

Morristown/Morrisville Planning Council
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Meeting Minutes of Tuesday 11 August 2020

Council Members Present: Allen Van Anda, Steven Foster, Etienne Hancock (Chair), and Tom Snipp

Council Members Absent: Joshua Goldstein

Guests: Grant Wieler, and Fire Chief Dennis DiGregorio (via phone)

Staff: Planning Director Todd Thomas

Call to Order: Chair Hancock called the meeting to order under the tent adjacent to the Clubhouse at 441 Copley Country Club Road at approximately 6:00 P.M.

Prior meeting minutes – Member Foster moved to approve the July 28th meeting minutes. A vote of 3-0-1 affirmed the motion, with Member Van Anda abstaining.

Discuss: §840.8 Fire Protection for Major Subdivisions – Zoning Administrator Thomas explained how the Development Review Board, in a recent deliberation, thought the language of §840.8 of the zoning bylaws, regarding Fire Protection for Major Subdivisions, was unclear. Mr. Thomas also explained how, for the proposed subdivision being deliberated, Ryder Brook, at the Route 100 concrete bridge, was an easily accessible, close-by, and superior water source that was preferred by the Fire Chief, but technically not allowed per the existing zoning language that required an “on-site” fire pond. Fire Chief Dennis DiGregorio joined the meeting via phone and said that he would prefer a water source that offered 2,000 gallons per minute and, after some debate, was located within a half mile drive of the proposed development. Mr. Thomas was asked to evaluate existing guidance on dry hydrants. He said he would work with the Fire Chief regarding any guidance published by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) on this matter. Member Van Anda said that this revised section of the zoning bylaws should be tied to that kind of guidance, or State and Federal guidance, and it should not be left up to the specifications of local officials. Mr. Thomas said that he would make that change in the rewrite of the fire protection standard for major subdivisions, which would be available for the August 25th Council meeting.

Discuss: General Town Plan update schedule – Mr. Thomas shared a Town Plan update schedule with the Council. It was decided that the Council would review one new Town Plan chapter per meeting, which would schedule out through the fall. Member Van Anda said that the Council should decide in December if the pre-Covid19 chapters of the Town Plan, such as the economic development chapter, would need to be revised, or rewritten, to reflect the current conditions. Mr. Thomas said that he would present an update to the Housing Chapter of the Town Plan for the August 25th Council meeting.

Discuss: Town Plan Chapter on Flood Resiliency – The Council reviewed the proposed Flood Resiliency Chapter. A brief discussion ensued regarding areas where the implementing the State river corridor layer was unrealistic because the Lamoille River would never be allowed to meander enough, as an example, to cause Bridge Street /

Route 100 to be moved or rerouted. As such, it was decided that it is not-realistic, or fair, to burden the property owners in this area with the river corridor regulations. Mr. Thomas said that evaluating the State's river corridor protections should only be considered for rural or undeveloped parts of the town. Mr. Thomas noted that the Flood Resiliency Chapter also encouraged the use of fill in the Special Flood Hazard Area, but outside the delineated Floodway, as the best means available in a cold weather climate to protect people and property from flood damage. The Council agreed, by consensus, to include the as-written Flood Resiliency Chapter as part of the 2020-2030 Morrisville/Morristown Town Plan.

Discuss: Town Road Policy – The Council discussed the letter it wrote, but never sent to the Selectboard regarding the Town Road Policy minimum road width changes made last summer. Council Members noted that the requested information regarding the width of plows with wings attached was never received. The Council, by consensus directed Mr. Thomas to update the date on the letter and send it to the Selectboard for consideration.

Discuss: Upcoming meeting schedule – Mr. Thomas reminded everyone that the warned Legislative Body public hearings for the 2020 zoning change will take place on Wednesday August 19th (Village Trustees) and on Tuesday September 8th (Selectboard). It was also decided that the August 25th Council meeting would start with a site visit up at Goddard Nesbit Road, and then return to the outdoor seating at Copley Golf Club for the remainder of the meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 7:15 PM, submitted by Todd Thomas, Planning Director