

Montpelier Planning Commission
October 3, 2011
Community Room, Montpelier Police Department

Subject to Review and Approval

Present: Jon Anderson, John Bloch, Kimberly Cheney, and Tina Ruth; also Youth Members Reed Bingham and Emma Campbell.
Staff: Gwen Hallsmith, Director of Planning & Community Development

Election of Vice Chair:

Upon a motion duly made by Tina Ruth and John Bloch, Jon Anderson was elected unanimously as Vice Chair. Vice Chair Jon Anderson chaired the meeting.

Review and Approval of September 19, 2011 Minutes:

Upon a motion duly made by Kim Cheney and Tina Ruth the Minutes of the September 19, 2011 were approved by acclamation.

Discussion of Suburban Zoning District:

Planning Commission Members discussed the possibility of inclusionary housing ordinances and the goals and suburban density requirements.

Mr. Bloch said if they want cluster housing then they have to be careful what they say are the development rights for the land. We need to come up with some type of vision that can be implemented. What does it look like?

Ms. Hallsmith said they need to enact design regulations to regulate what it looks like. That is part of the standards they need to develop. One of the reasons to have a higher density basic lot size is you can do infill development and have housing lots carved out in between some of the housing that have large lots and large frontages.

Mr. Anderson said he thinks they are saying to get rid of the one unit per lot and target density. There would be a maximum density and have a lot size of 7,500 square feet. They could require a minimum which would prevent them from getting into the situation of requiring 10 acre lots for subdivisions. The smaller the minimums the less need there is to rely on a PUD to achieve clustering.

Ms. Hallsmith said they are clustering the city by keeping the rural areas in a very highly incentivized cluster situation where you are preserving a lot of the existing open space but concentrating development in areas that can support it. The other tool that might be worth some discussion is the transfer of development rights because that would still allow for some preservation in certain targeted areas of the suburban district in return for higher density elsewhere.

Planning Commission Members discussed densities and lot sizes per housing units in the Suburban District.

Mr. Anderson said for purposes of giving the Planning staff guidance he would like to start with the purpose and description. The only objection he has to that is he has trouble understanding mixed use in these areas. He understands the plan is saying we want more housing. He isn't reading the plan saying we want more downtown type uses out in the suburbs.

Mr. Cheney inquired what mixed use meant.

Ms. Hallsmith replied you could have some commercial development in these areas like a convenience store on the corner or a coffee shop. Even if some of Crestview remains in the suburban district you could have some office space mixed in with some housing so people would walk to work instead of all being

concentrated in the downtown. Office use and daycares would support residents. Right now they have taken what was allowed in MDR and put it on the chart. If you were to encourage more mixed uses you would take things like bed and breakfasts and move it from conditional to permitted uses. You would take a family care facility and move it from conditional to permitted uses. You would move some of those into the area so they could develop in a residential area. If you look at Montpelier from an economic development perspective the biggest challenge she faces is when businesses like these want to come to town. There is nowhere for them to go and we are out of space.

Mr. Anderson inquired about the density discussion.

Ms. Hallsmith replied she got rid of the one unit per lot based on the conversation. Maybe there could be a lot size of 7,260 square feet as the minimum. They could leave the density standards the same because lot size is different than density.

Mr. Anderson said Gwen has asked to move certain uses into permitted from conditional uses. What is the sense of the committee?

Mr. Bloch said he believes they should put nature centers into permitted uses and animal boarding facilities or kennels.

Ms. Hallsmith said if they are shooting for mixed use moving some of the things that are conditional use into permitted use with site plan review might be the way to achieve it.

Mr. Anderson said he understands their direction to staff is that uses are staying where it is with nature center in permitted use.

Ms. Hallsmith said what she has right now moving into permitted with site plan review is bed and breakfast, art gallery, community center, family care facility, artisan's studio, catering service, convenience/commercial. She highlighted medical center as a possibility. Housing for the elderly could be a conditional use. A cultural facility could be conditional. Animal care/veterinarian could be conditional. Business services would be conditional. She is moving some of the prohibited uses into conditional use and some conditional uses into permitted.

The sense of Commission Members was to leave animal care and landscaped services as a conditional use. Theatre use could be a conditional use. Light manufacturing would be moved to a conditional use. These are from the existing use tables.

Mr. Anderson said they haven't discussed Crestview.

Mr. Cheney said he wants the minutes to reflect that he has heard the discussion but isn't ready to approve it. He understands it is guidance and will come back to the Planning Commission.

Adjournment:

John Bloch moved the meeting adjourn. Tina Ruth seconded the motion. The Planning Commission adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Gwen Hallsmith, Director
Planning & Community Development

Transcribed by: Joan Clack