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MORRISTOWN/MORRISVILLE
PLANNING COMMISSION
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Minutes of March 7, 2006

Members Present: Bill Henchy, Steve Benson, John Meyer, Kelly Rogers

Members Absent: Richard Duda, Andrew Volansky

Guests: Karen Lynch (Lamoille Economic Development Corp)

Recorder: Mark Leonard, Zoning Administrator (ZA)

Bill called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. On a motion by Bill, seconded by John, minutes of the January 17, 2006 meeting were accepted as presented. There were no minutes from February 7 due to lack of a quorum. Three members attended a Regional Smart Growth Forum in Hardwick in lieu of the February 21 meeting.

The ZA advised that Bruce Tomlinson had resigned from the Commission and that he would be advertising the vacancy.

The first item on the agenda was to review and discuss the draft Town Sewer Service Agreement (TSSA) and Village Trustees comments on the TSSA ahead of a scheduled joint meeting of the Planning Commission, Select Board, and Village Trustees on March 21. Bill did not think the proposed agreement should give the Village Trustees a say in how the Town uses any sewer system allocation it may purchase from the Village. He also expressed concern that the agreement as drafted would allow the Village to sell additional sewer allocation to properties outside the boundaries of the town sewer service area. Such service would encourage commercial or residential growth outside of those areas the Planning Commission has identified as growth centers.

Karen Lynch addressed the issue of providing sewer service to Hearthstone, located at the end of Stafford Avenue in the Industrial district. She advised that Hearthstone is concerned about lack of sewer service to their property as their existing septic system is failing and limits their ability to expand. Without access to the village sewer system, they might be obliged to relocate their business outside of Morristown.

Bill agreed it was in the town's interest to help Hearthstone stay and grow in Morristown, but reiterated his earlier comments that they could apply directly to Village for a sewer allocation under the existing procedure without waiting for a TSSA to be signed. He cited the location of Hearthstone in the Cadys Falls Water Co-op source protection area as an obstacle to any commercial development in that area. Karen said she was under the impression that the Co-op members would be willing to consider hooking onto the municipal water line, which would remove this impediment. The ZA said he would contact the Co-op leader to get their position on this question.

Moving on to prioritizing the Planning Commission's agenda, Bill expressed his view that the TSSA issue was the most immediate, requiring the PC's attention now. He felt that the range of issues for the PC to consider indicated a need for some in-house planning capability on the town staff, rather than relying on contracted services from LCPC or others. The ZA said the Select Board and Town Administrator had considered this in preparing the town budget but had opted not to fund it this year. He said the PC should press the Select Board on funding in the next budget.

Steve suggested that the list of topics discussed in January could be divided among the members, with each member taking primary subject matter responsibility for one topic and secondary responsibility for another. In this way, each member would become more familiar on a given subject than the Commission as a whole could.

Kelly said she felt the Commission could try to address all seven topics previously identified to a lesser degree or could focus on the top three and do a more thorough job.

Steve presented a concept for realigning traffic flow through the village center. The plan would have Portland Street become one-way going south from Bridge Street to the intersection at Main Street while Pleasant

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Street would be one-way northbound from Main Street to a point perpendicular with Bridge Street, where a new road would be required to connect with Bridge Street. Steve said the idea was to improve traffic flow through the village center while enhancing the business uses along the proposed route. He acknowledged that this would be a major change requiring much more study and review before going forward, but felt it was the kind of long-term vision for village improvements that the Planning Commission ought to be considering.

On a motion by John, seconded by Kelly, the meeting adjourned at 8:45PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Mark Leonard, recorder

Minutes approved on: SB/JM 4/4/06