



Town of Blowing Rock

Date: Tuesday, June 9, 2020, 6:00 p.m.

Location: Remote Meeting

Agenda

<i>Item</i>		<i>Present & Participants</i>
I.	CALL TO ORDER – ROLL CALL FOR ATTENDANCE	Mayor Charles Sellers
II.	APPROVAL OF MINUTES – By Roll Call <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. May 12, 2020 – Regular Meeting Minutes 2. May 21, 2020 – Special Meeting Minutes REGULAR AGENDA ADOPTION - Vote by Roll Call CONSENT AGENDA ADOPTION <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Budget Amendment - #2020-08 	Mayor & Council Mayor Mayor & Council
III.	PUBLIC COMMENTS – emailed or mailed to the Town Clerk prior to 12:00pm on June 9th.	Mayor/Town Manager will read, and Council will have the opportunity to respond
IV.	PUBLIC HEARING: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Budget Public Hearing – email or mail to the Town Clerk prior to 12:00pm on June 9th 	Manager Fox
V.	BUSINESS MATTERS: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Budget Adoption 2. TDA Update Presentation 3. Valley Blvd. Update 4. Foggy Rock CUP Amendment 5. RTAC – Replace Council Member - Albert Yount’s spot 6. Code Amendment - SOE 	Mayor & Council Tracy Brown Planning Director Kevin Rothrock Planning Director Kevin Rothrock Mayor & Council Mayor & Council
VI.	OFFICIALS REPORTS & COMMENTS: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mayor 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">2. Council Members3. Town Attorney4. Town Manager	
VII.	ADJOURNMENT/RECESS... <i>Mayor Charles Sellers entertains a motion and second to adjourn or recess the meeting.</i>	

Draft
MINUTES
Town of Blowing Rock
Town Council Meeting
May 12, 2020

The Town of Blowing Rock Town Council met via Zoom virtual/phone session for their regular monthly meeting on Tuesday, May 12, 2020, at 6:00 p.m. Present were Mayor Charlie Sellers, Mayor Pro-Tem Sue Sweeting and Council Members Albert Yount, David Harwood, Doug Matheson and Virginia Powell. Others in attendance were Town Manager Shane Fox, Town Attorney Allen Moseley, Public Works and Utilities Director Matt Blackburn, Planning Director Kevin Rothrock, Fire Chief Kent Graham, Police Chief Aaron Miller, Parks and Recreation Director Jennifer Brown, Finance Officer Nicole Norman and Town Clerk Hilari Hubner who recorded the minutes.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Sellers called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and welcomed everyone. Mayor verified attendance via roll call.

THE PLEDGE OF ALLEGINANCE

REGULAR AGENDA ADOPTION

Mayor Pro-Tem Sweeting made a motion to approve the agenda as presented, seconded by Council Member Matheson. Unanimously approved.

MINUTE APPROVAL

Council Member Harwood made a motion to approve the minutes from the April 14, 2020, seconded by Council Member Powell. Unanimously approved.

SPEAKERS FROM THE FLOOR

Mayor Sellers read three letters from citizens; Lee Rocamora, Tim Gupton and Greg Tarbutton. **Citizens Letters – Attachment(s) A – 1, 2 & 3**

PUBLIC HEARING

1. Speckled Trout – CUP 2018-01

Mayor Pro-Tem Sweeting made a motion to go into Public Hearing, seconded by Council Member Yount. Unanimously approved.

Planning and Zoning Director Kevin Rothock advised the Speckled Trout, LLC is requesting an amendment to their conditional use permit to renovate and expand the covered deck and the outdoor seating area. The property is located at 922 Main Street at the intersection of Hwy 221.

Speckled Trout made some significant modifications to the restaurant building and property the past few years including the addition of an antique wine cask displayed at

the front entrance door. The wine cask was approved through the issuance of a conditional use permit in January 2019.

The new owners of the restaurant also purchased the adjoining parking lot to secure parking for their restaurant to offset the loss of parking in front of the building.

The restaurant is limited to forty (40) outdoor seats and no additional outdoor seating is being proposed, just some of it relocated to the proposed expanded decking.

At the April 23, 2020 remote electronic meeting, the Planning Board recommended approval of the CUP amendment application with the following conditions: the roof pitch on the deck roof must not be less than what is shown on the plans submitted and as close to 6:12 as possible.

Mr. Rothrock advised he was able to meet onsite with Council Members individually to explain specifics of the proposal. He further advised he had been asked by a few Council Members if DOT had any issues with the project which they do not.

Council Member Yount asked if the wine cask would stay or be moved. Mr. Rothrock advised it would stay in the same location.

