

Montpelier Planning Commission
January 09, 2006
City Council Chambers, City Hall

Subject to Review and Approval

Present: Carolyn Grodinsky, Vice-Chair; David Borgendale; Anne Campbell; Craig Graham; Ken Jones; Richard Sedano
Staff: Valerie Capels, Planning & Community Development Director

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Ms. Grodinsky at 7:05 p.m.

Minutes

The minutes were not available for review.

Public Appearances

Tim Carver, of East Montpelier said that he owns 70 acres of land and wanted to comment on the new zoning. Mr. Jones asked whether Mr. Carver could make his comments when the Commission got to that item on the agenda. Mr. Carver said he had given the Commission written comments and would wait until the Commission took up that agenda item.

Public Hearing - Master Plan Amendments

Ms. Capels gave an overview of the Master Plan amendments that were under consideration. She said the Regional Planning Commission did not approve the Master Plan amendments this summer because they found the amended Master Plan to be lacking adequate provisions related to child care and updated data. The proposed changes are intended to address those deficiencies. She said that the new data was intended to supplement, but not replace the existing data in the Master Plan.

Ms. Grodinsky invited the public to comment. Claire Kendall said she works at the Family Center of Washington County. She appreciated Montpelier's desire to address this issue. It was excellent that the Master Plan amendment highlights the availability of child care and the benefits to the city. The encouragement of private child care facilities is important. She would provide two grammatical corrections in writing and added that recommendation B on page 4 is very important.

Mr. Carver said that although he is a member of the Regional Planning Commission, he was not representing that agency at this meeting. He had communicated his thoughts with the Planning Commission and the Council on the Master Plan amendments and zoning regulations.

Ms. Capels said that Ms. Kendall's comments reminded her of an amendment she had prepared. Ms. Capels suggested the following sentence be added to the second paragraph on page 2; "Information provided by the Family Center of Washington County indicates that, as of December 2005, the total capacity of licensed programs in registered homes in Montpelier can accommodate 46 infants and toddlers, 208 preschoolers and 396 school-aged children, 250 of these are for summer and school vacations only." Kathleen Burroughs said there are well over 30 legally exempt providers that would not be included in those numbers. Ms. Grodinsky asked if the information on the legally exempt providers could be added. Ms. Capels said yes. She added that, if the Planning Commission endorses the draft amendments, they will be forwarded

to the City Council. The Council could then warn hearings in February. Once adopted by the Council, the amendments would be resubmitted to the Regional Planning Commission.

Ms. Grodinsky asked if anyone else wanted to testify. There was no response and Ms. Grodinsky closed the hearing.

MOTION: Ms. Campbell made a motion that the revisions to the draft Master Plan amendments be approved. Mr. Graham seconded the motion. Mr. Borgendale asked which group of children the 250 childcare spaces for summer vacations referred to. Ms. Capels said that it referred to the 396 spaces for school-age children. Ms. Grodinsky said that should be clarified. Ms. Campbell suggested adding "are for school age children" to the sentence. Ms. Grodinsky asked whether the Commission should wait to get a better number for the legally exempt care providers. Ms. Capels said that the amendment could say that there are approximately 30 such facilities. The Commission agreed. The Commission voted unanimously to approve the motion as revised.

Mr. Borgendale asked whether the motion included the data update. Mr. Jones said that he thought that the Commission had already approved that aspect. Ms. Capels said she thought a motion would be good to clarify that this was ready to move on to the Council.

MOTION: Mr. Borgendale made a motion that the data update amendment be sent to the Council. Ms. Campbell seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

Proposed Zoning Revisions

Ms. Grodinsky asked Tim Carver if he would like to give his comments at this time. Mr. Carver said his written comments summarize his concerns and that he would not take up the Commission's time by going over them. Ms. Grodinsky said the Commission will be holding a public meeting on January 17, 2006 for the public to discuss ideas. She added that the public hearing will be held on January 23.

Public Meeting:

Ms. Grodinsky asked whether there was any need to discuss the meeting further. Mr. Sedano said the Commission needed to think about how to best inform the public of the key aspects of the proposed revisions. He said that Commissioners could each speak about the aspects of the proposal they felt were most important or each Commissioner could discuss a different topic from the proposal. Mr. Jones said he thought that it was important to emphasize that there are opportunities to develop land in Conservation Areas while protecting community resources. He said that it should be made clear that the Planning Commission is trying to add clarity and is not trying to shut development down.

