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3 **Town of Charlotte**
4 **PLANNING COMMISSION**
5 **Meeting Conducted at Town Hall and via Teleconference**
6 **February 20, 2025**

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8 ***DRAFT – subject to approval by the Planning Commission***

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

10 **Staff:** Nate Bareham, Town Administrator, Recording Secretary, Nicole Burnell.

11 **OTHERS:** Paul Plante, Frank Tenney, Charles Russell, Pete Demick, Claudia Mucklow, Alexa Lewis, Deirdre Holmes, Darren Schibler, Kate McCarthy.

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14 ***Posted Agenda:***

15 7:00 PM Call to Order
16 7:01 PM Changes to Agenda (if any); Public Comment (for items not on the agenda)
17 7:02 PM Review and approve draft PC minutes: February 6 meeting
18 7:05 PM Review a revised LURs update work plan
19 7:10 PM Review updates to the East + West Villages report
20 7:30 PM Discuss dimensional standards
21 8:15 PM Act 181 – Finalize Outreach Plan
22 8:30 PM Discussion of liaisons to town committees
23 8:50 PM Drafting PC Agenda for March 6, 2025
24 9:00 PM Adjourn

25
26 **Call to Order:** Robert Bloch called the meeting to order at 7:00p.m.

27
28 **Changes to Agenda (if any):** None.

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30 **Public Comment:** None.

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32 **Review & approve draft PC meeting minutes: February 6 meeting:**

33 **MOTION by Bill Stuono; seconded by Matt Krasnow, to approve the PC meeting minutes for February 6, 2025, as drafted. VOTE: 6 ayes, motion carried.** Linda Radimer was absent.

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36 **Review a revised LURs update work plan:**

37 Darren Schibler, Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC) noted a swap in
38 agenda items between the February 20th and March 20th meetings. February 20th will focus on
39 Dimensional Standards (Lot Area, Density, Coverage, Side / Rear Setback). Development Pattern
40 (PUDs, Subdivisions, Frontage) was moved to March 20th. The reason behind the swap, a logical flow
41 from the last meeting between the Planning Commission and CCRPC.

42
43 **Review updates to the East + West Villages report:**

44 Kate McCarthy, CCRPC, summarized changes that had been made to the report. Kate noted
45 some specific details were changed, including details pertaining to the Greenbush Road speed study. The
46 casual connection between village zoning and development in rural areas was deemphasized. The
47 section on public engagement was made more concise. The desire for mixed uses in the villages instead
48 of just housing was made clear.

49 Kate said that the report is a reasonable presentation of the issues at hand, credibly done through
50 an inclusive process, the CCRPC is out of hours and therefore has concluded their work on the report.
51 Kate asked for formal acceptance of the report from the Planning Commission.

52 Bill, as a contributor to the revised report, asked to summarize for the Planning Commission the
53 changes that he had requested. Bill noted that the previous Town Planner had incorrectly placed
54 emphasis on forced development in rural areas, from not growing out the villages. Bill pointed out that
55 the villages account for 2% of Charlotte's land area. Thus, when considering land area, the villages have
56 had more development than rural areas. Bill corrected an additional inaccuracy which originated from
57 the previous Town Planner; 30 by 30 is a statewide goal, not town by town.

58 Darren reiterated the request for formal acceptance of the report. Robert asked if the Planning
59 Commission could make further edits to the report. Darren recommended the Planning Commission
60 leave the report as-is, for the Town to take from the report what they find useful and perhaps incorporate
61 those aspects into the updated Town Plan. Kate added that the Planning Commission could write a
62 memo and append to the report.

63

64 **Discuss dimensional standards:**

65 Darren recapped what was covered during the previous meeting between the Planning
66 Commission and CCRPC.

67 Darren presented a slide on the results from the public engagement visual preference survey.
68 Darren said the task at hand is to determine if current Land Use Regulations (LURs) support or hinder
69 the types of buildings which scored high in the visual preference survey from being built or maintained.