Council Member Harwood asked for a timeline of the Bass Lake sidewalk in conjunction with this project and if the two would overlap. Mr. Rothrock stated he hoped the Bass Lake sidewalk will start soon and there shouldn't be any issues with the two projects interfering with one another.

Town Manager Shane Fox advised the contracts had been signed for the Bass Lake sidewalk and one piece is still left to be sign off on between McGill and DOT. He further advised work should begin within the next few weeks, but the COVID-19 pandemic has put work behind on the project.

Council Member Matheson asked Mr. Rothrock to elaborate on the roof. Mr. Rothrock advised it's going to be a gable roof, the awning will be removed and a full roof covering will be built over the deck and tied back into the roof pitch.

Mayor Pro-Tem Sweeting asked Mr. Rothrock if he had received any public comments. Mr. Rothrock advised he had not for this meeting or for Planning Board.

Council Member Harwood asked if since the signage is depicted on the elevations if that would be a separate application. Mr. Rothrock advised that would be.

The applicant Eric Brinker stated the sign will be the same one that is currently on the building, they will just be moving it to the roof.

Mayor Pro-Tem Sweeting advised the seating with their new recommendations comes to forty-seven (47) seats (with the stools). She further advised she wanted to make sure

they were limited to the limit of forty (40) seats. Mr. Rothrock advised the CUP addresses that and he would make sure that is enforced.

With no further questions or comments, Council Member Matheson made a motion to close the public hearing, seconded by Mayor Pro-Tem Sweeting. Unanimously approved.

Council Member Matheson made a motion to approve as presented, seconded by Council Member Powell. Unanimously approved. **Attachment B – Speckled Trout CUP #2018-01**

BUSINESS MATTERS:

1. BRAHM Sculpture Request

The Blowing Rock Art and History Museum has selected an artist to exhibit their outdoor sculpture through the 34th Outdoor Rosen Sculpture Exhibition. BRAHM will carry insurance and it will be bolted down to the existing pad outside of BRAHM.

BRAAC approved the sculpture during their April BRAAC meeting.

Mayor Pro-Tem Sweeting made a motion to approve as presented, seconded by Council Member Harwood. Unanimously approved.

2. Ad Hoc 321 Committee Update

Planning Director Kevin Rothrock gave a brief update on the Ad Hoc meeting. Mr. Rothrock stated he had sent the study to the Planning Board members and had received some comments and/or recommendations back. He further stated the Planning Board will have a remote meeting to discuss the recommendations from the study and will bring that information back to Council. Mr. Rothrock advised he will update Council on the progress monthly.

OTHER BUSINESS

- Mayor Sellers – Thanked Council Members, staff and everyone who had gone above and beyond. He stated the Blue Ridge Parkway will be re-opening on May 15th. The restrooms won't be opened at Bass Lake yet, but instead will on the 18th will bring in Porta John's and portable handwashing stations.
- Council Member Yount – stated he felt all would start looking to the next epidemic and inventory gloves, facemasks, hand sanitizer, signage, additional rules/regulations.
- Council Member Harwood – stated he was extremely appreciative of Manager Fox and staff. He applauded Department Heads, our Town has come through this without any of the services being interrupted or having to furlough any employees. He stated that is amazing and he really wanted to compliment the leadership of Manager Fox. He thanked the Public for all the comments via phone and email, he stated he had spent a lot of time talking to people the past week and he respects everyone's opinion. He stated he felt the Council is on the best path currently for

the Town and until he sees data that changes that opinion he felt it was best to continue with the current path. He further stated once the county meeting takes place on May 19th then Council can revisit the plan.

