

Morristown/Morrisville Planning Council
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Meeting Minutes of Tuesday 19 February 2019

Council Members Present: Steven Foster, Etienne Hancock, Joshua Goldstein, and Tom Snipp

Council Members Absent: Allen Van Anda, and Linda Greaves

Guests: Selectwoman Judy Bickford

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 – Member Goldstein moved to approve the December 4th meeting minutes. The motion was affirmed by a vote of 3-0, with Member Hancock abstaining. Member Snipp moved to approve the January 15th meeting minutes. The motion was affirmed by a vote of 3-0, with Member Foster abstaining. Member Goldstein moved to approve the February 5th meeting minutes. A vote of 4-0 affirmed the motion.

Discuss: Inclusionary Zoning (Selectwoman Bickford) – Selectwoman Bickford said that she wanted the Town to have an inclusionary housing policy in order to help maintain affordable housing. Members talked about what it might take to administer such a policy. Member Foster suggested offering a density bonus for the creation of affordable housing. Mr. Thomas said that any density bonus needs to thread the needle of being generous enough so developers will actually use it, while also resulting in development projects of a scale that still fit with its host neighborhood. Chair Hancock said that he liked the idea of offering a density bonus because it kept the town out of running a housing program. The Council agreed that the Town should look to find more ways to create new affordable housing, especially ownership. Member Goldstein said that we should look to peer communities such as Gunnison, Colorado or the towns up valley from Aspen. Mr. Thomas said that Lamoille Housing Partnership or the United Way should be invited to an upcoming meeting to see if they would be willing to help or partner in the effort to create more affordable housing in Morrisville.

Discuss: Low Density Residential (LDR) Zone for the North End – Mr. Thomas said that the Council previously discussed allowing greater residential density to encourage the construction of more single-family homes in the North End of town, from Pinewood Estates to Cadys Falls. The Council examined some mapping prepared by Mr. Thomas showing where the proposed expansion of Low Density Residential Zoning could take place. The Council asked Mr. Thomas to conduct a buildout analysis based on this mapping for an upcoming meeting.

Discuss: LDR Zone along the Village's southern border – Mr. Thomas presented a map to the Council that squared off the southern border of the village by expanding the LDR Zone thereto. This zone expansion, which could help create more single family

homes in this area, as proposed, would move its southern boundary from just north of Lague Road to Meadow Road. Mr. Thomas said that offering a higher and better use in this area might create some redevelopment interest in places like the vacant multi-family across from the bulk fuel facility or at the adjacent junkyard. Mr. Thomas was asked to conduct a buildout analysis based on this mapping for an upcoming meeting.

Discuss: Mixed Office Residential Zone changes for Park Street – Mr. Thomas pointed out various parcels on Park Street that were built-out based on the maximum Mixed Office Residential zoning density allowed, but still had acres of open land available for development within the core of the Village. The Council thought that the High Density Residential Zone should be extended to the bottom of hill on Park St. Mr. Thomas said he would amend the proposed map, in addition to downzoning the tail of the Mixed Office Residential Zone to Medium Density Residential. Mr. Thomas was also asked to conduct a buildout analysis based on this mapping for an upcoming meeting.

Discuss: Evaluate residential density in the Commercial Zone – Member Goldstein said that he wants to find more places for new housing in Morrisville. He said that when he drives up Brooklyn Street, he thinks this is a good area to help that housing need. Mr. Thomas said that he provided a memo offering recommendations for this zone, including rezoning the top half of the old Langdell Farm parcel to residential. Member Hancock agreed that the Commercial Zone should not extend up to Frazier Road. Mr. Thomas also suggested allowing residential uses on the second and third floors of businesses in the Commercial Zone. Mr. Thomas said he would provide some case studies of such. It was decided that Chris Chauvin should be invited into an upcoming meeting to discuss rezoning the upper portion of the old Langdell Farm. Mr. Thomas was also asked to add a discussion of residential density in the Central Business Zone to an upcoming meeting. The Council discussed that the limited availability of parking in the downtown was the main impediment to allowing more residential housing units therein.

The meeting adjourned at 7:35 PM, submitted by Todd Thomas, Planning Director