

MORRISTOWN/MORRISVILLE PLANNING COMMISSION
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Meeting Minutes of February 21, 2012

Members Present: Paul Griswold, Bill Henchey (Chair), Reeves Larson, John Meyer, Max Paine & Andrew Volansky

Members Absent: Lauren Traister

Staff: Todd Thomas, Zoning Administrator & Planner

Guests: None

Call to Order: The meeting began at 6:15 P.M. jointly with the Selectboard in the Community Room. The Commission reconvened at 6:45 for its meeting in the upstairs lunchroom immediately after the BED zoning conversation with the Selectboard.

Discussion: BE zoning revisions with the Selectboard – ZA Thomas discussed the recent changes made to the Business Enterprise (BE) zoning district. He said that the revised bylaw no longer prohibits metal buildings in the district, but instead requires that the front façade be comprised of at least two specified high quality building material in addition to any metal (one specified high quality building material if no metal is present on the façade). He added that the existing bylaw only allows for 60% lot coverage for buildings and parking, but that the revised bylaw allows for 60% lot coverage for just buildings. ZA Thomas explained that parking or other impervious surface was not included within the lot coverage percentage of the revised bylaw, but a 25% landscaping requirement and larger front setback was added to ensure that the parcels in the BE zone always retain a leafy and open look. The Selectboard said that they appreciated the Planning Commission's efforts to improve the BE zoning. ZA Thomas said that he would distribute a clean version of the bylaw to the Selectboard and that it would likely be included within the next zoning update.

Discussion: Review "zoning change worksheet" for agenda – The Commission reviewed the highlighted zoning issues on the "zoning change worksheet" slated for discussion at the meeting.

Discussion: Family Child Care Facility & Day Care Facility uses – ZA Thomas provided the Commission with a matrix regarding Family Child Care Facility (FCCF) & Day Care Facility (DCF) use allowances. ZA Thomas reiterated that the current zoning in the COM & SI zones was illegal because a single-family dwelling use was allowed therein and an FCCF use was not. He reminded the Commission that the Members agreed at the last meeting to address this illegality and to add the FCCF use to the IND, AB & LVGC zones because the more intensive DCF use was already allowed in each of these zones. ZA Thomas said that the Commission could finalize the proposed use allowances after Jeanette Fisher from the Vermont Department of Children & Families appeared at the next Commission meeting to discuss potential FCCF & DCF impacts on abutting property owners and neighborhoods.

Discussion: Fair Housing Act exceptions from zoning – ZA Thomas led the Commission through a proposal for an additional exemption to §401.1 of the Bylaw for Fair Housing Act Compliance. ZA Thomas said that he would include the “Reasonable Modification” exemption and corresponding definition within the next zoning update.

Discussion: Bulk storage of fuel zoning change – ZA Thomas proposed eliminating the phrase “in the Industrial District” from §481 Bulk Storage of Fuel with the next zoning update, as this use was allowed in more than just the IND zone.

Discussion: Proposed definition for setback – ZA Thomas introduced a proposed definition for Setback. Member Volansky asked ZA Thomas to work on including roof overhangs into the definition for the next meeting.

Discussion: Letter regarding temporary signage – ZA Thomas introduced draft language that would exempt certain factory tent sales from the sign bylaw’s prohibition on temporary signage. The Commissioners reviewed the language and requested that ZA Thomas add in some time constraints and also reevaluate how long permitted temporary signage could remain in place, both to be reviewed at the next meeting.

Discussion: Zoning relief req. front setback, LDR (Beeman) – ZA Thomas shared a letter dated 2/15/2012 and a plan dated 1/31/2012, both from Outback Design of Johnson, requesting front setback relief for 945 Laporte Road (Tara Beeman). Chair Henchey confirmed that the requested front setback relief was for the entire LDR zone and not just the subject parcel. ZA Thomas said that it was. Member Griswold said that the 200 foot setback requirement seemed somewhat severe since none of the existing structures in the district complied. The Commission debated the merits of the request and agreed that they would discuss it further if the proposed house site and edge of ATR roadway were staked in the field. ZA Thomas said that he would pass the staking request along to Outback.

Discussion: Revised Wellness Plan – ZA Thomas distributed the newly revised Wellness Plan that the Commission sent to a subcommittee comprised of Member Griswold, Kate Whitehead and Allen Godin for further review. The Commission discussed the brevity of the revised Wellness Plan. Member Griswold said that the currently plan was distilled to the essence of wellness and that is why the subcommittee members could all agree to it. ZA Thomas asked the Commissioners to review the draft plan and bring any comments thereon to the next meeting.

Discussion: Architectural design invitation for BE changes – The Commissioners approved the draft invitation for BED compliant designs and instructed ZA Thomas to send the invitation to the previously discussed local architects.

Approve prior meeting minutes – Upon a motion made by Member Larson, the February 7, 2012 meeting minutes were accepted. A vote of 6-0 affirmed the motion.

The meeting adjourned at 8:00 PM. – respectfully submitted by Todd Thomas, ZA