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3 **Town of Charlotte**
4 **PLANNING COMMISSION**
5 **Meeting Conducted at Town Hall and via Teleconference**
6 **May 15, 2025**

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

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

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

11
12 **OTHERS:** Paul Plante, Frank Tenney, Charles Russell, Claudia Mucklow, Darren Schibler Kate
13 McCarthy.

14
15 ***Posted Agenda:***

16 7:00 PM Call to Order
17 7:01 PM Changes to Agenda (if any); Public Comment (for items not on the agenda)
18 7:02 PM Annual Reorganization of the Planning Commission
19 7:10 PM Review & approve Draft PC Meeting Minutes: May 1 Meeting
20 7:15 PM Discussion with CCRPC on Act 181, Future Land Use, Housing Targets, and
21 Recommendations on Tier 1B
22 7:45 PM Discussion with CCRPC on Village LUR Updates
23 8:50 PM Draft PC Agenda for May 29 Meeting
24 8:55 PM Updates from around Town
25 9:00 PM Adjourn

26
27 **Call to Order:** Matt Krasnow called the meeting to order at 7:02p.m.

28
29 **Changes to Agenda (if any):**

30 Matt said that an agenda item for the May 21st Joint Meeting with the Planning Commission,
31 Development Review Board and Charlotte Conservation Commission needed to be established.

32
33 **Public Comment:** None.

34
35 **Annual Reorganization of the Planning Commission:**

36 **MOTION by Carrie Spear; seconded by Robert Bloch, to appoint Matt Krasnow as Chair**
37 **of the Planning Commission. VOTE: 7 ayes, motion carried.**

38 **MOTION by Matt Krasnow; seconded by Linda Radimer, to appoint Robert Bloch as Vice**
39 **Chair of the Planning Commission. VOTE: 7 ayes, motion carried.**

40 Matt asked Nate Bareham, Town Administrator, if the Planning Commission readopted Rules of
41 Procedure annually. Nate said it's best practice. This will be added to the agenda for the next Planning
42 Commission meeting.

43
44 **Review & approve draft PC meeting minutes: May 1 meeting:**

45 **MOTION by Matt Krasnow; seconded by Robert Bloch, to approve the PC meeting**
46 **minutes for May 1, 2025, as amended. VOTE: 6 ayes, motion carried.** Ashley Berliner exited the
47 meeting following reorganization.

48

49 **Discussion with CCRPC on Act 181, Future Land Use, Housing Targets, and Recommendations**
50 **on Tier 1B:**

51 Darren Schibler, Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC) opened the
52 discussion with a review of the CCRPC's timeline and work plan. For the May 15th meeting, continued
53 discussion of Land Use Regulations (LURs) changes, and Act 181 Topics. For June 19th, final review of
54 new draft LURs, and development pattern.

55 Kate McCarthy, CCRPC, then recapped the Planning Commission's April 17th meeting with the
56 CCRPC during which there was discussion of the use table, changes to minimum lot sizes, and Planned
57 Urban Developments (PUDs). Kate then recapped what the Planning Commission discussed during their
58 May 1st meeting. These items included lot size changes in the East and West Village Commercial
59 Districts, agreement for density bonuses if projects are mixed use, and consensus that the CCRPC
60 survey would be completed collectively.

61 Kate moved to goals for the night. Pertaining to Act 181 review of the regional future land use
62 map, draft housing targets, and consideration of Tier 1B requests. Regarding LURs review revisions,
63 obtain responses to survey questions, obtain clear direction for final draft revisions.

64 Darren reviewed the draft regional future land use map. Darren said the CCRPC has received
65 public feedback regarding overlooked conservation and acknowledged that this was an oversight and
66 will be corrected. Bill Stuono pointed out that open space agreements are not depicted and asked if the
67 CCRPC would correct this as well. Darren said this should be highlighted in local plans. Bill said this
68 has been a source of contention in the past. Robert agreed with Bill and felt that the CCRPC should
69 adjust. Charles Russell said that open space agreements are minimal and limited to East Charlotte
70 Village. Kate noted that the regional plan will remain general. Robert felt that the map does not appear
71 general, rather meticulous. Darren responded that statute requires the CCRPC to include the various
72 designations.

73 Darren then spoke to intended updates to the map that will occur once the public comment period
74 has closed, including potential delineation of areas for Act 250 jurisdictions, and to ensure compatibility
75 between regional and municipal. Robert noted that inclusion of the word *future* in the title is confusing
76 as it indicates change and this should be clarified. Carrie asked how long the map is valid. Darren said
77 this follows the same period as the Town Plan, updated every 8 years, but can be amended before then.

