

TRANSYLVANIA COUNTY PLANNING BOARD MINUTES

Regular Meeting, September 21, 2017

Call to Order, Chairman West

The Transylvania County Planning Board met in regular session on Thursday, September 21, 2017 at 7:00pm in the Community Services Building Conference Room. Members present were Chair Mike West, Kimsey Jackson, Mack McNeely, Sandy Watson and Lauren Wise. Steve Woodsmall (excused), and Vice-Chair Daryle Hogsed, were absent. Staff members present were Transylvania County Planning and Community Development Director Mark Burrows, and County Planner Joy Fields. Program Assistant Kalen Lawson was absent (excused). Also present were four (4) citizens. Media was not present.

- I. **Welcome:** Chairman West welcomed all to the meeting and, for the benefit of the public attending, planning board members introduced themselves.

- II. **Public Comment**
 - Carol Dugger, speaking on behalf of the Friends of 276 Heritage, noted the group's appreciation that the Planning Board members took the time to listen to members of the public and engaged in thoughtful discussion. She also noted their appreciation for the proposed ordinance changes including limiting the size of on-premise signs along scenic corridors to 80 square feet, although the Friends would like even smaller signs.
 - Tom Oosting, also a member of Friends of 276 Heritage, noted that there is a sign on Mill Hill on US 276 where there is a curve, on the right, with a 8x12 Connestee Realty sign that he would like to be smaller and 8x10 meets his needs. He shared his thoughts that the character of the county and the community "brand" is not about big signs, billboards and bright lights; it is about the environment, the beauty and the scenic nature of the county.

- III. **Approval of Agenda**

Mack McNeely motioned to approve the September 21, 2017 agenda, seconded by Sandy Watson, and unanimously carried.

- IV. **Approval of Minutes**

Mack McNeely motioned to approve the August 17, 2017 regular meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Lauren Wise, and carried unanimously.

- V. **Subdivision Approvals and Updates**

Joy Fields notified the Planning Board that there were eleven (11) exception plats, and two (2) 1-lot subdivisions approved since August 18, 2017.

VI. Old Business:

A. Sign Ordinance Update

- Mark Burrows opened the discussion by noting that the Scenic Corridor Ordinance was updated to include changes that Planning Board discussed and approved by vote at their August meeting.
- He also noted that staff had mailed Planning Board members two versions of the draft Sign Control Ordinance - the clean version and a redline strike out version.
- Sandy Watson shared that she had reviewed the proposed changes and they reflected what she heard the board discuss.
- Lauren Wise noted that Planning Board members and staff had received many notes from the public and all of them have requested that the Planning Board consider smaller on-premise signs located on scenic corridors. He asked whether the Planning Board should review and reconsider proposing a standard between 40 and 80 square feet for on-premise signs located on scenic corridors.
- Mike West expressed his concern that while the ordinance is for the entire county, most comments have come from one section of the county.
- Mack McNeely raised a concern that some sections of scenic corridors are more built-up and parts of US-64 have a very large right-of-way. Mack shared that he has spoken to many people and has the feeling that 80 square feet is a fine size for on-premise signs located on scenic corridors. Business owners need to be able to advertise. The predominant sentiment Mack heard was that off-premise signs should not be prohibited. He asked whether the Transylvania County Sign Control Ordinance should allow off-premise signs on scenic corridors in the county so the public can address the NC DOT regulations for signs on scenic byways at a later date. Mack shared photographs of a number of existing off-premise directional signs along the NC-281 South (Whitewater Way Scenic Byway).
- Discussion about the off-premise signs located on scenic corridors continued and included – size, number and location of off-premise signs. The potential argument of opposing sides could be, “if off-premise signs are allowed, there could be too many signs”, or “there may not be enough businesses located off of Scenic Corridors for off-premise signs to be a problem”. There could be a consideration of 20 square feet for off-premise signs on scenic corridors.
- Following this discussion, Planning Board members discussed several sections. Consensus was reached on the following proposed changes:
 - i. 5.11 Off-premise signs designed to be visible from a road, or a portion thereof, designated as a Scenic Corridor by the Transylvania County Board of Commissioners shall be no greater than twenty (20) square feet with a limit of one sign per establishment per Scenic Corridor.
 - ii. 4.6 removed.
 - iii. 4.7 Off-premise signs designed to be visible from a road, or a portion thereof, designated as a Scenic Byway by NC DOT shall follow the NC DOT regulations for Outdoor Advertising.
- Staff noted that directional signs to volunteer fire departments are considered governmental signs and would remain exempt.

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- Lauren Wise made a motion to accept the proposed changes as discussed during the meeting and have staff present the draft changes to the County Commissioners for their consideration. The motion was seconded by Mack McNeely, and carried unanimously.

B. Future Meeting Dates

- October 19 – Mountain Ridge Protection Ordinance
- October 30th– Joint Meeting with the City of Brevard (Mark to follow-up with Daniel Cobb)
- November 16th - Potluck meeting (starting early) and continued discussion on the Mountain Ridge Protection Ordinance
- December 21st – Canceled unless needed to complete the Mountain Ridge Protection Ordinance

VII. New Business:**A. Planning & Community Development Department Director's Report**

- ARC Wayfinding: Staff is collaborating with Transylvania County Tourism Development Authority (TDA) and will issue a RFP for a sign company to design, fabricate and install 7-10 signs throughout the county.
- ARC WiFi: Staff is in the process of closing-out the grant that enabled Comporium to install Wi-Fi in downtown Rosman.
- The Joint Historic Preservation Commission (JHPC) received funds to assist with renovation/restoration of the Allison-Deaver House and staff is in the process of closing-out the grant after successful repairs are completed.
- JHPC will be holding a special meeting October 10th for history related groups.
- HOME Funds: A grant to help three low-income homeowners is progressing and staff hope to have the three homes finalized and an RFP issued for contractors soon.
- Golden LEAF: Activities by the school system and Transylvania Economic Alliance (TEA) including the shell building located on Ecusta Road are ongoing.
- Transylvania County Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC): County Commissioners approved the recommendations from TAC for SPOT 5.0 road projects.
- Small Area Plans: Cedar Mountain and Lake Toxaway have shown interest in pursuing small area plans for their communities. A concern expressed by Mike West is that all small area plans have common terminology.
- Workforce Affordable Housing: There is \$25,000 in the FY17-18 budget to identify housing strategies for the county.

B. Other

- None

VIII. Public and Board Member Comments

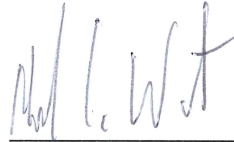
- Mack McNeely shared that the bid for the building that TEA is going to build opened today.
- Sandy Watson thanked Mack McNeely for encouraging the Planning Board to reconsider off-premise signs on Scenic Corridors.

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- Mike West thanked the Planning Board for the spirit of cooperation between and among Planning Board members during the recent discussions to the Sign Control and Scenic Corridor Ordinances.

IX. Adjourn

There being no further discussion, a motion was made by Sandy Watson to adjourn, seconded by Mack McNeely, and carried unanimously.

MINUTES APPROVED



Mike West, Chair



Joy Fields, Recording Secretary

