

1
2
3 **Town of Charlotte**
4 **PLANNING COMMISSION**
5 **Meeting Conducted at Town Hall and via Teleconference**
6 **March 21, 2024**

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

8 **Planning Commission:** Matt Krasnow (Vice Chair), Gerald Bouchard, Carrie Spear, Linda
9 Radimer, Kyra Wegman, Robert Bloch. *Absent:* Charlie Pughe (Chair).

10 **Staff:** Larry Lewack, Town Planner; Recording Secretary, Nicole Burnell.

11 **OTHERS:** Frank Tenney, Charles Russell, Paul Plante, Bill Stuono, Alexa Lewis, Brandon Tieso,
12 Claudia Mucklow, Brian Sullivan, Joseph Mazzeo

13
14 ***Posted Agenda:***

15 7:00 PM Call to Order
16 7:02 PM Changes to Agenda (if any); Public Comment
17 7:05 PM Verizon upgrade at 3425 Spear St. antenna tower: info session
18 7:30 PM Update on village planning project
19 7:40 PM Nonconforming Structures: redraft of LURs amends (complete edits)
20 7:55 PM Mark up draft LURs revisions to Sec. 3.1, Sec. 9.7 & definitions (continued)
21 8:15 PM Create work plan for LURs amends through June
22 8:45 PM Review & approve draft meeting minutes: March 7 mtg.
23 8:50 PM Adjourn

24
25 **Call to Order:** Matt Krasnow called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

26
27 **Changes to Agenda (if any):**

28 Larry Lewack announced that his newly drafted “*Harper’s Index*” of *Charlotte Housing,*
29 *Income & Jobs Factsheet* is available both as a handout and on the town website. The intent of the
30 document is to provide some baseline data on the need for more diverse housing types in town,
31 and its intended use is to ground the conversation on what matters for the village planning work.

32
33 **Public Comment:**

34 Charles Russell presented information he’s found in the town archives including the first
35 Town Plan which included a map. In addition, Charles located documentation on initial bylaws,
36 and subsequent updates throughout the years. Charles also presented a 2010 Conservation Fund
37 document which listed allocations.

38 Bill Stuono expressed concern with the two surveys that have been distributed as part of
39 the village planning project. Bill said he believes the surveys do not fit Charlotte, so he didn’t
40 complete either one. Larry responded that over 250 people had completed the two surveys thus
41 far. Bill asked if it is possible for someone to complete the survey more than once. Brandon Tieso
42 confirmed that it is possible if someone has more than one email account. Matt suggested that Bill
43 generate some questions that could be given to Dubois & King for future surveying efforts.

44 Bill asked if the Planning Commission is familiar with the term smart growth: rural
45 communities, close to urban areas or village centers. The relevance being that Charlotte
46 epitomizes, smart growth. Bill said that because of this, village centers should not be used for
47 housing density, rather commercial growth. [*Ed. note:* this framing is in conflict with the definition
48 of smart growth used in the planning field today. The American Planning Association defines

49 smart growth as "that which supports choice and opportunity by promoting efficient and
50 sustainable land development, incorporates redevelopment patterns that optimize prior
51 infrastructure investments, and consumes less land that is otherwise available for agriculture,
52 open space, natural systems, and rural lifestyles."]

53 Claudia Mucklow referenced recent housing reappraisals completed in Charlotte, that have
54 not been completed in other neighboring towns, which skews data.

55
56 **Verizon upgrade at 3425 Spear St. antenna tower: info session:**

57 MSK attorney, Brian Sullivan, and Dewberry engineer (contractor for Verizon Wireless),
58 Joseph Mazzeo, presented information and respond to questions. Brian provided history on the
59 tower and pointed out that Verizon is the last major wireless service provider to opt in to that
60 tower, which means there broadcast equipment will be mounted the lowest on the tower. A 60-
61 day notice of intent has been submitted to the VT PUC.

62 Gerald Bouchard asked if the proposed frequencies will be different. Brian responded they
63 will be the same frequency range as other carriers.

64 Kyra Wegman asked what physical changes will be made to the tower. Brian answered 9
65 antennas and 6 remote radio heads, which is like other carriers.

66 Matt asked about a generator to be added on the ground. Joseph answered that the existing
67 compound will be expanded by 18 feet and a 12x20 steel platform added as the ground is uneven.
68 The generator will be 30 kilowatts.

69 Kyra asked who is responsible for maintaining the tower. Brian answered it is owned by
70 American Tower. They do annual safety and radio frequency emission inspections.

71 Linda Radimer asked about safety measures to prevent climbing access to the tower.
72 Joseph responded that the climbing ladder is locked and requires an app to access.

73 Matt recalled that the Planning Commission had previously decided against becoming an
74 interested party. Mr. Sullivan and Mr. Mazzeo were thanked for presentation.