78 Darren moved to draft housing targets and reviewed how the CCRPC developed targets for
79 cities, rural towns, and mixed urban and rural towns. Darren then reviewed targets for Charlotte. Bill
80 said that the Planning Commission has discussed and is comfortable with the low targets, but not high-
81 end targets. This has not been discussed and would involve increasing water and wastewater capacity.
82 Matt pointed out that the low targets are aligned with historic growth and that targets are not binding.
83 Robert added that targets are not a mandate, provided towns take reasonable measures to meet targets.
84 Robert then asked which entity would decide if sufficient efforts were being made towards targets and
85 the consequences if not taken. Darren began his response by explaining that low targets are the bare
86 minimum to meet housing needs, the high targets solve every housing issue, the mid targets are a
87 compromise between the two. Darren then said the mandate is to include actions in local plans, if not,
88 then it becomes an issue of regional confirmation of a municipal plan. Kate added that every town will
89 take their own approach to meeting housing targets, outlined various approaches, and suggested this be
90 the focus of the upcoming update to the Town Plan. Regarding the Town Plan, Darren pointed out that
91 the current Town Plan outlines development outside of the rural district, however, this is where most of
92 the development occurs. Linda asked about the monitoring of housing target plans for bordering towns,
93 Darren said the CCRPC would participate in this.

94 Darren then discussed Tier 1B. Tier 1B would include limited exemption from Act 250 including
95 residential or mixed use development, and up to 50 units on 10 or fewer acres of land. Darren outlined
96 what would still be applicable including local regulations, other State permits, existing Act 250
97 conditions. Eligible areas include Village Center and Village Areas (East and West). Kate added that not

98 all eligible areas need to adopt Tier 1B. Darren then reviewed the pros and cons of Tier 1B. Pros
99 included removal of duplicate review, easier permit amendments, creating certainty for applicants,
100 reduce the cost of housing development, and signal support for housing targets. Cons included limited
101 value as current zoning limits project size, and Act 250 may provide review of elements not covered in
102 LURs. Bill asked if Charlotte opts in to Tier 1B for the Villages, is there any potential for extension
103 outside the Villages, as there was previous talk of this. Darren responded that extension is not possible
104 or anticipated. Bill also pointed out that Sheehan Green went through Act 250 for development and
105 asked if that would need to be updated, if the Villages are opted into Tier 1B. Darren and Kate asked for
106 time to investigate as to not misspeak. Bill also noted that Charlotte's zoning regulations do not cover
107 Act 250 criteria, including water supply, erosion, impact of wetlands, transportation and traffic. These
108 would need to be addressed in LURs. Darren responded that water, wastewater, erosion, and wetlands
109 are regulated by the State. Kate said the choice is to adopt updates to LURs or opt out and defer to Act
110 250. Paul Plante said that water concerns could be addressed through connecting to the Champlain
111 Water District. Kate agreed that is amongst the choices when considering development. Bill responded
112 that residents at large are opposed to connecting to the Champlain Water District.

113 Darren presented three potential motions that the Planning Commission could make regarding
114 Tier 1B; recommend all eligible areas, recommend specific eligible areas, recommend opting out. Carrie
115 suggested the recommendation for all eligible areas. Bill asked Carrie if she felt current zoning
116 regulations adequately address Act 250 criteria. Carrie said she is not familiar with those criteria. Matt
117 agreed with Carrie and provided his rationale, including minimal risk, and development in areas of town
118 the Planning Commission has recommended. Ken Smith said that he is against recommending all
119 eligible areas. Robert brought up that recommendation is a good faith measure towards housing targets.
120 Linda favored recommending specific eligible areas and suggested East Village Commercial. Darren
121 pointed out that Village Center aligns with the Village Commercial Districts. There was consensus for
122 this option.

123 **MOTION by Matt Krasnow; seconded by Carrie Spear, to recommend to the Selectboard**
124 **that they request Tier 1B status for the East and West Village Commercial Districts as defined in**
125 **Charlotte's Land Use Regulations. VOTE: 6 ayes, motion carried.**
126

127 **Discussion with CCRPC on Village LUR Updates:**

128 Darren recapped what remains in the current draft, from the initial draft. This includes changes to
129 the use table, with many commercial uses changing from conditional to permitted, matched building size
130 thresholds to the existing patterns, and a minor change to the floodplain standards to ensure permits are
131 required for earthwork in floodplains. Items no longer found in the current draft include reducing the
132 minimum lot size to 1 acre in the East, West, and Village Districts, and the removal of PUD
133 requirements.

