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**MORRISTOWN/MORRISVILLE
PLANNING COMMISSION
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Minutes of May 15, 2007

Members Present: Bill Henchey, John Meyer, Richard Duda, Andrew Volansky, Kelly Rogers, Lauren Traister

Members Absent: Steve Berson

Guests: Community Coordinator Heidi Krantz, Mike Miller (LCPC), Village Trustees Dana Wildes & Ed Debor

Recorder: Mark Leonard, Zoning Administrator (ZA)

Chairman Bill Henchey called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM. Mike Miller reviewed the current Economic Development chapter of the Town Plan, which broadly addresses the major job sectors, labor force, factors affecting economic development, and future concerns. He noted that data on 'livable wages', provided by the Peace & Justice Center, was outdated (1998) and said he would try to get newer figures.

Bill talked about the major issues to be discussed at the upcoming (June 5) stakeholder meeting. Topics mentioned were telecommunications infrastructure needs (to include high speed internet and cellular phone service), assessment of needs for additional commercially zoned areas, and utility infrastructure; specifically sewer and water. He said the discussion should try to identify factors that the town can influence, through zoning or other means, that either positively or negatively affect economic development.

Dana Wildes said he would like to have discussion on whether to expand the list of allowable uses in the Business Office Park (BOP) zoning district. He noted that the BOP had been identified as the desired area for new economic development about ten years ago, but has not seen any such development to date. He felt that a discussion with BOP property owners, Planning Commissioners, and others interested in broader economic development for Morristown could lead to a comprehensive plan for creating the requisite infrastructure within the BOP that could make it more attractive to new businesses.

Ed Debor encouraged the Planning Commission to develop or update policies and recommendations within this chapter that would enhance ongoing efforts to revitalize the central village business area. He suggested extending a personal invitation to major commercial property owners to participate in the stakeholder meeting. He pointed out that while some of these landowners are seen as obstacles to economic development by some people, he knows of many instances where these individuals have played a constructive role in developing new businesses.

Dana said he would also like to see a recommendation to review the permitting process to ensure that it is not burdening economic development through inefficient or ambiguous procedures. He mentioned that it took him over two years to gain all necessary permits and approvals for an 8-lot subdivision, although he conceded that the local permitting process only took about two months.

Heidi addressed the creative/entrepreneurial business sector, citing it as a major potential source of new businesses in town that did not require large, commercially zoned properties to operate. She added that the need for improved telecommunications services was tied in to this sector.

Heidi reviewed some of the overall responses to the community planning survey and presented a list of questions from Chip Sawyer at LCPC designed to compile the results in a comprehensive, understandable format. She hopes to have Chip attend the June 19th meeting to go over the findings. She asked the Planning Commission to help shape the final survey report, which she hopes will be available for review and discussion by July, ahead of the Land Use chapter review.

On a motion by Andrew, seconded by Richard, the meeting adjourned at 9:05 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Mark Leonard, recorder

Minutes approved on: 06/05/07