75
76 **Update on village planning project:**

77 Robert Bloch represents the Planning Commission on the Steering Committee and reported
78 that the focus has been on outreach and engagement. The next step in this phase is to speak with
79 East and West Village residents.

80 Robert said that there is a misconception that efforts are predetermined and meant to
81 urbanize Charlotte. Robert clarified that those involved, aside from consultants, live in and want to
82 preserve Charlotte's rural character. Robert encouraged all to get involved.

83 Larry reported on the March 16 design workshop held at Charlotte Congregational Church,
84 which attracted 55 participants. They provided opinions on their preferred location for additional
85 housing, transportation, community facilities, parks, infrastructure, etc.

86 Larry reiterated Robert's point that there is no preset agenda; the intent of outreach is for
87 themes to emerge. Larry reviewed visual preference survey responses. Results of both surveys,
88 the design workshops, focused group listening sessions and other feedback will inform an
89 eventual conceptual plans for both villages, which will incorporate all this information into some
90 recommended designs, infrastructure needs, and bylaw amendments to allow the kinds of projects
91 that residents say they want in the villages. This draft conceptual plan will come before the
92 Planning Commission for feedback & revised as needed, with opportunities for public comment.

93 Larry spoke to next steps, which includes further outreach. (A virtual, online-only version
94 of the design workshop will be held on Wednesday, April 10; listening sessions for residents of
95 each village will be held April 11.) Following approval of the conceptual plan (draft due in June),
96 the consultant team will draft proposed bylaws changes, to be vetted by the Planning Commission,

97 subject to public hearings, revised & finalized by the PC, then submitted to the Selectboard for
98 approval. Matt pointed out that without bylaw changes, the current development pattern will
99 remain locked in. Kyra spoke to a statistic that 90% of school staff and teachers that work in
100 Charlotte, do not live in Charlotte, asking for consideration of who the development is for.

101 Bill expressed disappointment that no one on the Steering Committee lives in either of the
102 villages. Bill spoke to infrastructure challenges of creating walkability in the East Village. Robert
103 said that no one is planning sidewalks in the East Village. Robert encouraged Bill to get involved.
104

105 **Section 3.8.b, Nonconforming Structures: v.6g redraft (continued):**

106 Agenda item tabled.
107

108 **Mark up draft LURs revisions to Sec. 3.1, Sec. 9.7 & definitions (continued):**

109 Agenda item tabled.
110

111 **Create work plan for LURs amends through June:**

112 Larry pointed out that the Commission has been stuck on discussing the same 3-4 LURs
113 amendments for several months now. He suggested it would be helpful if we returned to our
114 'regular order' of preparing revisions to the LURs which included: review of draft, mark-up of
115 draft, public hearing, finalize changes to the draft, submission to the Selectboard.

116 Larry suggested we start by addressing Land Use Regulations (LURs) which have resulted
117 from changes in state statute, such as Act 47, and finalizing tabled items. Kyra asked how the
118 update to the Town Plan ties in. Larry responded that in 2025, our focus will turn to updating the
119 Town Plan. Robert asked if the Town Plan is aspirational or policy. Larry responded that it is both.
120 Matt reminded the Commission that LURs are updated more frequently than the Town Plan, and
121 how consistency is needed. Charles agreed with Matt.

122 Larry suggested for the next few months, while we're waiting upon the consultants to
123 produce draft LURs related to zoning bylaws for the two villages (expected by September),
124 completing as many of these tabled or incomplete drafts as possible will be advantageous.

125 Regarding our work plan, Matt suggested that the meeting following an item being on the
126 agenda, there is a vote on that draft, so we can keep moving these drafts forward for adoption.
127 Robert agreed. The following work plan was established:

128 April 4th – Act 47 statutory changes.

129 April 18th – Nonconforming structures, Section 3.1, setback waivers.

130 May 2nd – Mixed use and Planned Urban Development sections.

131 May 16th – EV charging; Section 5.4.C.4.

132 June 6th – Section 3.6.A limiting multiple uses on a single lot.

133 June 20th – Thompson's Point draft.
134

135 **Review/approve draft PC meeting minutes: for March 7, meeting:**

136 **MOTION by Matt Krasnow, seconded by Gerald Bouchard, to approve the PC meeting**
137 **minutes for March 7, 2024, as drafted. VOTE: 5 ayes, motion carried.** Robert Bloch abstained.
138

139 **Adjournment:**

140 **MOTION by Robert Bloch; seconded by Linda Radimer, to adjourn the meeting. VOTE:**
141 **6 ayes, motion carried.** The meeting was adjourned at 8:39 p.m.
142

143 Minutes respectfully submitted:

144 Nicole Burnell, Recording Secretary, with edits by Larry Lewack, Town Planner