- Mayor Pro-Tem Sweeting – thanked Manager Fox as well as all the employees for their professionalism and approach to COVID-19. She advised she had done a walk through and drive through Town over the weekend and saw twenty (20) masks on individuals, very limited social distancing, Tanger Outlet bathrooms were open, only saw once mask on someone there, the store Unwound had their bathrooms locked and one of them had an out of order sign. Felt this was a violation since the bathrooms are stated in their CUP. She advised David Barker at the Market was so slammed with people wanting to use his bathroom that he finally put a sign up stating their bathrooms were closed. Chamber wasn't open for bathrooms and they were closed on Sunday.
- Council Member Matheson – thanked staff for all their hard work and continued services. He advised he suggested adding a couple of hand sanitizing stations in Town. He further advised he looked to the Governor and his health officials to what they are recommending and move forward depending on what is advised after the May 19th meeting.
- Council Member Powell – Applauds everyone and thanked them for their work. She advised nobody would have predicted this pandemic and wants everyone to remember we are fighting a virus, not each other and we need to all work together. She further advised she felt the county and the health officials have worked beautifully with all the Town Managers and communicated very well to all. She stated something she wanted to plant a seed about with other Council Members is businesses are having to change the way they are doing business now and have had a few reached out to her about having food trucks and one a flower truck. She stated she hoped Council keep an open mind to that possibility.
- Manager Fox – Thanked staff for all their hard work, he hadn't had any complaints from anyone and all sixty-seven (67) employees have been working from day one and have been able to contribute the whole time. He advised he had been able to be a part of the county task force meetings and be kept up to date with the progress, be a voice for the Town and share all the information with Council. The County will review the current restrictions at the county meeting on May 19th at 5:30 p.m. He updated the following projects: Bass Lake project is still moving forward, just a little delay. Paving will start around May 18th in Town and staff has asked for a detailed work plan. The old playground has been removed, drainage and foundation work has been started. The playground company will be onsite May 18th to start prepping and the equipment will be delivered the week of May 25th. Hanging baskets will be going up the week of Memorial Day. Manager Fox advised he and Parks and Recreation Director Jennifer Brown have discussed several options regarding the bathrooms; Porta Johns or opening the bathrooms in Memorial Park to start with. After discussing the consensus among Council was to start with opening the restrooms at Memorial Park with a shortened schedule (10 am – 6 pm or 11 am – 6pm) and have a cleaning company cleaning them approximately three (3) times a day.

Council discussed options for holding a special meeting to moving forward with the restrictions based on the county's recommendations. Council Member Matheson made a motion to hold the special meeting on May 21st at 3:00 p.m., seconded by Council Member Powell. Unanimously approved.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

None

ADJOURNMENT

At 7:30 p.m. Council Member Yount made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Council Mayor Pro-Tem Sweeting. Unanimously approved.

MAYOR _____
Charlie Sellers

ATTEST _____
Hilari Hubner, Town Clerk

ATTACHMENTS

Citizens Letters – Attachment(s) A – 1, 2 & 3
Speckled Trout CUP #2018-01 – Attachment B

Draft
MINUTES
Town of Blowing Rock
Town Council Special Meeting
May 21, 2020

The Town of Blowing Rock Town Council held a special meeting on Thursday, May 21, 2020, at 3:00 p.m. The meeting took place at Town Hall located at 1036 Main Street, Blowing Rock, N.C. Present were Mayor Charlie Sellers, Mayor Pro-Tem Sue Sweeting and Council Members Albert Yount, David Harwood, Council Member Matheson and Virginia Powell. Others in attendance were Town Manager Shane Fox, Town Attorney Allen Moseley and Town Clerk Hilari Hubner who recorded the minutes.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Sellers called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. and welcomed everyone.

THE PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

TOPICS DISCUSSED

- 14-Day Quarantine – Council discussed and agreed to follow suit with Watauga County in lifting the quarantine restrictions for returning second homeowners and visitors.
- Short-Term Rentals – Council discussed and the consensus was to follow suit with the county and lift restrictions which will allow for short term rentals to resume renting at 50% occupancy
- AppalCART – Manager Fox advised discussions had been had between him, AppalCART and Council Member Matheson as to how to proceed with the route this summer. Due to the uncertainty of COVID-19 they felt it was best not to have the shuttle route this summer. The shuttle will presumably resume in 2021.
- Restaurants and Dining – Council discussed and agreed to allow each restaurant within Town limits: one public parking spot for curb side pick-up (the preference would be a end of the row space), allow up to 25% of their onsite private parking (no public spaces) to be used toward seating for the 50% occupancy for dining (but still follow all the social distancing guidelines set by the Governor's restrictions). Allow restaurants to provide coverage in the form of portable tents (no larger than 12x12). All with this with the understanding this is during Phase two and will be revisited and changes could be made if something doesn't work.
- Recreation – Council discussed Summer Camp with the strict COVID-19 restrictions as well as not being able to utilize Blowing Rock School it would be difficult to operate. The consensus among Council was it would be best not to have summer camp. Council Member Yount made a motion to refund the money to anyone who has prepaid for summer camp, seconded by Mayor Pro-Tem

Sweeting. Unanimously approved. Council discussed options to open the pool with the given restrictions. Council Member Matheson advised he would like to have the pool open. The consensus among Council was to allow staff make the decision how to proceed with the pool operation. Manager Fox advised he would keep Council updated. Council discussed the 4th of July Festival and due to large crowds, the parade draws the consensus was to cancel the parade.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss, Mayor Pro-Tem Sweeting made a motion to adjourn at 5:10 p.m., seconded by Council Member Matheson. Unanimously approved.

