Morristown/Morrisville Planning Council

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Meeting Minutes of Tuesday 8 March 2022

Council Members present: Steven Foster, Joshua Goldstein, Etienne Hancock (Chair), Tom Snipp, and Allen Van Anda
Council Members absent:
Guests present: Nina Church, Garret Hirchak, Jason McArthur, Dan McLaughlin, Graham Mink, Beth Salvas, Conservation Commission Co-Chair Ron Stancliff, and Development Review Board Members Laura Streets, and Donnie Blake
Staff: Planning Director Todd Thomas

Call to Order: Chair Hancock called the meeting to order in the Community Room of the Old Tegu Theatre at approximately 5:02 P.M.

Prior meeting minutes – Member Goldstein moved to approve the February 8th meeting minutes. A vote of 4-0 affirmed the motion, with Member Foster entering the room just after this vote took place.

Discuss: Airport Industrial Zone #5 & Business Services Definition – Garret Hirchak and Beth Salvas appeared before the Planning Council to discuss plans for their recently purchased 400-acre plus Elmorris Farms property that surrounds the airport. Most of the discussion centered on 89-acre Parcel 12-113, which is zoned Industrial and located directly across Route 100 from the airport. Long term plans for this parcel included a large industrial park, a new public water system that will serve the new development and provide fire suppression. Mr. Hirchak said that he wanted to ensure that the Town's Zoning Bylaws could allow MSI to potentially relocate their Stafford Ave headquarters to this airport parcel in the future, if needed. Council Members discussed potential long-term impacts that the development of Parcel 112-113 could have on Uptown Morristown. Planning Director Thomas thanked Garret Hirchak and Beth Salvas for meeting with the Council, and explained that the discussion of the proposed change to the Business Services definition would continue at the March 22nd Planning Council meeting.

Discuss: Reorganization – Member Goldstein moved for Member Hancock to remain as Chair. A vote of 4-0-1 affirmed the motion with Member Hancock abstaining. Member Foster moved for Member Snipp to remain as Vice Chair. A vote of 4-0-1 affirmed the motion with Member Snipp abstaining.

Discuss: Morrisville/Morristown 2020-2030 Town Plan – Planning Director Thomas said that the Lamoille County Planning Commission (LCPC) asked for additional language deletions to be made in the Transportation Chapter of the Town Plan. Mr. Thomas explained that the Executive Director of LCPC told Town Administrator Eric Dodge that the Town Plan would not be regionally approved without making said language changes. The Council Members were amenable to these as-presented Town Plan changes, and expressed a desire to just get the approval of the new plan complete. Mr. Thomas said he would take these LCPC language changes to the next Selectboard

and Village Trustee meeting for additional approval. He added that if these language deletions were approved at each of these meetings, he anticipated final Town Plan hearings in April, and a Town Plan approval vote later that month, or in early May.

Discuss: Complete Jersey Heights sidewalk in 2023 – Mr. Thomas provided an update on the Council's initiative to plan for and fund the 2023 construction that would fill the gaps in the sidewalk on Jersey Heights and LaPorte Road that will be created this summer by disconnected developer constructed sections of sidewalk. Mr. Thomas provided the updated cost estimate to fills these sidewalk gaps, thereby connecting the Bishop Marshall School to downtown Morrisville via sidewalk for the first time. He added that Town's approximate $400,000 construction cost could be reduced by approximately $50,000 if the traveled way was narrowed in front of 485 & 511 Jersey Heights, and the section of sidewalk that would be built in front of these homes was constructed atop the southern edge of the existing pavement. Jason McArthur of 511 Jersey Heights said he was amendable to this new approach, as it would eliminate negative impacts with the 4 maple trees that run along the front of his property. Planning Council Members were excited about this new proposal because it would preserve the maple trees, save $50,000, and the physical changes to the road would create significant traffic calming. Mr. Thomas said he would ask the Selectboard, at its next meeting, to approve the sidewalk layout change in front of 485 & 511 Jersey Heights, as part of the larger, previously approved, B Street to BJAMS Sidewalk Scoping Study.

Discuss: New zoning to protect contributing structures in the Historic District – Mr. Thomas led the Council through significant revisions to the §207 Historic Preservation Criteria of the Zoning Bylaws. After a long discussion that included extensive input from developer Graham Mink, Dan McLaughlin, and Development Review Board Members Laura Streets, and Donnie Blake, it was agreed that the proposal would be rewritten to focus more acutely on architectural elements (such as trim boards, corner boards, freeze boards, properly proportioned windows, a front entrance with a portico, a front porch, and no vinyl siding) of building façades in the Central Business zoned sections of Main Street, Portland Street, and perhaps some of Bridge Street. It was also agreed that said criteria would only regulate the first 30 feet of lot depth, as measured from the front line of the building on said streets. Member Goldstein, and the vast majority of the audience in attendance, expressed no reservations about taller buildings in downtown Morrisville. Mr. Thomas said he would make this, and the aforementioned changes to the §207 Historic Preservation Criteria language, and present the revisions at the March 22 Council meeting. Chair Hancock reiterated that he expected these revisions to receive addition review and edits over the comings months.

The meeting adjourned at 7:15 PM, submitted by Todd Thomas, Planning Director