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Town of Charlotte
PLANNING COMMISSION
Meeting Conducted at Town Hall and via Teleconference
April 17, 2025

DRAFT – subject to approval by the Planning Commission

Planning Commission: Matt Krasnow (Chair), Robert Bloch (Vice Chair), Bill Stuono, Ashley Berliner, Ken Smith, Linda Radimer, Carrie Spear (virtual).

Staff: Rebecca Kaplan, Planning and Zoning Assistant, Nicole Burnell, Recording Secretary.

OTHERS: Paul Plante, Frank Tenney, Charles Russell, Claudia Mucklow, Darren Schibler, Kate McCarthy.

Posted Agenda:

7:00 PM Call to Order
7:01 PM Changes to Agenda (if any); Public Comment (for items not on the agenda)
7:02 PM Review & approve draft PC meeting minutes: April 3 meeting
7:10 PM CCRPC's Proposed LUR Updates Redlined Version
8:20 PM Review of LUR Updates to Prepare for Vote & Presentation to Selectboard
8:50 PM Draft PC Agenda for May 1 Meeting
8:55 PM Updates from around Town
9:00 PM Adjourn

Call to Order: Matt Krasnow called the meeting to order at 7:06p.m.

Changes to Agenda (if any):

Bill Stuono asked to revisit the Planning Commission meeting on Thursdays to see if an alternative day might work for members.

Public Comment: None.

Review & approve draft PC meeting minutes: April 3 meeting:

MOTION by Matt Krasnow; seconded by Robert Bloch, to approve the PC meeting minutes for April 3, 2025, as written. VOTE: 7 ayes, motion carried.

CCRPC's Proposed LUR Updates Redlined Version:

Darren Schibler, Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC) opened the meeting with an overview of the agenda for the night, including establishing timeline and work plan and a walkthrough of proposed Land Use Regulation (LUR) changes. Darren then recapped what had been discussed during the March 20th meeting which included: lot dimensional standards (5-acre versus 1-acre) and options for regulating building design. And during the April 3rd meeting, which included: that LUR changes should focus on the Village Commercial District, openness to changing to 1-acre lots in the Village Commercial District, differentiation between East and West Village Commercial, and discussion of mixed residential versus commercial in the Village Commercial District.

Regarding the timeline and work plan agenda item, Darren reviewed that topics for May 15th might include continued discussion of LUR changes, and Act 181 topics. Topics for June 19th might include the final review of the new draft LURs. Darren also reviewed topics that have been dropped due to time constraints.

50 Darren began the walkthrough of proposed LUR changes. Bill noted that the Planning
51 Commission is interested in limiting density changes to commercial areas. Darren acknowledged Bill's
52 comment and asked that it be discussed after the proposed LUR changes were presented. Darren
53 reviewed highlights of the proposed LUR changes which included: changes to the use table to shift some
54 conditional uses to permitted, and to match building size thresholds to existing patterns. Changing
55 minimum lot size to 1-acre, and how that change would impact nonconformities. Draft changes to
56 Village Commercial, West Charlotte Village, and East Charlotte Village Districts. Consideration of the
57 HOME Act duplex provision, and removal of Planned Unit Development (PUD) requirements.

58 Regarding the duplex provision of the HOME Act, Bill asked Darren to respond to a mixed-use
59 scenario. Specifically, could one rental in the mixed use be converted into two units. Darren said mixed-
60 use buildings would not fall under the duplex provision. Kate McCarthy, CCRPC, added that the HOME
61 Act is to allow duplexes where single family homes are allowed, a mixed-use building with an
62 apartment, is not a single-family home.

63 Darren presented proposed LUR changes for the West Charlotte Village District. Darren
64 suggested that anything 4 units or fewer would be permitted use, anything 5 units or more would be
65 conditional use. As rationale for this proposed change, Darren reviewed the 5 criteria of conditional use,
66 of which only 1 criterion is applicable, which could be dealt with during site plan review. Bill stated
67 concern for the proposed change, using elderly housing as an example of why site plan review would not
68 be sufficient. Kate questioned whether the state regulates elderly housing. Bill did not believe so. Kate
69 made note of the concern for follow-up. Darren moved on to proposed increase in maximum square
70 footage to 5,000 square feet for health clinic, office, personal service, and retail store. Another proposed
71 change, adding emergency shelter to conditional uses. Regarding dimensional standards, Darren said the
72 proposal is to move to a 1-acre minimum lot size. This would make all but 9 of the existing 52 parcels
73 conforming. Of those 9, only 3 are much less than 1-acre.

74 Darren moved to proposed LUR changes for the East Charlotte Village District. Darren said
75 much of what is proposed for the West Charlotte Village District was proposed for the East. An
76 exception being adding cemetery to the permitted uses category, as one exists. Regarding dimensional
77 standards, again, the proposal is to move to a 1-acre minimum lot size. This would make all but 4 of the
78 existing 39 parcels conforming.

79 Darren then moved to the proposed changes for the Village Commercial District. Darren noted
80 that cultural facilities up to 5,000 square feet had been moved to permitted use, 5,000-10,000 square feet
81 would be a conditional use. A similar change proposed for financial institution, health clinic, office,
82 personal service, retail store, and veterinary clinic. Another permitted uses change, to increase the
83 maximum to 10 units for dwelling elderly and dwelling multi-family. 10-20 units would be conditional
84 use. Darren acknowledged that under conditional uses, the distinction between East and West Charlotte
85 remained. Darren questioned if the Village Commercial Districts should be separated. Matt said there is
86 consensus within the Planning Commission to do so. Regarding dimensional standards, again, the
87 proposal is to move to a 1-acre minimum lot size. This would make all but 14 of the existing 31 parcels
88 conforming. Robert didn't find this to be dramatic improvement. Darren noted that a smaller lot size in
89 the Village Commercial District could be looked at.