MAYOR _____
Charlie Sellers

ATTEST _____
Hilari Hubner, Town Clerk



Town of Blowing Rock

1036 Main Street ★ Post Office Box 47 ★ Blowing Rock, North Carolina 28605

To: Mr. Shane Fox, Mayor Sellers, and Members of Town Council
From: Nicole Norman, Finance Officer
Subject: Budget Amendment Ordinance to Account for Various Items
(Ordinance #2020-08)
Date: June 9, 2020

Enclosed please find a Budget Amendment Ordinance for the fiscal year 2019-2020 for your consideration.

Section 1 (General Fund) reallocates exiting budget funds to other line items within departments where additional expenditures have occurred by reducing budgeted expenditures where savings have taken place.

Section 2 (Water/Sewer Fund) reallocates exiting budget funds to other line items within departments where additional expenditures have occurred by reducing budgeted expenditures where savings have taken place. This section also allocates excess sewer impact fees (\$10,000) towards sewer line expenditures associated with the Inn at Cornish project on Main St.

Please let me know if you need further details on the proposed amendment.

**2019-2020
Budget Amendment Ordinance 2020-08**

Be it ordained by the Town Council of the Town of Blowing Rock, North Carolina, that the following amendment be made to the annual budget ordinance for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2020:

Section 1. To amend the General Fund, the appropriations are to be changed as follows:

<u>Acct. No.</u>		<u>Current Appropriation</u>	<u>Decrease</u>	<u>Increase</u>	<u>Proposed Appropriation</u>
10-00-4200-003	Legal Services (Central Gov.)	\$ 15,000	\$ -	\$ 20,000	\$ 35,000
10-00-4200-016	Maint./Repair. (Central Gov.)	\$ 35,000	\$ 5,000.00	\$ -	\$ 30,000
10-00-4200-054	Insurance & Bonds (Central Gov.)	\$ 125,000	\$ 7,000.00	\$ -	\$ 118,000
10-00-4200-404	STR Helper Contract (Central Gov.)	\$ 14,500	\$ 8,000.00	\$ -	\$ 6,500
10-00-4260-233	Materials/Supplies-Grounds (Pub. Bldgs.)	\$ 11,000	\$ -	\$ 6,000	\$ 17,000
10-00-4260-033	Materials/Supplies Buildings (Pub. Bldgs.)	\$ 13,980	\$ 3,000.00	\$ -	\$ 10,980
10-00-4260-215	Maint./Repair.-Ground (Pub. Bldgs.)	\$ 15,960	\$ 3,000.00	\$ -	\$ 12,960
10-10-4310-004	Police Department Part Time Salaries (PD)	\$ 10,000	\$ -	\$ 10,000	\$ 20,000
10-10-4310-007	401 K Supplement (PD)	\$ 30,964	\$ 28,964.00	\$ -	\$ 2,000
10-10-4310-008	State Retirement (PD)	\$ 6,052	\$ -	\$ 91,533	\$ 97,585
10-10-4310-009	Officers 401K (PD)	\$ 92,569	\$ 62,569.00	\$ -	\$ 30,000
10-10-4310-014	Employee Development (PD)	\$ 12,000	\$ -	\$ 3,500	\$ 15,500
10-10-4310-016	Maint./Repair-Building/Equipment (PD)	\$ 10,000	\$ -	\$ 4,000	\$ 14,000
10-10-4310-033	Materials/Supplies (PD)	\$ 17,000	\$ -	\$ 2,000	\$ 19,000
10-10-4340-011	Telephone (FD)	\$ 1,000	\$ -	\$ 4,500	\$ 5,500
10-10-4340-016	Maint./Repair Building/Equip. (FD)	\$ 18,000	\$ -	\$ 10,000	\$ 28,000
10-10-4340-004	Fire Department Part Time Salaries (FD)	\$ 100,000	\$ 7,250.00	\$ -	\$ 92,750
10-10-4340-213	Utilities (New Building-FD)	\$ 24,000	\$ 7,250.00	\$ -	\$ 16,750
10-10-4310-002	Police Salaries	\$ 610,272	\$ 19,500	\$ -	\$ 590,772
10-20-4500-030	Materials/Supplies-Salt (ST)	\$ 47,000	\$ -	\$ 6,500	\$ 53,500
10-20-4500-032	Materials/Supplies-Streets Structural (ST)	\$ 52,000	\$ 11,500.00	\$ -	\$ 40,500
10-20-4500-033	Materials/Supplies (ST)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000
10-30-4700-900	Debt Service (San.)	\$ 42,373	\$ -	\$ 5,025	\$ 47,398
10-30-4700-118	County Landfill Fees (San.)	\$ 69,000	\$ 5,025.00	\$ -	\$ 63,975
			<u>\$ 168,058</u>	<u>\$ 168,058</u>	

This will result in a net increase of \$0 in the appropriations of the General Fund. As a result, the following revenue will be increased.

