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**MORRISTOWN/MORRISVILLE
PLANNING COMMISSION
P.O. BOX 748
MORRISVILLE, VT 05661
Phone (802) 888-6373
Fax (802) 888-6378**

Minutes of July 2, 2002

Members Present: Julia Compagna, Bruce Tomlinson, Bill Henchey, Kevin Lane

Members Absent: Kelly Rogers, Bill Bourne, Sam Guy,

Recorder: Mark Leonard, Zoning Administrator

Guests: Mike Miller (LCPC Planner), Jon Sullivan (Lamoille Economic Development Council), Heidi Krantz (Community Coordinator), Stephen Bousquet, Orah Moore, S.M. Ruggles

Julia called the meeting to order at 7:05PM

The topic for this evening's Town Plan review is Economy. Julia reviewed the current plan's Economy section. Census data needs to be updated, but the basic information and policies remain valid. Three of four recommendations in the current plan are tied to programs Heidi Krantz is currently pursuing. A grant has been received to pursue 'downtown' designation, which would result in certain tax and other incentives to businesses in that area. Julia noted ongoing discussions within the town and village boards regarding extending the village sewer line into the industrial and commercial districts north of the village boundary and the study of municipal facility requirements. Sewer extension would have a distinct impact, with new businesses adding jobs in the local economy.

Heidi Krantz addressed several topics in the current plan. She felt Recreation & Tourism should be more prominently mentioned. Morristown sees significant business from users of the recreation trails and bike routes. Mention in the Town Plan would help organizations involved in these activities pursue grants. Under Construction, she noted that the lack of affordable housing hinders efforts to attract new businesses. This should be emphasized in the Housing section as well. Under Transportation, she said there needs to be more public awareness of the bus service which is run on a limited basis in the town. She said the project to create a Youth Center could be tied to a mentoring program to develop a job skills base for new or expanding businesses. She is working on setting up another Community Forum to revisit the issues raised in the first forum, held in 1999, and to gauge public sentiment on policies the town wants to see in the revised Town Plan.

Heidi stated that the town is at the point of moving from studies to implementation on a variety of fronts. She recommended that the new Town Plan tie goals with specific objectives. She noted the current plan's goals calls for "maintaining the village as the commercial, *industrial*, and social center of the community" and wondered if the village was indeed the desired location for industrial users, being outside most of the industrial and commercial zoning districts. One action the town might want to consider within the five-year timeframe of the Town Plan would be establishing some sort of Economic Development Office whose function would be to 'sell' Morristown to prospective businesses and assist them in setting up in town should they decide to locate here.

Julia, noting that this sort of activity sounded a lot like the role of Lamoille Economic Development Council, asked John Sullivan of LEDC how much of that organization's effort is focused on Morristown. John replied that it was "substantial". He mentioned that LEDC is conducting a county-wide study of the overall economic picture, with results due in the Fall which should provide useful information to the Town Plan revision. He also suggested that any recommendations for economic development needed to include telecommunications infrastructure, as well as the traditional utility and road infrastructure requirements.