

**Morristown/Morrisville Planning Commission**  
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**Meeting Minutes of July 16, 2013**

**Planning Commission Members Present:** Andrea Caldwell, Paul Griswold (Chair), Etienne Hancock, Max Paine & Mark Struhsacker. Member Reeves Larson was also present, but arrived after the vote on the meeting minutes.

**Planning Commission Members Absent:** Tom Snipp

**Staff:** Todd Thomas, Zoning Administrator & Planner

**Guests:** Selectboard Member Bob Beeman, Village Trustee Dana Wildes, John Mandeville of the Lamoille Economic Development Corporation and Mike Paritz and Joni Lanphear of Leo's Small Engines.

**Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at approximately 7:00 P.M.

**Approve prior meeting minutes** – Member Struhsacker moved to approve the June 18 meeting minutes. A vote of 4-0-1 affirmed the motion, with Member Paine abstaining.

**Discussion: John Mandeville from LEDC on Economic Development** – John Mandeville from the Lamoille Economic Development Corporation appeared before the Commission to talk about economic development in the County. Mr. Mandeville said that the County and the entire State of Vermont lacks shovel ready land that can be purchased for business use. Mr. Mandeville said that a tried and true economic development practice to attract new business to your community is having designated industrial parks that are shovel ready, like what is being planned for the Trombley Hill water tank parcel owned by the Village. Mr. Mandeville added that the first three lots created from the Village's water tank parcel are pretty much already spoken for, but we could lose these businesses to outside of the community if we continue as-is with no shovel ready land available for purchase. Commission members asked Mr. Mandeville what makes a successful industrial park. Mr. Mandeville replied that access to municipal water and sewer is the primary ingredient to industrial park success. Mr. Mandel clarified that shovel ready means that the property in question has access to municipal water and sewer and can be shovel ready for building construction in 60 days. Member Griswold closed the discussion by opining on the adequacy of Morrisville school land for the next industrial park.

**Discussion: Non Rte 15 Setbacks in the COM Zone** – Dana Wildes appeared before the Commission to speak about the problems with the existing setbacks in the COM Zone. Zoning Administrator Thomas provided the Commission with a tax map view of a segment of the COM Zone showing the impacts of the setbacks on the property therein, including on Mr. Wildes' property. Mr. Wildes said that the side and rear setbacks made the parcel of land he recently purchased adjacent to his business unbuildable. Mr. Wildes added that he believed the large 45 foot side and rear setbacks in portions of the COM Zone creates sprawl and wastes otherwise viable land zoned for business. Mr. Thomas agreed that the 45 foot side and rear setbacks do not make a lot of sense for the existing

commercial properties that were not part of the Langdell Farm. Member Larson said that the 45 foot setbacks were intended for the farm parcel and he did not remember those setbacks being intended to be applied elsewhere in the COM Zone. Mr. Wildes said that he remembered the same thing about the zoning process at that time. Mr. Thomas said that he would add an evaluation of the COM Zone setbacks to the Commission's zoning "to-do" list. He added that obtaining neighborhood feedback about this change might be beneficial and that this feedback would likely be available at the planned August 6<sup>th</sup> informational meeting with the neighbors of the Village water tank parcel.

**Discussion: Proposed general changes to the sign bylaw** – Mr. Thomas provided the board with the requested sign bylaw change that would allow 10 ft.<sup>2</sup> of illuminated signage in any business window. Mr. Thomas added that the illuminated signage could not be flashing or animated. The Commission was comfortable with the proposed language change. Chair Griswold said that he would still like to have Nicole Gilbert from Great Big Graphics in to speak to the Commission about signage. Chair Griswold said that he envisioned this conversation as the beginning of a rewrite of the sign bylaw so it was simpler, shorter and more user-friendly. Mr. Thomas said he thought this was a great idea.

**Discussion: BE vs. IND Zoning for the Trombley Hill Water Tank Parcel** – Mr. Thomas said that he had previously asked Commission members if they thought the appearance of development on the Village water tank parcel should be more regulated, like what is required in the Business Enterprise Zone or left more to the vision of the developer and the Development Review Board, which is what takes place in the Industrial Zone (which does not have any design review criteria therein). Commission members generally agreed that the Village's water tank parcel was a bit off the beaten path and that design review criteria was not as important therein as it was for more visible business zones like the Business Enterprise Zone. The Commission instructed Mr. Thomas to propose that the Village water tank parcel become an industrial zone and include this zoning change and any needed Sewer Service Management Area changes in the next zoning update.

**Discussion: Prep for Aug 6<sup>th</sup> water tank neighbor meeting** – Mr. Thomas asked the Commission how it wanted to get the word out for the planed August 6<sup>th</sup> water tank meeting with the surrounding neighborhood. Mr. Thomas said that he envisioned mailing letters and/or putting flyers in all the mailboxes of the surrounding homes. Commission members discussed if they wanted this meeting advertised on the radio, but ultimately decided that the previously proposed letters and flyers were appropriate.

**Discussion: Schedule Zoning Change hearing for 13 August** – Mr. Thomas walked the Commission through the packet of zoning changes that would be heard at an August 13 public hearing. Commission members instructed Mr. Thomas to move forward with such a hearing, being sure to include the water tank parcel changes therein. Mr. Thomas said that he would have the hearing advertised and send out the required notices by Thursday.

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The meeting adjourned at approximately 9:00 PM – submitted by Todd Thomas, ZA