<u>Acct. No.</u>	<u>Current Appropriation</u>	<u>Decrease</u>	<u>Increase</u>	<u>Proposed Appropriation</u>
	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
		<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	

Section 2. To amend the Water/Sewer Fund, the appropriations are to be changed as follows:

<u>Acct. No.</u>		<u>Appropriation</u>	<u>Decrease</u>	<u>Increase</u>	<u>Proposed Appropriation</u>
30-91-7120-504	Sewer Line I&I Replacement	\$ 20,000	\$ -	\$ 10,000	\$ 30,000
30-91-7120-240	Contracted Services	\$ 10,886	\$ -	\$ 6,000	\$ 16,886
30-91-7120-217	Maint./Repair-Lift Station (Field Ops.)	\$ 13,000	\$ 6,000	\$ -	\$ 7,000
			<u>\$ 6,000</u>	<u>\$ 16,000</u>	

This will result in a net increase of \$10,000 in the appropriations of the Water/Sewer Fund. As a result, the following revenue will be increased.

<u>Acct. No.</u>		<u>Current Appropriation</u>	<u>Decrease</u>	<u>Increase</u>	<u>Proposed Appropriation</u>
30-91-3400-375	Sewer Impact Fees	\$ 22,000	\$ -	\$ 10,000	\$ 32,000
			<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 10,000</u>	

Section 3. Copies of this budget amendment shall be furnished to the Clerk to the Town Council and to the Finance Officer for their implementation.

Adopted this 9th day of June, 2020.

Attested by: Charles Sellers, Mayor

Hilari Hubner, Town Clerk



2019-2020 Overview

- F/Y 2019-2020 was on track to be the best year on record for Occupancy Tax Revenue after nearly a decade of continued growth.
- Developed a targeted, robust and data driven media plan. Utilized digital and streaming platforms, social media, television, radio, print and billboards. Targeted demographics included Retirees ages 55+, Families ages 35-55, Women ages 35+, Couples ages 35+, Millennials ages 25-35, Meeting Planners.
- Assisted BRAHM with more than \$22K in advertising finds.
- Assisted Art in the Park, Winterfest, Blowing Rock Music festival and Blowing Rock Charity Horse Show with target media campaigns.
- Maintained and leveraged working relationships with VisitNC, the Blue Parkway Association, Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation, Southeast Tourism Society, NC High Country Host, NC Travel Industry Association, Blowing Rock and Boone Chambers of Commerce, and regional TDA's.
- Hosted the CycleNC Mountains to the Coast Ride in September, a great platform to showcase the Town and surrounding communities while generating more than \$100k in visitor spending over the weekend with minimal impact.
- Provided \$85k toward Middle Fork Greenway development.
- Provided \$25k toward Moses Cone Restoration Project with Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation.
- Updated Organizational Mission and Strategic Plan.
- Enjoyed several earned media and PR accolades throughout the year including stories in Southern Living, Our State Magazine, NY Times, Forbes Magazine, UNC TV, Charlotte Observer, Raleigh News and Observer, Winston Salem Journal, Palm Beach Post and scores of regional dailies and tv news outlets.

Since Covid Shutdown

- The Leisure and Hospitality segment of the economy has been the hardest hit across the country but has the potential to be the first to come back. Pent-up demand has the majority of Americans yearning for travel and a getaway. Blowing Rock and the High Country are positioned very well with wide open spaces and tremendous outdoor opportunities.
- Some travel and tourism pundits say that it could be 2022 before travel is back to some semblance of normal.
- Calculating flat growth during March and April, conservative estimates say Blowing Rock lodging lost \$1.23 million in revenue. Direct Visitor Spending of overnight visitors was down more than \$3.68 million.
- We reworked the budget for 2020-2021 reflecting a decrease in revenue of 40% with the understanding that we'll revisit the budget quarterly and adjust accordingly.
- Stopped media campaigns due to lodging restrictions, to conserve funds and to ease local trepidation in inviting visitors during the pandemic.
- Continue to work with Blowing Rock Chamber and Appalachian District Health Department to provide guidance and best practices to businesses going forward.
- Pivoted messaging to local and supporting local business, shopping on-line, ordering takeout from restaurants and purchasing vouchers from lodging establishments.
- Complete redesign of website www.blowingrock.com
- Created content for website and social channels including virtual tours, puzzles, coloring pages, Easter-egg hunts and more for potential visitors to enjoy during stay at home orders.

