

Morristown/Morrisville Planning Council

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Meeting Minutes of Tuesday 23 April 2019

Council Members Present: Linda Greaves, Steven Foster, and Etienne Hancock

Council Members Absent: Allen Van Anda, Joshua Goldstein, and Tom Snipp

Guests: Bob Heanue, Graham Mink, Tyler Mumley, Ray Belanger Jr., Lauren Paine, Selectwoman Judy Bickford, and Conservation Commission Chair Ron Stancliff

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 6:05 P.M.

Prior meeting minutes – Approval of the prior minutes was tabled due to quorum issues.

Discuss: Jim Lovinsky of LHP for affordable housing waiver – Jim Lovinsky of Lamoille Housing Partnership appeared before the Board regarding the affordable housing waiver that was included as part of the warned zoning changes. Mr. Lovinsky spoke about inclusionary zoning and a model bylaw that allowed density bonuses for the creation of affordable housing. The Council said it would review this model Bylaw for its next meeting. Mr. Lovinsky also led the Board through a table of what rent levels were considered affordable in the community. Member Foster said that he would want a project audit requirement placed on the developer to be part of any affordable housing bylaw. Selectwoman Bickford stressed that she wanted to see ownership affordable housing created. Mr. Lovinsky and developer Graham Mink said that the housing market simply does not support creating affordable single-family homes due to land acquisition costs, soft costs, permit costs, and material costs. He added that a developer needs to sell a newly built and modest ranch home for \$250,000 (above market value) to actually make a profit. Chair Hancock said that the new material submitted by Mr. Lovinsky would need to be reviewed and discussed at the May 7th zoning change hearing in order for the affordable housing waiver to move forward without taking on the risk of unintended consequences.

Discuss: Commercial Zone changes– Mr. Thomas walked the Council through proposed changes in the Commercial Zone, including splitting the old Langdell Farm parcel between residential and commercial, and downzoning the James Road parcels from Commercial to Industrial. Allowing greater density in the Commercial Zone for multi-family housing located primarily above existing or new commercial spaces was also proposed. Landowner CCS and the Council supported these changes as proposed. Mr. Thomas said that these changes were already included in the pending zoning change.

Discuss: Zoning on the corner of Morristown Corners and Cadys Falls Rd – Ray Belanger Jr. said that he would like to convert the old milk barns at the intersection of Morristown Corners Road and Cadys Falls Road into housing. He said that he would look build 8 to 10 single family homes on this approximately 5 acre parcel if the adjacent Low

Density Residential Zone was brought across the street to his property. He said he would build an extension of the Morristown Corners Water Corp. water line to serve the homes. The Council discussed that this land was zoned Industrial to allow for business and job expansion in this area. Graham Mink said that if the Council decided to grant zoning change request, he would like his father's adjacent property to be included as well. Mr. Thomas said these comments would be considered at the May 7th zoning change hearing.

Agenda Addendum: Minimum Dwelling Unit Size – Graham Mink said that he was opposed to the proposed bylaw that created a 500 ft² minimum dwelling unit size in the Central Business Zone. He explained that he was already building apartments sized at just under 400 ft² on Upper Main Street that were very popular with renters. He also said that these smaller apartment sizes were very important to keeping rents down because smaller buildings were less expensive to build. He added that the proposed 500 ft² minimum would force him to construct larger buildings than needed and rents would increase to account for the added development cost. Chair Hancock thanked Mr. Mink for offering a real world example and said that his comments would be considered at the May 7th zoning change hearing. A larger discussion about parking in the downtown and how it related to the redevelopment of existing buildings took place to end the meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 7:10 PM, submitted by Todd Thomas, Planning Director