Morristown/Morrisville Planning Council

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Meeting Minutes of Tuesday 11 January 2022

Council Members present: Steven Foster, Joshua Goldstein, Etienne Hancock (Chair), Tom Snipp, and Allen Van Anda
Council Members absent:
Guests present: Tyler Machia, Conservation Commission Chair Ron Stancliff, and Development Review Board Member Laura Streets
Staff: Planning Director Todd Thomas

Call to Order: Chair Hancock called the meeting to order in the Community Room of the Old Tegu Theatre at approximately 5:00 P.M.

Prior meeting minutes – After a lengthy discussion and disagreement regarding the November 9th meeting minutes, the Council decided to take no action regarding formally approving them. Member Foster moved to approved the December 14th meeting minutes. A vote of 3-0-2 affirmed the motion (with Members Hancock and Goldstein abstaining).

Discuss: Morrisville/Morristown 2020-2030 Town Plan reporting form – Planning Director Thomas walked Planning Council Members through changes made to the Town Plan at the recent Village Trustee warned public hearing. Mr. Thomas added that the Selectboard would need to match these changes at their upcoming meeting on the 18th, and that the Selectboard may choose to make additional language changes at that meeting, which would necessitate another round of Town Plan hearings. In regard to additional Town Plan language changes, Mr. Thomas presented an email from Selectboard Member Jess Graham. The Council jointly drafted responses to the 6 questions raised in this email. Mr. Thomas said that the Planning Council response to this email would be discussed at the upcoming January 18th Selectboard meeting, which he encouraged Planning Council Members to attend. Mr. Thomas added that the State required reporting form would need to be updated again for upcoming the Selectboard Town Plan changes.

Discuss: Laura Streets for §505(h) composting requirement – Development Review Board Member Laura Streets reappeared before the Planning Council regarding a proposed requirement that site plans show locations for communal compost in multi-family housing developments. Mr. Thomas noted that Demars Properties and Green Mountain Management submitted emails to him in opposition to this proposal. It was discussed that wildlife can be a problem with outdoor compost locations. Member Snipp noted that the food scraps that would be composted were currently in the adjacent dumpster and already available to wildlife. Member Foster noted that these compost locations were already part of the Rental Health Housing Code checklist. Council Members agreed to require that compost receptacles be shown on site plans, as required by the proposed revision to Section 502(h) of the Zoning Bylaws. Mr. Thomas said that language change would be part of the next zoning update (slated to take place in the fall).

Discuss: Zoning for IND#2 (Houle Ave east) – Mr. Thomas submitted a revised map showing a potential zoning change for a portion of the IND#2 Zone (east of Houle Ave, but limited to the south side of Harrel Street). Member Foster noted that 9 of the 10 parcels in this area, on the south side of Harrel Street, were already in residential use (even though this area was currently zoned Industrial). It was discussed that landowners in this area had not come to a consensus regarding a potential zoning change. Therefore, Council members decided to table any further zoning change discussion for the IND-2 area, which continues the existing prohibition on the creation of new residential uses in this area.

Discuss: Change Business Services Definition – As part of the above IND#2 Zone discussion, the Council reviewed the proposed revision to the Business Services definition that was previously discussed with Lyndon Burkholder of Green Mountain Trailers. Certain Council Members expressed concern that the scope of such a change could be much bigger than originally imagined. It was agreed that this topic would be discussed at the next meeting, along with some proposed controls designed to limit the scale of newly proposed buildings by the airport (IND#5 Zone).

Discuss: Subdivision sketch plan approval changes – Mr. Thomas asked Council Members to review some proposed process changes to the portion of the Zoning Bylaws that regulates subdivision approval. He explained that the proposed changes would allow an applicant to bring a subdivision sketch plan in front of the DRB, a cost-friendly remedy that was not available to applicants now. Mr. Thomas said that this change would be included as part of the larger fall zoning change process unless a Council member objected.

The meeting adjourned at 7:25 PM, submitted by Todd Thomas, Planning Director