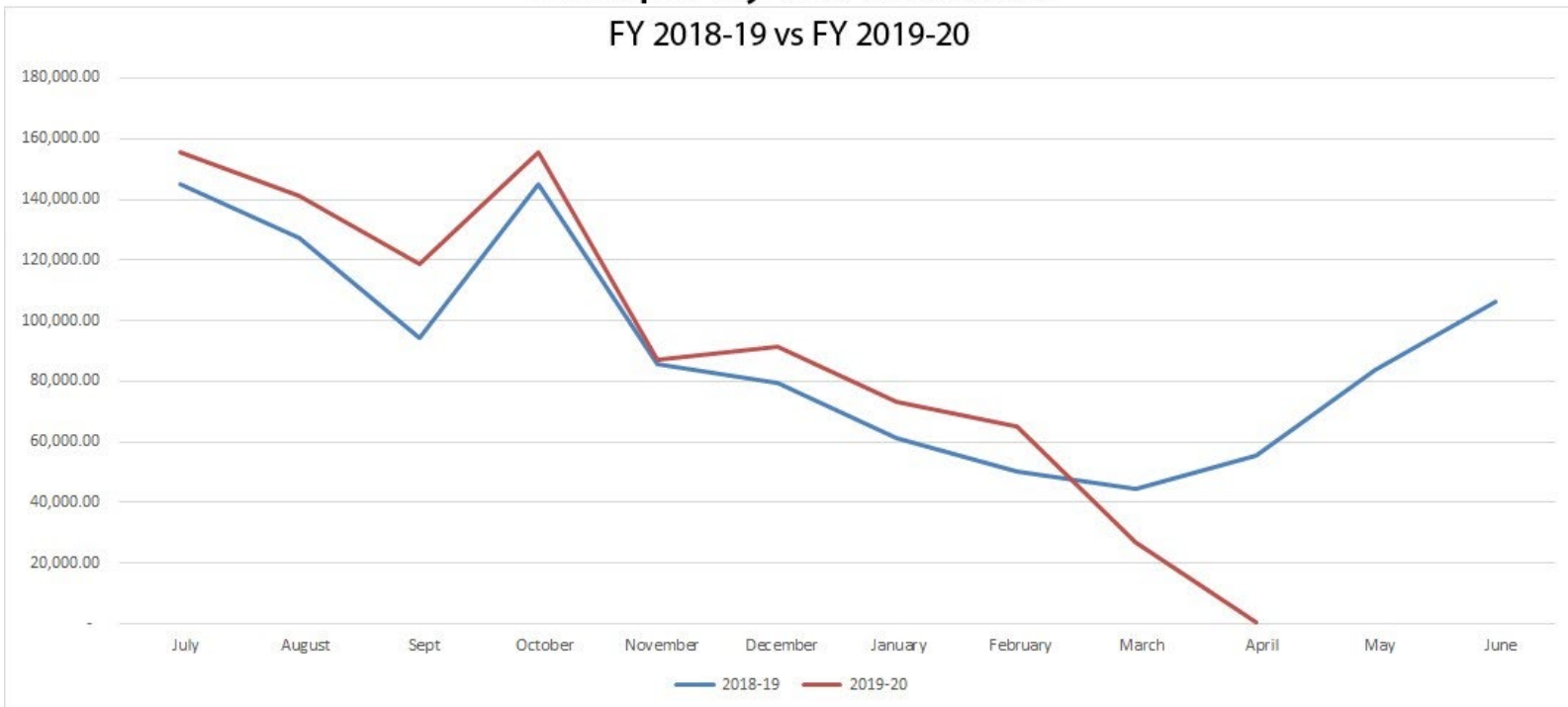
- Continue to meet weekly with VisitNC and NCTIA on research and traveler sentiment.

