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MORRISTOWN/MORRISVILLE
PLANNING COMMISSION
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Minutes of January 16, 2007

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

Members Absent: none

Guests: see attached list

Recorder: Mark Leonard, Zoning Administrator (ZA)

Chairman Bill Henchy called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. This meeting was a stakeholder meeting on issues regarding the Housing section of the Town Plan. The ZA prefaced the group discussions with an overview of zoning terms and definitions and description of the various residential zoning districts in the village and town.

LCPC land use planner Mike Miller provided two definitions of 'affordable' housing: 80% of the median household income for the county (~$40K), which equates to $32K, results in monthly housing costs of just under $800 or housing costs that do not exceed 30% of household income (not tied to any county median income figure).

Community Coordinator Heidi Krantz explained the process of breaking into groups to address four questions in each group. The four questions, along with a summary of comments and responses, are attached to these minutes. There was broad consensus that zoning regulations should be reviewed to consider allowing density bonuses in order to preserve open space and encourage affordable housing, to identify and revise zoning requirements (for example, number of parking spaces per unit) that hinder the development of more affordable housing, and to consider changes to or creation of new zoning districts to more appropriately define lot size and use requirements in various areas across the town.

The ZA provided an overview of what zoning is (and is not), what current zoning allows in various districts, and what options for changes that could affect the town's housing requirements exist. He noted that while some people might be inclined to see the Town Plan as a means of solving housing problems, in practical terms the town's resources are limited. While zoning provides some tools to affect the availability of housing, other options, such as property tax incentives, would be much more difficult to employ. He suggested focusing on two questions: what are the housing needs of the community as a whole and through zoning changes, what can the town do to positively impact these needs. Alternate housing development modes, such as co-housing projects, should also be examined.

Minutes of the January 2, 2007meeting were reviewed and accepted. The meeting adjourned at 9:15 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Mark Leonard, recorder

Minutes approved on: 2/6/07