

## **Morristown/Morrisville Planning Council**

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### **Meeting Minutes of 1 May 2018**

**Planning Council Members Present:** Linda Greaves, Paul Griswold (Chair), Etienne Hancock, Max Paine, Tom Snipp, and Laura Streets

**Planning Council Members Absent:** None

**Guests:** Bob Heanue, Bob Burley, Josh Goldstein, Allen Van Anda, F.W. McCune, Jen Davis, and representing Verizon: Brian Sullivan, Louis Hodgetts, and Andrew Davis.

**Staff:** Planning Director Todd Thomas

**Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order in the Community Meeting Room of the Town Offices at 43 Portland Street at approximately 6:00 P.M.

**Discuss: Route 100 South solar farm by East Light Partners** – This item was tabled until the May 15<sup>th</sup> agenda. Local pilot Bob Burley asked the Council to cognizant of the glare that will come from the solar farm as planes try to land at the airport from the south.

**Discuss: Verizon cell tower at Copley Golf Club** – Attorney Brian Sullivan, engineer Louis Hodgetts, and Andrew Davis appeared before the Council representing Verizon Wireless and its pending application to locate a 100 foot tall cell tower at Copley Golf Club. Mr. Sullivan said that this would be a monopole with no guy-wires that would remain unlit at night and any views of the tower would be limited to the top 1/3 of it thanks to the surrounding tree cover. Upon a question from Member Snipp, Mr. Sullivan said that the cell tower by Stowe's sewer plant was similar. Member Hancock asked for confirmation that the access driveway will not be restricted by any cell tower fencing. Mr. Hodgetts said that this woods road would not be blocked. A discussion ensued about the cell tower generator's fuel source. The Council expressed a desire that the proposed diesel fuel source be changed to propane for environmental reasons. Chair Griswold expressed concerns about the obtrusive views that neighboring properties may suffer as a result of this new cell tower, especially higher up on Elmore Street. He also expressed concerns with the health and longevity of the few large trees that are doing the lion's share of the screening of the proposed cell tower. Upon a question from Allen Van Anda, it was confirmed that the private balloon test that Verizon did was done during leaf-on season. Bob Heanue asked that the weekly cell tower generator testing be done at dark and not during golfing hours when the sound generated could be a distraction. Josh Goldstein asked what the public benefit of this cell tower was. Mr. Sullivan said that this tower would help coverage better penetrate the school, hospital, and downtown buildings and ready Verizon for future increasing data consumption in the area. Chair Griswold asked if Copley Hospital was party to this cell tower lease. Mr. Sullivan said that the hospital was not party to the lease but that a separate agreement was executed with the hospital. Mr. Sullivan added that the cell tower construction was slated for some time in 2019. The Council, after discussing the proposal further, directed Mr. Thomas to write a letter to Mr. Sullivan and Verizon asking for the following items:

1. A well-publicized public balloon test during leaf-off season to see if the views of the proposed cell tower were as limited as Verizon's agents were claiming.

2. A report from a forester that the few large trees that will help hide this cell tower are healthy and that these trees are likely to have a continued lifespan that is as long as the 25 year cell tower lease.
3. Changing the fuel source for the cell tower generator from diesel to propane.
4. The weekly generator testing to be completed at dusk so the noise therefrom does not bother the guests at the adjacent inn or golfers on the course.

**Discuss: Selectboard meeting about business equipment tax** – Mr. Thomas informed the Council Members that could not attend, that the joint meeting with the Selectboard was successful in regards to the Council's efforts to eliminate the machinery and equipment tax on businesses. He added that there was vocal opposition at the meeting to the 1% rooms and meals tax and that the Selectboard immediately came out against that tax. Chair Griswold said that he planned to reappear before the Selectboard in the future with a presentation regarding why the Town should adopt the 1% meals and rooms tax.

**Discuss: Low Density Residential Zone for Jersey Heights?** – Mr. Thomas presented the Council with a map that showed portions of the Jersey Heights neighborhood switching from Low to Medium Density Residential zoning. It was discussed that the LDR Zone was responsive to areas that do not have Village water and sewer service and that the proposed zoning change area was completely served by municipal water and sewer. The Council and Bob Heanue was supportive of this change. Mr. Thomas said that it would be included within the next zoning update.

**Discuss: Requested setbacks in the Airport Business Zone** – This Council again discussed Graham Mink's request to reduce the setbacks in the Airport Business Zone. Mr. Thomas suggested that this effort could be accomplished by the next agenda item regarding merging the Airport Business Zone into the Industrial Zone.

**Discuss: Merging of Airport Business and Industrial Zones** – Mr. Thomas led the Board through the relatively minor changes needed to merge the Airport Business Zone into the Industrial Zone. The Council was supportive of these changes. Mr. Thomas said that he would have a proposal ready for the next Council meeting. Member Hancock asked Mr. Thomas to ensure that the airport / Route 100 area was still protected from some of the salvage yard type of Industrial Zone uses that may be more appropriate in other parts of town.

**Discuss: Special Tax Exemption 32 VSA §3836 (Paul)** – Chair Griswold said that he was tabling potential changes to how the Town handles these tax exemptions because the Statute was not helpful for senior tax relief.

**Approve prior meeting minutes** – Member Snipp moved to approve the April 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting minutes. The motion was affirmed by a vote of 6-0.

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The meeting adjourned at 8:00 PM.

– submitted by Todd Thomas, Planning Director