

**MORRISTOWN/MORRISVILLE
PLANNING COMMISSION
P.O. BOX 748
MORRISVILLE, VT 05661
Phone (802) 888-6373
Fax (802) 888-6378**

Minutes of January 15, 2002

Members Present: Julia Compagna, Kevin Lane, Bill Bourne, Sam Guy, Kelly Rogers, and Bill Henchey

Members Absent: Bruce Tomlinson

Guests: Development Review Board: Gary Nolan (chair), Theresa Breault; Select Board: Brian Greenia (chair), Mark Struhsacker; Village Trustees: Dick Sargent; Conservation Commission: Kathleen O'Neill (chair), Gert Lepine; Paul McGinley (Town Administrator), Heidi Krantz (Community Coordinator), Scott Corse (Morristown Community Partnership), Mike Miller (LCPC Planner), Mike Stafford (Recreation Trails Committee), Steve Rae

Julia Compagna, Chair, formally called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM. This is a joint meeting of the Planning Commission and Development Review Board, with members of the Morristown Select Board, Morrisville Village Trustees, and various community organizations invited to attend. The purpose of the joint meeting is to exchange information and coordinate activities among the various groups in the town and village who are involved in land use and development issues.

Mike Miller, planner at Lamoille County Planning Commission, spoke on the process of updating the Town Plan. Morristown has received a grant of \$8,000 to rewrite the Town Plan and LCPC will be hired to execute the grant. The Town Plan revision is not due until Spring of 2003, but it's not too early to start the process. This will allow for more input from throughout the community and should result in a better product. Key issues include identifying goals in the plan which will enable subsequent grant applicants to be eligible for more aid. Grant applicants usually must demonstrate a need identified in the Town Plan to be eligible for grant money. The more specific the goal, the more likely the grant application will be favorably reviewed. Mike had no timetable or process outline yet for development of the Town Plan revision, but would be meeting soon with the Planning Commission to lay one out.

The findings of the Morristown Economic Opportunity Study, prepared by Cynthia Tokos under a separate grant, were reviewed and discussed. Paul McGinley said the study identified some problem areas noted by local business people. Julia advised that another planning grant was being applied for which would address downtown issues; she anticipated this study would be more action-specific than the Tokos report. It would include a market analysis of the village downtown area and look at underutilization of downtown buildings. This grant would produce assessments of specific properties by engineers and architects and a priority project list that could be used for specific improvement projects. Julia expected most downtown business owners would participate as the results of this study could directly benefit them. The study will also help complete the 'Downtown Designation' process. The town may wish to expand the boundaries of the historic district in the designated downtown area to include more buildings. Heidi Krantz is preparing this new grant application. It requires a \$12,000 match from the town, which the Select Board has already approved from the Morristown Development Fund. If approved, funds should be available in May 2002 and would be used over an 18-month period.

Julia updated the status of Suss Microtech's (formerly Karl Suss) plans to relocate from their present Waterbury location. They are looking to double the size of their facility, with a comparable increase in their workforce. Julia had spoken with someone at Suss and determined that the Morristown Business Office Park district would be well suited for this business. The Union Carbide property on Route 100 would be a good location, except that the planned bypass would cut that lot in half, with neither half large enough for Suss' needs. Suss is also looking

to make the move within the next year, which may be quicker than Union Carbide is looking to vacate. Union Carbide is willing to entertain offers for its property, the bypass notwithstanding. Sam pointed out that the town couldn't poach businesses from other towns unless the business in question comes to us first. Kevin asked who is responsible for seeking out new firms who might relocate to Morristown: LEDC, Chamber of Commerce, the state? All agreed that the town should clearly identify an agency to perform this function. Bill Henchy asked if the Select Board would be willing to offer tax incentives to help in such efforts. Brian Greenia replied that prior to Act 60, the town was willing to do so, but that under 'Tax Stabilization' that came with Act 60 it was much harder to do.

Julia advised that an AOT representative plans to attend the select Board meeting on February 4th to provide the latest status on the Route 100 Bypass. She said that the Planning Commission had discussed possible short-term alternatives while the bypass project is still pending, but none were feasible. Several members suggested sign changes to improve traffic flow at the corner of Bridge and Brooklyn Streets. There is a state-funded project to rehab the Tenney Bridge on the east end of town.

Julia informed those present that the Planning Commission had adopted a policy of reviewing the zoning and subdivision bylaws annually, in the Jan-Feb timeframe. In the current review, the commission was mostly looking at correcting spelling, grammatical, and technical errors in the bylaws, with only a handful of substantive changes being considered. Public input on this process is welcomed.

Members of the groups indicated made the following comments:

Town Administrator: Paul McGinley informed the members of pending revisions to state regulations on stormwater discharge and treatment. Applicants will need a state stormwater discharge permit. Locally, applicants for conditional uses have conditions placed on their permit approval by the Development Review Board to address on-site stormwater treatment. There are no restrictions or conditions on permitted use applications. He went on to say that the Town Plan revision must address sewer requirements in its land use section. This was vital if commercial growth in the north end of town was going to be effectively managed. He updated the status of the Brooklyn Street Sidewalk Project and said that the planned Oxbow sidewalk project did not meet required design criteria and was being reworked.

Conservation Commission: Kathleen O'Neill said the Conservation Commission planned to work closely with the Planning Commission in drafting revisions to the Land Use section of the Town Plan.

Morristown Community Partnership: They expect to be more involved in and focused on events and special programs, such as the town festival held in the summer.

Morristown Select Board: The Select Board has drafted a budget for the coming fiscal year; it contains a 3.3% increase in property taxes. The Board will begin to include permit fees under general revenues. Brian Greenia noted that there have been no increases in zoning permit fees in over seven years. He asked the Zoning Administrator to research what other town charge and provide the Board a recommendation on any increases. Julia asked if the Board had considered assessing 'impact fees' on developers or new businesses. Brian said they had looked at this a few years ago, but that they couldn't effectively apply such fees here. He said the town may accept up to three (3) miles of new town roads from currently private roads. He is still getting queries from some individuals about the possibility of permitting mini-storage in existing barns. Julia advised him on the Planning Commission's efforts over the last several months to address this issue. The result was a vote not to draft such a bylaw to replace the one which had been improperly adopted and which had been rescinded by the Select Board last month. Lastly, he noted that all future municipal meetings would be held in the new Morrisville Water and Light Department building. The change of venue would be announced in various forums.

Recreation Trails Committee: The committee's goal is to connect the schools, the planned CREW facility and existing trails into a network and eventually link it to other towns and trails. They are seeking grants to look at land acquisition and other means of trails access.

Village Trustees: The Board of Trustees and the Water and Light Commission will merge into a single legislative body in April 2002 under a new charter; it will be the Village of Morrisville Board of Trustees. Under the new charter, the Board of Trustees will be responsible for water, sewer, and light services in the village. The sewer treatment plant is at about 75% of its operating capacity. When it reaches 80% of capacity, the Village will have to develop an expansion or replacement plan.

Julia thanked those in attendance for their participation in the meeting and looked forward to working with them over the coming year. Minutes of the December 18, 2001 meeting were reviewed. Bill Henchy made a motion to approve the minutes as written, Sam seconded the motion, and it was approved unanimously.

Sam moved and Bill Henchy seconded a motion to adjourn the meeting; motion was approved unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 9:10PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mark Leonard, recorder

Cc: Town of Morristown Select Board
Morristown/Morrisville Development Review Board
Town Clerk