70 Darren provided a dimensional standards overview which included: Lot Area (typically
71 minimum), 5 acres in the Village Districts. Density (typically maximum), Residential: typically based on
72 dwelling unit, Non-Residential: typically based on floor area (sq. ft.). Lot Frontage (minimum), 75-150
73 ft. in Village Districts.

74 Robert confirmed with Charles Russell that Lot Area has been consistent across Districts since
75 zoning was enacted in 1969. To this point, Darren said that LURs are not reflective of development
76 patterns in the Village Districts. In many cases, dimensional standards do not match up with LURs.
77 Therefore, one of the goals of the Bylaw Modernization Grant, is to right-size LURs. Darren pointed out
78 that legalizing what exists will aid in preservation. Kate added that in slow growth rural communities,
79 when development does happen, the town should get what they want, and zoning is a tool to achieve
80 this. Robert asked for facts on dimensional standard inconsistencies in the Village Districts.

81 Bill pointed out that the East and West Charlotte Villages differ, and that commercial growth
82 was the focus when the Village Districts were established. Bill stated intent to propose that the Village
83 Commercial District be used for mixed use or commercial use only, given the limited land area for
84 commercial growth. Darren cautioned against requiring mixed or commercial uses in the Village
85 Commercial District because it is difficult to gauge market demand. Instead, make it easy to shift and
86 meet market demand.

87 Darren continued his dimensional standards overview. Front/Side/Rear Setbacks (minimum), 25
88 ft. in Village Districts, 15ft. Side/Rear in Village Commercial District. Lot Coverage (maximum),
89 Building Footprint 20-25% in Village Districts, Total Lot (impervious) Coverage 30-40% in Village
90 Districts. Structure Height (maximum), 35 ft. in Village Districts.

91 Darren explained that Density is Dwelling Units/Total Area or Build Area/Total Area. Build
92 Area equals areas not restricted by Setbacks of Lot Coverage. Total Area equals Minimum Lot Area.
93 Number of Dwelling Units is limited by size of the Dwelling Unit.

94 Darren showed a slide which demonstrated the variation in Lot Area throughout the Village
95 Districts. Darren then moved to a slide with a table outlining Existing Lot Area (5 acres or less, 2 acres
96 or less, 1 acre or less) in the West Charlotte, Village Commercial West, East Charlotte, Village
97 Commercial East Districts. The takeaway being that the vast majority of existing parcels in each of these

98 districts are already smaller than 5 acres. Frank Tenney asked if any lots fall into two districts. Darren
99 responded that he was intentional to ensure lots were counted in one district only, judgement calls were
100 based on frontage. Bill pointed out that the Sheehan Green development in the East Village District is
101 being used as an example of smaller lots but was held to the 5-acre standard through a Planned
102 Residential Development and Open Space agreement. Darren agreed with Bill's comment and pointed
103 out that the intent is to change zoning so that incremental development, resembling Sheehan Green, is
104 possible.

105 Darren then presented aerial view slides to further demonstrate Lot Area, beginning with Camel
106 View Lane in the Village Commercial East District. Moving to Lynrick Acres in the West Charlotte
107 District. Concluding with 251 Ferry Road in the Village Commercial West District. Bill commented on
108 avoiding smaller lots with larger homes, and said the scale presented by Darren would likely be
109 favorable. The question is how to zone for it dimensionally without allowing for undesirable scale.

110 Darren moved to a slide on Lot Dimensions: 1 Acre Example. When meeting the 150 ft.
111 Minimum Frontage, 290.4 ft. is the remaining Lot Depth. Darren added in the 25ft. Front, Rear, Side
112 Setbacks, which reduces Lot Depth to 240.4 ft and leaves 55% of the Lot in the Non-setback Area.
113 Finally, Darren factored in Lot Coverage, Total Impervious Area 13,068 sq. ft. for 30% and Total
114 Building Area 8,712 sq. ft. for 20% coverage (which could be doubled with two-story). Darren said
115 reducing Lot Area to 1-acre would fit the character of the area more than the current 5-acre Lot Area
116 which allows for much larger building and impervious areas.