Moving Forward

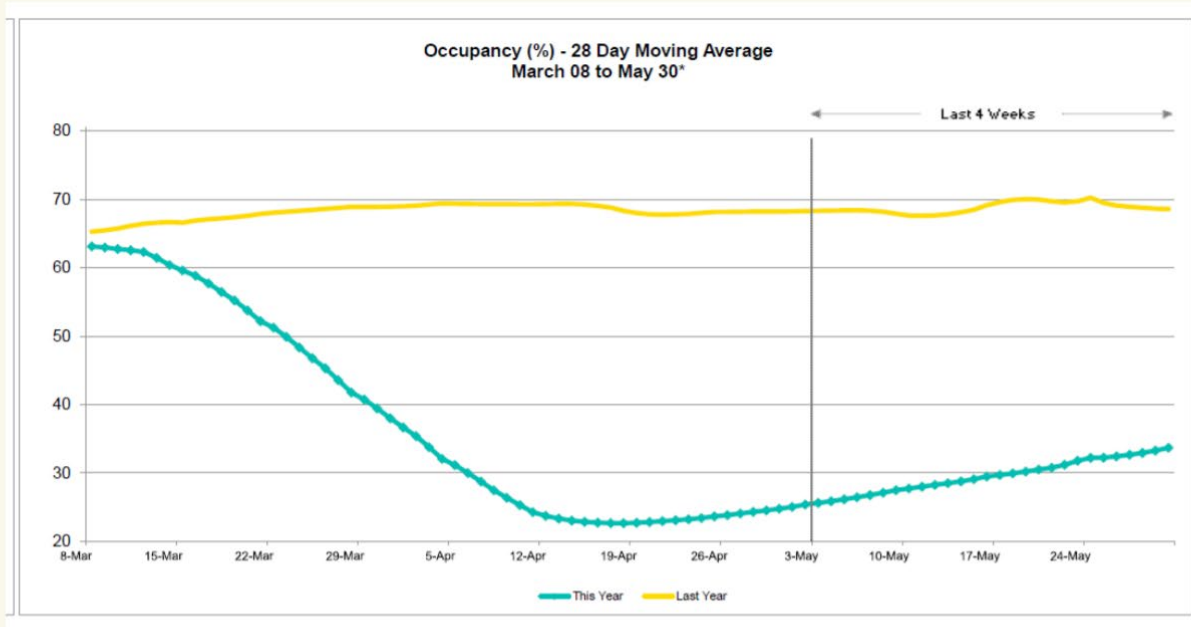
- We'll continue to encourage businesses to participate in Count On Me NC program to promote and ensure safe practices for guest confidence.
- Media plan will continue to focus on key, proven demographics that are mostly within state. Traveler sentiment surveys are saying that travelers are likely not ready to travel far distances and would prefer to visit destinations that are outdoor focused and places that they know and trust.
- Because of an election year, we will not purchase television until at least after the election is over. Reasons include increased rates because of availability (supply and demand) and it's simply hard to cut through all the noise.
- We'll work to secure consulting firm to develop a Sustainable Tourism Management Plan as voted on by the TDA Board of Directors.

Occupancy Tax Revenue

FY 2018-19 vs FY 2019-20



COVID-19 Impact on NC Tourism



Feelings About Traveling Now

Question: What ONE WORD best describes how you feel about travel right now?

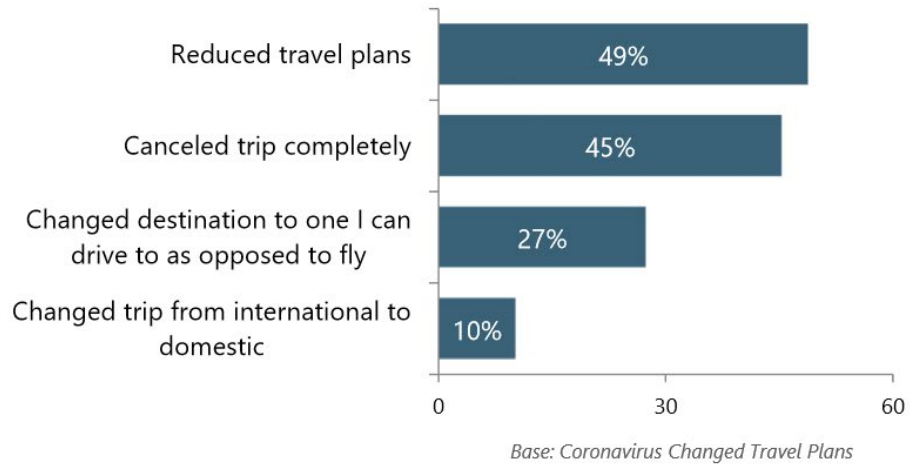
(Base: All respondents 1,257 completed surveys. Data collected May 29-31, 2020)



IMPACT ON TRAVEL PLANS



73%
of travelers planning to travel in the next six months will change their travel plans due to coronavirus

