

**Montpelier Planning Commission**  
**Monday, January 27, 2003**  
**City Hall, 7:00 pm**

***Subject to Review and Approval***

**Present:** Chair David Borgendale, Members Carolyn Grodinsky, Vice-Chair Sara Teachout, Bryan Mitofsky, Anne Campbell, Irene Facciolo, Curt McCormack, Planning Director Valerie Capels, Planner Stephanie Smith

**Others present:** Charles Rubner

**Call to Order by the Chair.**

Mr. Borgendale called the meeting to order at 7:10 p.m.

**Approval of the Minutes.**

Mr. Mitofsky moved to approve the January 13, 2003 meeting minutes, seconded by Ms. Facciolo. The motion passed 6-0, with Mr. McCormack abstaining.

The December 9, 2002 meeting minutes were not available for review or action.

**Comments from the Chair**

Mr. Borgendale introduced Curt McCormack, the new member of the Planning Commission appointed by the City Council at their last meeting. Mr. Borgendale asked Mr. McCormack to give a brief presentation of his background.

Mr. McCormack said he currently works for Vermont Public Interest Research Group, and is involved in the Smart Growth initiative and public education on reducing Sprawl. He worked in the Legislature for many years and was the Bike/Ped Coordinator with AOT. Mr. McCormack was involved in the funding and completion of Montpelier's Winooski East and West Bike Path. Mr. McCormack said he would be interested in being a Planning Commission liaison to the City-State Commission.

**Section 204.B Zoning Revision**

The Commission discussed the Development Review Board's interpretation of the zoning regulations concerning parking in this district, which was that parking could be within a building that covered 60% of a lot, in addition to the 25% allowed for surface parking, leaving 15% as green space. The City Council asked the Planning Commission to clarify the regulation.

Materials previously distributed and Mr. Borgendale's recent draft language were reviewed. Mr. Mitofsky made a motion to accept the proposed zoning change as written by the Chair and for the revision to proceed through the public process, seconded by Ms. Grodinsky.

Ms. Grodinsky said she would like the change to be more prescriptive to ensure against future confusion. Ms. Teachout suggested that the revision should address standards for enclosed parking.

There was agreement that, rather than inadvertently allowing commercial parking structures in the Riverfront District, which are not allowed, the enclosed parking should be auxiliary, ancillary, or accessory to the primary use in the building.

A number of members felt that Ms. Wasserman's revision was more prescriptive. Mr. Mitofsky amended his motion to reference Ms. Wasserman's revision with the addition of the following:

"c. Accessory parking ( 49.9% of less of the total square footage of the building)..." and added Mr. Borgandale's revision (2).

The revision reads as follows under section 204.B.2. Riverfront District Parking and Loading Standards:

- a. The waiver provisions of Section 805.H. shall apply to proposals in the Riverfront District.
- b. No more than twenty-five percent (25%) of a lot shall be used for unenclosed above ground parking.
- c. Accessory parking (49.9% or less of the total square footage of a building), that is enclosed and incorporated into the design of a building structure may supplement parking provided in b above. This parking shall:
  - (1) be designed and screened so that it does not appear to be a parking lot and in such a way so to be integrated into the site and building design; and
  - (2) complies with all of the standards and design guidelines outlined in sections 204.B.1 and 3.
- d. Parking requirements for residential uses in the Riverfront District shall be waived.

Ms. Grodinsky seconded the amended motion. The motion passed 7-0.

### **Master Format Process and Revised Assignment of Master Plan Topic Areas**

Mr. Borgendale explained that with the appointment of a new member and Ms. Campbell's interest in Master Plan-related topics other than what she had been assigned, the Commission should revisit and re-assign them.

The final list of topics and the members responsible for developing the outline are as follows:

Transportation:	Carolyn and Curt
Economic Development, Civic District/State:	Sara
Natural Resources:	Carolyn and Anne
Cultural & Recreation Resources:	Anne
Downtown, Parking:	Bryan
Infrastructure, Education:	David
Housing:	Irene and Curt
Historic/Built Environment:	Irene
Health/Social Services:	Irene and Curt

Ms. Capels provided some background on the sample Master Plans we have collected from other communities. She also distributed a handout prepared for the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission, *Creating a Vision: Preparing a New Town Plan*.

The Commission discussed the need for a timeline and to set internal goals for completing different stages of the development of the Master Plan. How do other communities address this process?

Ms. Grodinsky expressed an interest in using sustainable planning principles because the identified topics are interconnected. She felt the topics could not be addressed in a vacuum. Ms. Grodinsky referenced Burlington's Master Plan, as it mentions these principles in the beginning of the document. A member suggested looking at this process in terms of a matrix.

Ms. Teachout felt the document should be brief and to the point, with direct reference to an established vision for Montpelier. Mr. Mitosky thought the Commission should look at the City's "big picture" implementation and address the City's economic ability to achieve that implementation. Ms. Facciolo thought the Commission shouldn't temper their vision for the City.

Charles Rubner, a representative of the MDCA, has experience in strategic planning. He felt it was important to think about the people who are affected by the Master Plan, and the need to get their input on the vision for the City. How will this process and ultimately the outcome work for the community. The people in the community need to support this vision.

A member brought up the "topic outlines" and that a component of that outline is a vision statement. Once these visions are discussed by the Planning Commission they could then take it to a public forum for discussion. Mr. Rubner thought that a general vision statement brought to the public would be more effective.

Mr. Mitofsky stated that a lot of "visioning" was done at the Town meeting at National Life on September 25, 2002. The topics that the Commission members are researching were generated from that meeting. This master planning process started with a public meeting.

The Commission came up with the following ideas to try and include in the process and the reasons for doing so:

- 1) Need for a "marketing" campaign
- 2) Need for discussion of items that people care about—how will these topics affect your part of town.
- 3) Public process is important to solicit input from public as well as getting information out to public.

#### **Transportation Plan RFP Update**

Ms. Capels said there is no update on the Transportation RFP.

#### **Other Business**

At the next meeting the Commission would like to develop the public participation process for the master plan work ahead, and discuss development of a general vision statement. The Commission will also work on a report for the City Council meeting on February 12, 2003.

Ms. Grodinsky thought that quarterly retreats should be worked into the PC schedule, and she will not be at the next PC meeting on the 10<sup>th</sup>.

#### **Adjournment.**

The meeting adjourned at 9:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Stephanie A. Smith, Planner and Valerie J. Capels, Director

*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.*