134 Darren then reviewed highlights from the current draft including consistently requiring
135 Conditional Use review for 5 or more-unit dwellings in all Village Districts. Separation of East and
136 West Village Commercial Districts. For mixed use in the West Village Commercial, minimum lot size 1
137 acre. For mixed use in the East Village Commercial, minimum lot size 2 acres. In the East and West
138 Village Districts, maintain 5-acre residential lots. In the East and West Village Districts, maintain
139 PUD/Planned Residential Development (PRD) requirements. In the Village Commercial Districts,
140 PUDs/PRDs are only required for Major Subdivisions, not Minor. Darren then opened the discussion to
141 Planning Commission comments.

142 Bill said he had researched zoning ordinances for senior housing in neighboring communities. In
143 Shelburne, which has many senior housing complexes, senior housing still falls under conditional use.
144 Through his research Bill also established that many towns do not have a senior housing ordinance, or
145 density bonus for senior housing. Charlotte is unique in this way, not aligning with any neighboring
146 communities. Bill stated a preference for senior housing to remain a conditional use, as LURs do not
147 touch upon the practicality of senior housing being in proximity to transportation and amenities. The

148 same can be said for affordable housing. In response, Kate asked if Conditional Use provisions could
149 ensure proximity to transportation and amenities for senior and affordable housing. Bill said Conditional
150 Use review provides the DRB with leeway to investigate. Kate noted that there are many ways to
151 support seniors in a variety of housing types. Bill responded that senior housing was the impetus for
152 accessory dwelling units and spoke to concerns for senior housing without hydrant water. Darren said
153 that specific use standards for senior housing could be put in place.

154 Darren asked for comment on: For mixed use in the West Village Commercial, minimum lot size
155 1 acre. For mixed use in the East Village Commercial, minimum lot size 2 acres. Matt recalled the
156 Planning Commission discussing and agreeing to this. Carrie asked why the minimum lot size in the
157 East Village Commercial is proposed at 2-acres. Matt spoke about the existing patterns in the East
158 Village Commercial, with fewer nonconforming lots being under 2-acres, when compared to the West
159 Village Commercial. This analysis was completed by the CCRPC. This prompted Darren to review a
160 slide on lot size and nonconformities that would result from the Planning Commission's proposal.
161 Robert pointed out that there is essentially no change in conforming and nonconforming lots. The one
162 exception being mixed use in the West and East Village Commercial Districts which currently fall under
163 not applicable. Matt said an element missing from the slide is how the proposed changes would change
164 capacity on larger lots. Matt requested an analysis from the CCRPC on those larger lots. In closing,
165 Darren noted that requiring mixed use might not yield the desired effect. Robert asked for an alternative
166 approach. Darren suggested design requirements for the Commercial Village Districts. Or to ensure
167 residential can occur easier in other districts.

168 Kate moved to the slide on survey questions. Kate confirmed: that in the East and West Village
169 Districts, maintain 5-acre residential lots. Regarding changes to permitted and conditional uses, the
170 current draft is acceptable, possible future changes to senior and affordable housing. The purpose
171 statements for the East and West Village Commercial Districts are acceptable. PUDs are optional for
172 smaller projects.

173 Darren asked about the June meeting scheduled as the 2nd and 4th Thursdays are listed versus the
174 1st and 3rd. Matt noted this is an error. The CCRPC will attend the June 19th meeting.

175 176 **Drafting PC Agenda for the May 21 Joint Meeting and June 5 Meeting:**

177 For the Joint Meeting, Bill suggested discussion of noncontiguous PRDs and transferrable
178 development rights. Robert suggested an update on the CCRPC's work with the Planning Commission.
179 Matt said Robert's agenda item is time sensitive and that would be the starting point for the Planning
180 Commission's allotted time.

181 For the June 5th meeting, Matt outlined a review of Rules of Procedure, confirm calendar dates
182 for the remainder of the year, discussion of next steps following the conclusion of work with the
183 CCRPC, and presentation from the Charlotte Conservation Commission.

184 185 **Updates from around Town:**

186 Bill asked Nate for an update on the hiring of a Town Planner. Nate said the position has been
187 posted. One application has been received thus far and is a strong contender. Bill then asked about the
188 Zoning Administrator resigning. Nate confirmed that the Zoning Administrator's last day will be June
189 20th. Bill confirmed that he and Matt will also represent the Planning Commission on the hiring
190 committee for the Zoning Administrator.

191 192 **Adjournment:**

193 **MOTION by Robert Bloch; seconded by Linda Radimer, to adjourn the meeting. VOTE: 6**
194 **eyes, motion carried.** The meeting was adjourned at 9:26p.m.

195
196 Minutes respectfully submitted:

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