90 Darren moved to the proposed changes for the Commercial/Light Industrial District. Darren said
91 proposed changes in this District were mainly for consistency in building size thresholds; permitted uses
92 up to 10,000 square feet, conditional uses exceeding 10,000 square feet.

93 Darren quickly noted one proposed change in the Rural and Shoreland Districts: removal of
94 affordable housing from conditional uses as it is also listed under permitted uses. Darren also suggested
95 that wording be changed in the Flood Hazard Area Overlay District to require permitting for any
96 development. The final proposed change, to define emergency shelter in the definitions section.

97 Kate recapped concerns thus far, Bill's concern noted above moving 4 units or fewer to
98 permitted use, and separation of East and West in the Village Commercial District. Kate asked for

99 further concerns. Robert questioned if moving dimensional standards to a 1-acre minimum would result
100 in meaningful change. Darren said the intent is to give more flexibility. Robert said the potential housing
101 impact should be established. Linda Radimer noted that the Village Commercial District was
102 strategically placed in proximity to wetlands to prevent expansion and asked where, and what type of,
103 commercial expansion is being planned for. Darren spoke to the difficulties in determining desired
104 amenities. Bill asked why density was stricken in the Village/Light Industrial District. Darren responded
105 that it was an error. Matt asked why affordable housing was stricken from conditional uses in the
106 Village/Light Industrial District. Darren said affordable housing was removed from conditional uses
107 because it was listed as both permitted and conditional, which is confusing. Matt asked that parking
108 facilities be addressed during the May 15th meeting. Matt noted that in the West Charlotte Village some
109 permitted uses trigger site plan review. Matt asked for clarification. Charles Russell responded that site
110 plan is triggered by anything exceeding 2 units. Regarding site plan review, Kate noted that specific use
111 standards can be established. Consensus for the CCRPC to establish use standards for elderly housing.
112 Robert questioned if historical preservation, as it pertains to character of the area, is possible. Kate said
113 proposed changes are to perpetuate existing patterns.

114 Matt opened the discussion for public comment. Frank pointed out that cemeteries are regulated
115 by the state and asked why a town permit would be necessary. Through discussion, it was determined
116 that burial on your own property is exempted from regulations. Frank asked if an “inn” had been defined
117 by size and if so, at what point it becomes a conditional use. Darren read the definition for inn, as found
118 in LURs, for clarification. Frank then asked about elderly housing and noted that some elderly housing
119 complexes have separate buildings for dining or recreation, which is similar to commercial use. Darren
120 responded that what Frank described is referred to as congregate housing or residential care facility,
121 which could be defined within the LURs. Frank closed his comments by questioning water and septic
122 capabilities when reducing dimensional standards to a 1-acre minimum. Charles spoke to the purpose
123 statements for various districts and how they include character of the area. Darren said that purpose
124 statements were used when determining proposed changes to permitted uses.

125 Kate summarized the next steps for the CCRPC. The CCRPC will distribute a survey to the
126 Planning Commission. The CCRPC will address questions pertaining to 1-acre lots, permitted versus
127 conditional uses in the 3 primary (East, West, Commercial) districts, division of the Village Commercial
128 into East and West and what should be similar or different. They will research a variety of topics related
129 to how much housing would be enabled, specific criteria for dwellings for older adults, and be prepared
130 for a discussion on parking facilities.

131

132 **Review of LUR Updates to Prepare for Vote & Presentation to Selectboard:**

133 Matt opened discussion with review of Section 3.8 B, Nonconforming Uses of Land &
134 Structures, which was approved by the Planning Commission in November 2024. Bill noted that it is a
135 substantial rewrite to the section. Matt said this is an opportunity for the 2 new Planning Commission
136 members to weigh in. Through review, it was determined that 3.8 B 1) c) would be eliminated.

137

138 **Updates from around Town:**

139 None.

140

141 **Drafting PC Agenda for May 1 Meeting:**

142 Matt asked Claudia Mucklow how much time would be needed for the Charlotte Conservation
143 Commission (CCC) to present to the Planning Commission on May 1st. Consensus to table the CCC's
144 presentation to June. Ken Smith spoke about conservation efforts, commercial growth relating to
145 recreational opportunities in Charlotte, and need to establish a plan as the precursor to updating LURs.
146 Robert agreed with Ken and stated concern over inactivity towards the task of updating the Town Plan.

147 Matt felt that the Planning Commission has been staying on task, completing items deemed as near
148 finished or required, before taking up the Town Plan update.

149 Matt outlined the following, 10 minutes call to order, changes to agenda, public comment,
150 review of draft minutes. 1 hour to continue reviewing LUR updates that are nearly ready for voting and
151 presentation to the Selectboard. 40 minutes for debriefing the CCRPC's April 17th presentation. 5
152 minutes for agenda building. 5 minutes, to hear any updates from around Town.

153

154 **Revisit of when the Planning Commission meets:**

155 Tabled as Ashley Berliner exited the meeting before reaching this agenda item.

156

157 **Adjournment:**

158 **MOTION by Robert Bloch; seconded by Linda Radimer, to adjourn the meeting. VOTE: 6**
159 **ayes, motion carried.** The meeting was adjourned at 9:21p.m.

160

161 Minutes respectfully submitted:

162 Nicole Burnell, Recording Secretary, with edits by Rebecca Kaplan, Planning and Zoning Assistant.