

Morristown/Morrisville Planning Council

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Meeting Minutes of April 1, 2014

Planning Council Members Present: Andrea Caldwell, Paul Griswold (Chair), Etienne Hancock, Max Paine, Tom Snipp & Mark Struhsacker. Member **Yvette** Mason arrived at approximately 8:00 P.M.

Planning Council Members Absent: None

Staff: Todd Thomas, Planning Director

Guests: Scott Johnson, Baly Raman, Leon Whitcomb, Rhoda **Bedell**, Nancy Durand, Brian Greenia, Marc Cote, Lynne Jewett, Marlene Handler, Sue **Olsen**, Terry Owen Hirschak, Charles Lambert, Roy Marble and Marcia Marble

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

Warned Hearing: Proposed zoning change package – Mr. Thomas opened the public hearing and discussed the following proposed zoning changes with the audience:

- a. *§214 COM Zone: Decrease minimum commercial lot size, reduce commercial setbacks & increase minimum area per residential unit.*

Mr. Thomas said the proposed Commercial Zone lot size and setback changes were meant to be business friendly and to give landowners more commercial development options for the many existing undersize lots in the Commercial Zone. He added that the Planning Council hoped that these changes would lead to infill commercial development, especially on the many small streets. Mr. Thomas also explained that the proposed changes reduced the residential density in the COM zone to a number that more closely represented what existed on the ground.

- b. *§215 BE Zone: Strike existing BE Zone language and replace with proposed*

Mr. Thomas noted that the proposed Business Enterprise Zone language was meant to offer a better balance between the desire for a high design aesthetic on Route 100 heading into the Village, while not creating too many hurdles to developing open-land thereon for new businesses. Leon Whitcomb and Rhoda Bedell said they were opposed to eliminating the currently allowed residential uses on upper floors in the zone. The Planning Council ultimately, after much discussion, decided to table proposed changes to the BE Zone to allow time for Mr. Thomas to study this issue in greater detail.

- c. *§243-244 SI Zone: Eliminate Multi-Family residential use*

Mr. Thomas explained that this was a housekeeping item and that the SI Zone would now match the RRA zone in regards to the elimination of the Dwelling Unit Multi-Family use there from.

- d. *§280 INN Zone: Create Innovation Zone*

Mr. Thomas explained that the proposed Innovation Zone was very similar to the existing Industrial Zone, but with added design criteria, such as a vegetated buffer and a requirement for a wooded walking path in said

buffer. Marc Cote said that the proposed Innovation Zone should be changed to require a sidewalk instead of the walking path in the Center Road and Trombley Hill Road buffer, because a wooded walking path would not be available for pedestrian use during the entire year due to seasonal weather changes.

- e. *§310 Airport Hazard Area: Delete hazard bylaw as recent State takings make it redundant*

Mr. Thomas said that the existing Airport Hazard Area overlay zone was no longer needed due to the recent State navigational easement takings.

- f. *§424.4d Accessory Apartments: Delete Conditional Use requirements to ease Accessory Apartment permitting.*

Mr. Thomas said that this Conditional Use requirement should be deleted as Accessory Apartments should not be held to a higher permitting standard than single-family homes.

- g. *§425 Fences: Rewrite Fence regulations, making common fence forms allowable by-right*

Mr. Thomas said that this proposed fence bylaw change would allow most typical fences to be allowed by-right and without a permit.

- h. *§470 Signs: Strike existing Sign regulations and replace with proposed*

Mr. Thomas noted that the changes to the sign bylaw were a priority of Chairman Griswold and that the proposed language simplified the sign requirements without making dramatic changes thereto. Mr. Thomas said that the proposed language for construction sign size needed to be changed from what was advertised at 6 ft.² to 9 ft.². The Planning Council assented to this change.

- i. *§660 Local Act 250 Review: Delete requirement, Morristown is not a MAPA community*

Mr. Thomas explained that this change was a housekeeping item.

- j. *§670 Local Downtown Tax Credit Review: Delete requirement as review doesn't happen*

Mr. Thomas explained that this change was a housekeeping item.

- k. *§910 Other Definitions: Augments Building Height definition, removes all Airport Hazard Area definitions, removes all Fence definitions and replaces existing Fence definitions with a new definition of Fence*

Mr. Thomas explained that the proposed definition changes were supportive of the above proposed zoning changes.

- l. *§1020 BE Zone: Removes Bridge St & Cadys Falls Rd sections from BE Zone*

Mr. Thomas said that this proposed change moved Bridge Street and Cadys Falls Rd from the more design intensive BE Zone and into the INN Zone, which contains far less design requirements and is likely more fitting of these less traveled and visible roads.

- m. *§1054 Industrial Zone #4: Eliminates IND Zone #4 and Removes Trombley Hill Industrial Park there from*

Mr. Thomas explained that this proposed change was part of moving the Trombley Hill Industrial Park from the Industrial Zone to the Innovation Zone.

- n. *§1151 Innovation Zone #1: Establishes INN Zoning for Trombley Hill Industrial Park*

Mr. Thomas explained that this proposed change was part of moving the Trombley Hill Industrial Park from the Industrial Zone to the Innovation Zone.

- o. *§1151 Innovation Zone #2: Establishes INN Zoning for Bridge St & Cadys Falls Rd sections of BE Zone*

Mr. Thomas explained that this proposed change moved current sections of the BE Zone along Bridge Street and Cadys Falls Road into the Innovation Zone.

Member Griswold moved to close the public hearing and to approve the advertised zoning changes, which included the as revised sign size change for construction signs in §470, provided that the changes to the §215 BE Zone be tabled until the residential component therein can be studied in greater detail. The motion was affirmed by a vote of 7 to 0.

Approve prior meeting minutes – Member Hancock moved to approve the March 4, 2014 meeting minutes. A vote of 4-0-3 affirmed the motion with Members Max Paine, Snipp & Struhsacker abstaining.

The meeting adjourned at 9:45 PM – submitted by Todd Thomas, Planning Director

