that a plan revision was needed and they would like to be able to point to it when zoning change requests, like this evening's Pinewood Estates request, are made. Member Goldstein also expressed the desire for the new town plan to read like a manifesto of what we want Morrisville to become. Mr. Thomas discussed if there was a desire for the new town plan to be written so that it could be confirmed. The consensus was that the new Town plan should instead be accessible and easily readable by the average town resident.

The meeting adjourned at 7:55 PM, submitted by Todd Thomas, Planning Director

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