

TRANSYLVANIA COUNTY PLANNING BOARD MINUTES

Regular Meeting, August 17, 2017

Call to Order, Chairman West

The Transylvania County Planning Board met in regular session on Thursday, August 17, 2017 at 7:00pm in the Community Services Building Conference Room. Members present were Chair Mike West, Kimsey Jackson, Mack McNeely, Steve Woodsmall, Sandy Watson and Lauren Wise. Vice-Chair Daryle Hogsed was absent (excused). Staff members present were Transylvania County Planning and Community Development Director Mark Burrows and County Planner Joy Fields. Program Assistant Kalen Lawson was absent. Also present were 22 citizens. Media was not present.

I. Welcome

II. Public Comment

- Jan Nickerson, representing Friends of 276 Heritage, shared that Dollar General Sign was a wake-up call and motivated the community to think about signs and how they wanted their community to look and feel (handouts attached).

III. Approval of Agenda

Chair Mike West suggested modifying the agenda to include the Scenic Corridor Ordinance as item A under Old Business. A motion was made by Kimsey Jackson to approve the modified August 17, 2017 agenda, seconded by Steve Woodsmall, and carried unanimously.

IV. Approval of Minutes

A few minor corrections were discussed such as a typo on page 2 and the spelling of Kimsey Jackson's name. A motion was made by Sandy Watson to approve the modified minutes of the July 20, 2017 regular meeting. The motion was seconded by Mack McNeely and carried unanimously.

V. Subdivision Approvals and Updates

Joy Fields notified the Planning Board that there were number (10) exception plats, and one (1) 1-lot subdivisions and one (1) 2-lot subdivisions approved since July 20, 2017.

VI. Old Business:

- A. Scenic Corridor Ordinance** – Most of the proposed changes are grammatical. The one proposed change of substance is to consider including the entire length of US 276, outside of the City of Brevard's planning jurisdiction, as a Scenic Corridor.

Discussion by the Transylvania County Planning Board included:

- Language of “natural experience” was changed
- Reference to off-premise signs was removed since it is addressed in the Sign Control Ordinance.
- The difference between Transylvania County Scenic Corridors and NC DOT Scenic Byways, and which roads in Transylvania County hold both designations.
- Regulations proposed in sign control ordinance for signs located on Scenic Corridors.
- Other necessary changes identified by the board included: NC 281 (Whitewater Falls) from 64 to the Jackson County Line and US 64 from NC 281 North to the west side of the Toxaway Falls bridge.
- The inclusion of the entire length of US 276 outside of the City of Brevard’s jurisdiction.
- A review of Sections 6.10 and 4.7 of the Transylvania County Sign Control Ordinance in regards to signs located on Scenic Corridors. Section 4.6, which prohibits off-premise signs along Scenic Corridors, was reviewed and accepted. Section 6.10 on-premise signs located on Scenic Corridors were restricted to a sign face of eighty (80) square feet.
- Steve Woodsmall made a Motion to approve the technical changes and the addition to the US 276/Greenville Hwy to the Scenic Corridor Ordinance and to present the ordinance to the County Commissioners. Lauren Wise seconded and discussion ensued. The motion was approved unanimously.

B. Sign Ordinance Update

- Discussion of a proposed sign size for on-premise signs located on Scenic Corridors resulted in a recommended size of eighty (80) square feet per sign face as opposed to one hundred fifty (150) square feet elsewhere in the County.
- Mark Burrows led the review of the redline/strikeout version of the draft sign ordinance and the Planning Board discussed: moving signs, the correction to section 5.5.1, illuminated signs, luminance levels and measurements, electronic message signs, time period for temporary signs, and the consolidation of Sections 11 and 13 which deal with permits.
- Following consensus on these proposed changes, Mark Burrows suggested that staff present a final draft to the Planning Board for their review and approval at their September 21st meeting. All agreed.

VII. New Business:

A. Planning & Community Development Department Director’s Report

- Kalen Lawson is out of the office for surgery and Mark Burrows will be on vacation next week.
- ARC Wayfinding Grant – TDA will be identifying 7-10 strategic locations to highlight areas of interest. NC DOT will be helping to coordinate the sign location within the NC DOT right of way. Land of Sky Regional Council also received an ARC grant for a few wayfinding signs in Rosman. Efforts for sign design and location between the two grants will be coordinated by staff.
- Allison-Deaver House has a new roof thanks to JHPC and staff, funding through the State Historic Preservation Office and donations to the Transylvania County Historical Society.

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- HOME Funds - 18 applications were received by staff from applicants seeking to bring their homes up to code. There should be sufficient funds to fully rehabilitate three homes to current NC Building Code.

B. Other

- Joint Planning Board Meeting in October was discussed with the date to be determined.
- November and December meetings – consider one meeting as a potluck dinner.

