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**MORRISTOWN/MORRISVILLE
PLANNING COMMISSION
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Minutes of February 13, 2007

Members Present: Bill Henchy, Richard Duda, John Meyer, Andrew Volansky, Lauren Traister, Kelly Rogers, Steve Berson

Members Absent: none

Guests: Dave Crawford (Town Administrator), Heidi Krantz (Community Coordinator)

Recorder: Mark Leonard, Zoning Administrator (ZA)

Chairman Bill Henchy called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. Agenda for the meeting was to discuss the board's views on the pending Pope Meadow subdivision application and review the proposed community development survey.

The Pope Meadow 22-lot subdivision proposal had been discussed at the previous meeting with a number of neighboring residents and a representative of the developer in attendance. The board reviewed a letter from Dawn Andrews (copy attached), who had attended that meeting, expressing her opinion that the project was desirable from the standpoint of increasing the overall housing stock in town and of providing housing that is affordable for moderate income households in today's housing market.

Board members discussed whether they felt that the project conformed to the zoning bylaws for the Medium Density Residential (MDR) zoning district and the subdivision bylaw requirements and standards. They agreed that it does conform to the objectives and minimum residential density requirements for the MDR district, although they discussed whether the current density requirements were appropriate in this part of the district or should be revised.

In reviewing the subdivision design standards in regard to this project, members felt that the DRB should consider whether the proposal adequately addressed the need for open space (as defined in the bylaws) and had sufficiently detailed landscaping plans to mitigate the visual impact of the development on surrounding neighborhoods. They also expressed concern about the traffic impact of the project, voicing support for requiring a detailed traffic impact analysis that would also address pedestrian safety requirements.

Members discussed whether the project was consistent with the Town Plan. Within the Housing section, the project appears to support the goal of 'offering options for residential development which accommodates the various ages, income levels, and housing preferences of Morristown's diverse population' while possibly being at odds with the goal of 'providing for orderly residential growth that maintains the character of existing neighborhoods, allows for ample green space, and is compatible with the physical capacities of land and existing facilities and services'. Additionally, the Land Use section calls for 'orderly residential, commercial, and industrial growth while maintaining the character and vitality of our neighborhoods'. The question to be resolved by the DRB is whether the project is out of character with surrounding neighborhoods in the same zoning district solely on the basis of its higher density.

The board chair requested that the ZA draft a letter from the Planning Commission to the DRB expressing its view that the project conforms to the zoning bylaws and requesting that the DRB give careful consideration to the subdivision design standards for open space under aesthetics (section 810.5) and landscaping (section 860.3).

Members reviewed the proposed community development survey and agreed to cut down the length of the survey. They also modified several of the questions. Heidi Krantz agreed to update the survey with these revisions for the board's final approval in time to get the survey out at Town Meeting.

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The ZA advised members of the Senate Transportation committee hearing on proposed funding changes for the Morrisville bypass project, to be held in town on Feb 20. Bill said he would attend the hearing.

Review and approval of the minutes of the February 6, 2007 meeting was deferred to the next meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 9:45 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Mark Leonard, recorder

Minutes approved on: 3/20/07 AV/JM