117 Robert asked if there are any undeveloped 5-acre lots in the Village Districts. Darren noted
118 examples in the East and West Village Districts and pointed out that further restraints, such as wetlands,
119 are not included in the theoretical example. Robert suggested a buildout analysis. Darren noted that such
120 analysis is costly. In response, Robert proposed a concise buildout analysis of larger, undeveloped lots.
121 Bill asked how stormwater would be addressed with the reduction to 1-acre Lot Area. Darren said
122 details, such as stormwater, would need to be worked out, and wouldn't be part of a buildout analysis.
123 Paul Plante pointed out that landowners may be forced into larger Lot Area than 1 acre to address water,
124 wastewater, stormwater. To Paul's point, Bill asked if current LURs are sufficient to address these
125 issues, and suggested stormwater regulations may need to be updated.

126 Darren briefly previewed possible zoning updates, to be discussed further in March.

127 Bill asked if the CCRPC housing quotas are available. Darren said they are available at the state
128 and regional level, not municipal. Darren commented on two target years, 2030 and 2050, and that there
129 is a low and high range for each. Municipal targets should be available in early to mid-March. Darren
130 asked if this should be an agenda item for the next meeting between the CCRPC and the Planning
131 Commission or if it should be a separate meeting. Robert responded that sufficient time should be set
132 aside during the scheduled March 20th meeting.

133

134 **Act 181 – Finalize Outreach Plan:**

135 Darren reviewed the Public Engagement Plan which included: Meeting dates with the Planning
136 Commission and Selectboard. Identify any additional recommended public outreach to include low-
137 income, persons of color and indigenous peoples, household with limited English proficiency, people
138 missed in Village Master Planning outreach.

139

140 **Discussion of liaisons to town committees:**

141 Robert asked if any Planning Commission member had any interest in a town committee. Robert
142 recapped that being a liaison does not mean that the liaison must attend every meeting held by the
143 committee that they are assigned to.

144 Matt Krasnow asked for further consideration and spoke about unintended consequences of
145 liaisons. Matt favored an observe and report role. Matt referred to time constraints both during Planning
146 Commission meetings and asking Planning Commission members to take on an additional role. Matt

147 suggested a formal request from the Planning Commission to committees to ask for collaboration when
148 needed or perhaps quarterly.

149 Robert said he envisioned an informal liaison for the Development Review Board, Charlotte
150 Conservation Commission, perhaps the Charlotte Energy Committee, not every town committee. That
151 the liaison would monitor agendas and determine when attendance would be useful. The liaison would
152 not act in any formal capacity. Bill agreed with Robert's analysis of the assignment, informal
153 connectivity to committees. Regarding time constraints, Bill proposed a brief allotment of time on each
154 Planning Commission agenda to provide any updates. Nate Bareham spoke to the need for informality,
155 speaking formally is not proper without prior approval, and stated scheduling concern with requesting
156 quarterly collaboration from town committees.

157

158 **Drafting PC Agenda for March 6, 2025:**

159 Robert proposed that suggestions are presented and Matt, as Chair, would draft an agenda.
160 Ashley Berliner suggested approving the East and West Village Report for the CCRPC. Robert proposed
161 Town Plan prework, such as mapping. Bill added generating feedback that has been requested from the
162 CCRPC. Carrie suggested review of the LUR spreadsheet previously worked on by the Planning
163 Commission.

164

165 **Adjournment:**

166 **MOTION by Ashley Berliner; seconded by Ken Smith, to adjourn the meeting. VOTE: 6**
167 **ayes, motion carried.** Linda Radimer was absent. The meeting was adjourned at 9:11p.m.

168

169 Minutes respectfully submitted:

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