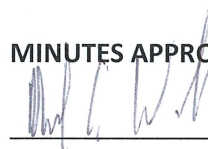
VIII. Public and Board Member Comments

- A member from the public commented about the “exponential growth” that is going on in our county and the Planning Board is doing the right thing by trying to stay in front of the “storm” and keeping the vibe.
- The public commented on how great it was to see the Planning Board members having cordial discussions and compromising throughout the meeting.
- Steve Woodsmall and others on the Planning Board thanked the public for coming and taking part in the government process

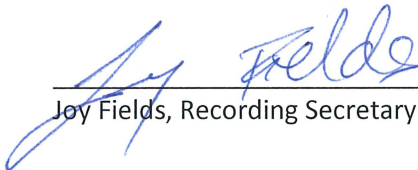
IX. Adjourn

There being no further discussion, a motion was made by Kimsey Jackson to adjourn, seconded by Steve Woodsmall and carried unanimously.

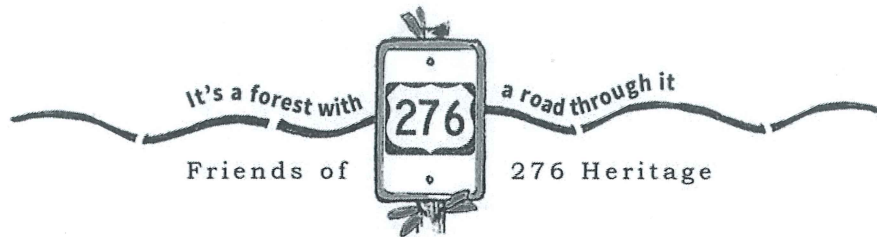
MINUTES APPROVED



Mike West, Chair



Joy Fields, Recording Secretary



Comments Thursday, August 17, 2017 to the Planning Board
regarding the proposed Revisions to the Sign Control Ordinance for Transylvania County

My name is Jan Nickerson. I happen to be a business person, with a Cornell MBA, a Big 5 CPA and 40 years of corporate management or consulting. This evening I speak on behalf of Friends of 276 Heritage, several of whom are here this evening.

The tall bright yellow sign that Dollar General usually uses was a wake-up call for many local residents, as we realized how that wouldn't fit on our beloved 276. Appreciative of Dollar General's response to our outreach to them, and their resulting commitment to adapt their signage and building design to fit into our Route 276 mountain aesthetic, many residents along Route 276 formed **Friends of 276 Heritage**, a grass roots organization committed to preserving and protecting our mountain forest highway.

Our concept of heritage includes economic heritage – such as tourism, camps and agriculture; ecological heritage – including storm water management; natural heritage, experienced by bicyclists, mountain bikers, and hikers enjoying a waterfall in DuPont; as well as cultural heritage, such as the arts and crafts that proliferate Route 276 South, as they do the county in general. Why are we so committed? So that we and generations to come can continue to enjoy the beauty and the environment that attracts residents and tourists alike to Transylvania County.

We have extended our civic interest to the county-wide impact of the **Sign Control Ordinance** in providing suggestions for how signage in Transylvania County could reflect the county's brand that sustains interest by residents and tourists, and that sustains our economy. We have reviewed the proposed revisions to the Sign Control Ordinance for the county, and are delighted to see provisions:

1. **Enhancing sign safety**, by prohibiting flashing, moving, strobe or mirrored signs, or those that prevent free ingress/egress.
2. **Minimizing light pollution at night**, by prohibiting lights aimed upward or toward the street, and limiting the amount of illumination at night.
3. **Restricting on-premises signs on scenic corridors** to a maximum of 15 feet high and 32 square feet. As you may recall from the photostudy of 276 South I presented last month, businesses there have self-opted for signage that already fits within these criteria. In driving from the NC/SC border to Wilson road yesterday, we found only 3-4 signs that would need to be grandfathered.

While we are hopeful that you and the Commissioners will also support and approve the extension of the application of scenic corridors to include 276 South, we nonetheless believe that the proposed revisions for discussion this evening are for the benefit of all of Transylvania County. We believe these revisions will help sustain the attractiveness of Transylvania County which, as a whole, is good for every business and property owner.

We have talked to planning staff and while we understand their concerns about the challenges of several other changes we proposed, we are disappointed to not see addressed 2 safety concerns: signs near curves and tall signs; nor the replacement of grandfathering with amortization for existing signs.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you this evening.

Jan Nickerson

On behalf of Friends of 276 Heritage

Friends.Of.276.Heritage@gmail.com

Martha Bridges, Al and Susan Brothers, Carol Dugger, Kathy Figiel, John Graham, Jan Nickerson (884-3514), Tom Oosting, Harriet Walls and many others