Ms. Grodinsky asked Commissioners how they wished to approach the meeting. Mr. Jones offered to take up the topic that he had just described. He was willing to develop a list of other topics that the Commissioners could choose from. Ms. Grodinsky said the two fact sheets and a large scale map should be available at the meeting. Mr. Borgendale said he thought there were three topics that represented the most dramatic changes. These are the community resource inventories, the community resource overlays, and the evaluation the Development Review Board will conduct. Ms. Grodinsky added that the zoning map will also be important. Mr. Jones added the movement toward mixed-use zoning to the list. Mr. Sedano added the

topics of the streamlining of the application process and the building form changes. Ms. Grodinsky said that copies of the Commission's report to the City Council should also be available at the meeting. Ms. Campbell said it would also be helpful to have Geoff Beyer's map of the trail network. The map with the breakout of the numbers of units for the HDR and LDR would also be helpful. Ms. Capels said that she was working with Eric on that information. She would also have the existing and proposed zoning maps and the future land use map from the Master Plan.

Mr. Graham offered to take on the streamlining and building form topics. Mr. Jones said he would cover the map and the community resource overlay. Ms. Grodinsky and Ms. Campbell said that they would talk about the community resource inventory. Ms. Capels said that she could discuss the changes to the DRB procedures, lot sizes and mixed uses.

Potential Schedule for Zoning Revisions:

Ms. Capels said that Yvonne Byrd asked the City Council if, after the public hearing, they would like to have a similar meeting with the Planning Commission. A tentative date for such a meeting would be February 1. It might make sense to communicate with the Council before finalizing any substantial revisions from the public hearing. She asked whether the Planning Commission would want to schedule a special meeting on February 6 to finalize any changes. Ms. Capels said that it would then be possible to have a revised draft for another Planning Commission hearing on February 27. Mr. Borgendale said he thought that it would be good to have a meeting with the Council before finalizing the revisions because he would like to hear their reactions. Mr. Jones said that February 27 would be just a few days before the election. The Council may have a problem with a hearing on that date. The Commission may want to get the Council's reaction to the schedule. Mr. Sedano said there were not many days to spare before the May deadline. He thought the Commission should focus on doing its job as quickly as possible since that was what the Council had requested. The other Commission members generally agreed.

Ms. Capels asked whether the Commission would be interested in a special meeting on February 6 to go over and finalize any revisions in response to the public hearing. Ms. Campbell said that it would be helpful to have the meeting with the Council before the Commission finalizes the revisions. She did not want to finalize the changes on February 6 if the Council cannot meet with them on February 1. Mr. Sedano said the Commission needed to keep moving forward. The Commission can be available to meet with the Council before February 6, but the Commission should proceed to do the work it needs to do. Mr. Borgendale said that, regardless of the timing of the meeting with the Council, the Commission could use the February 6 meeting to do a lot of the work on the revisions. The work did not necessarily have to be finalized on that date. Ms. Capels said the draft would have to be finalized and published by February 9 in order to have a public hearing on February 27. Mr. Sedano said he expected the Council will want to meet with the Commission. The Commission wants to meet with them also, but cannot put itself in the position of needing to hold the meeting in order to move ahead. Ms. Grodinsky asked Ms. Capels to convey the fact that the Commission would be available for a meeting on February 1. Ms. Capels said that she would coordinate the arrangement of a meeting.

Mr. Borgendale asked whether a redlined version of the draft could be published for the second hearing. Ms. Capels said that should be possible. Mr. Sedano said that an alternative would be to publish a list of the changes, if there were not a large number of them. He said that the Commission could decide when it is clear how extensive the changes will be.

Ms. Capels noted that there are 5 Mondays in January and the Commission could use January 30 for a special meeting. Ms. Grodinsky said that she would prefer that date to February 6. The Commissioners agreed to schedule a special meeting on January 30 with February 6 as a fall back date, if needed. Ms. Capels said that the next meeting after February 27 will be March 13. Mr. Jones said that the Commission could leave open the possibility of finalizing the revisions after the close of the hearing on February 27. Mr. Borgendale said he would be comfortable with that because one purpose of the second hearing is to validate that the Commission heard and considered comments from the first hearing. Mr. Sedano agreed. Ms. Grodinsky said that meant that the Commission will stay after the February 27 hearing and try to finalize the proposal. Mr. Jones said that assumes that the Commission will not have to make significant changes.

Other

Ms. Grodinsky said she had received the Commissioners' comments on the article that she drafted for the Bridge. She will look at the comments and send a revised draft to everyone.

Adjournment

Mr. Sedano made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:30 p.m. Mr. Borgendale seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Valerie Capels

Transcribed by Kathleen Swigon.

These minutes are subject to approval by the Planning Commission. Changes, if any, will be recorded in the minutes of the meeting at which they were acted upon.