

Morristown/Morrisville Planning Council
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Meeting Minutes of Tuesday 16 July 2019

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

Council Members Absent: Joshua Goldstein and Linda Greaves

Guests: Bob Heanue, Roy Marble, Ron Stancliff, Dodi Day, 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.

Discuss: Zoning Change Legislative Body Vote (Waiver % & Short-Term Rentals) – Planning Director Thomas explained to the Planning Council members present that, on the whole, the 2019 zoning bylaw update sailed right through the approval process. He noted that there was a small disagreement between the Selectboard and Village Trustees regarding if short-term rentals should be owner occupied. He said it was left so that short-term rentals in the Town do not have to be owner occupied, but short-term rentals in the Village do have to be owner occupied. He added that the Selectboard would like a DRB process for non-owner occupied short-term rentals rather than just a prohibition. Mr. Thomas said that the Selectboard also directed the Council to increase the maximum waiver percentage in the zoning bylaw from 15% to 25%. The Council asked Mr. Thomas to present these edits at the August 20th (next) Council meeting. Mr. Thomas was also asked to gather some rolling data on short term rentals, including the % of housing stock and the % owner-occupied.

Discuss: Roy Marble comments on recent zoning changes – Roy Marble, while lauding the direction of the Council and its staff, was concerned that some of the zoning bylaw's requirements could result in a "taking" claim. Ron Stancliff of the Conservation Commission provided rebuttal comments regarding the Town's ability to use its police powers as part of the zoning process. The Council discussed Roy's comments and thanked him for his efforts in reviewing the proposed zoning changes.

Discuss: Smoothing out the recent zoning change along Jersey Heights – Mr. Thomas said 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. Mr. Thomas said that a Medium Density Residential (MDR) zone buffer between the two was needed. He suggested weaving this MDR area in between HDR and LDR near the Jersey Heights condos. The Council said it would look at a proposal for such at its August 20th meeting.

Discuss: Letter of support for the redevelopment of the Hutchins Block – Mr. Thomas presented a draft letter of support for the redevelopment of the Hutchins Block on Hutchins Street. Chair Hancock signed the as-revised letter upon Council approval.

Discuss: Copley Municipal Parking Lot (agenda addendum) – The Council and Mr. Thomas discussed redesigning the municipal parking lot with the goal of adding more overnight parking than the Hutchins Block redevelopment would need. Mr. Thomas said that a plan and cost proposal were due to the Town Administrator for the fall budget season. The Council adjourned the meeting for a site walk of the municipal parking lot.

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