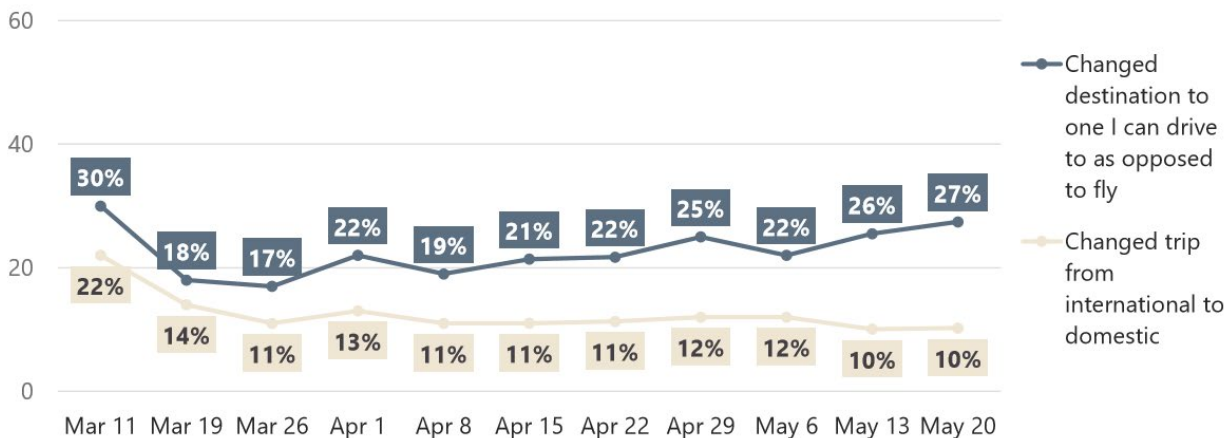


Travel Sentiment Study Wave 11



IMPACT ON TRAVEL PLANS

Impact of COVID-19 on Upcoming Travel Plans Comparison



Base: Coronavirus Changed Travel Plans

Travel Sentiment Study Wave 11



TO: Mayor Charlie Sellers and the Blowing Rock Town Council
FROM: Kevin Rothrock, Planning Director
SUBJECT: 321 Visioning – Recommendations from Planning Board
DATE: June 5, 2020

Attached please find a summary of recommendations from Planning Board on the 321 Visioning Process. Planning Board members had an opportunity to review the Vision and Recommendations from the Ad Hoc Committee and Benchmark Planning. The entire Planning Board discussed the study at their remote meeting on May 28, 2020.

The attached summary lists the observations of individual board members, staff comments in **green** and Planning Board consensus in **red**.

**321 Visioning
Valley Blvd Study
Planning Board Observations and Recommendations
May 2020**

- **Planning Board Member Comments**
- **Staff Comments**
- **Planning Board Consensus**

Bill McCarter

- BR should acquire the DOT property on the east side of VB. I represent NCDOT in the sale of unused right-of-way, so I can help with this project.
- Survey - I wondered if the participants disliked the occupants (Outback and A-1 Pest) more than the appearance of the building?
- I was surprised to learn that you had recommended color palettes in the code. You have quite a few design guidelines. Have you considered putting together a handbook? **Commercial Color palettes were adopted in 1997**
- I'm not a fan of calculating points to determine compliance. I would rather have a minimum standard, then offer incentives for going beyond the minimum. **Agreed**
- Rather than creating a new GB zoning district, have you considered an overlay district to limit the types of commercial uses along VB? **May not need an overlay district. Just use base zoning district and make amendments to standards, dimension, permissible uses, etc., for General Business.**

Mike Page

- The Valley Boulevard Study seems to me to be a good framework for us to begin our recommendations for changes to the Land Use Ordinance in keeping with the vision identified in the study and the recommendations made. As Kevin has suggested, we might undertake our recommendations to Town Council one Code section at a time. Prioritizing our work should be driven by the relative urgency of providing guidance to landowners and developers who will have to comply with any changes adopted by the town. The most immediate issues we need to address are Code changes relating to building materials, building heights, roof mounted equipment, and setback requirements. Anyone planning to build or renovate a property today would look to existing Code provisions and should be able to plan in accordance with the Code provisions in force from time to time. While all of the recommendations integrate to achieve the vision set out in the study, the devil is in the details for Code changes requiring additional architectural elements, color palate limitations, stone walls, and landscaping. Each area will require both objective and subjective analysis.
- As the study recognizes, there are six "context areas" along the corridor. There may be case by case projects that will require quite a lot of flexibility in the application of strict Code rules. To what extent flexibility is appropriate must be keep in mind as we consider

removing permission for subjective modifications and eliminating nonrestrictive language.

- Setback requirements recommended in the study may vary by context area. Each parcel may have its own aesthetic to be considered. I generally agree with the recognition of topography in establishing setbacks. Building height issues that are identified in the study

Mike Page (cont.)

- present a similar challenge. I would be wary of a uniform 35-foot limitation. A building height rule varying with setback seems to me to be the better alternative. It will be difficult to establish a rule that fits all parcels, but the Code changes as adopted should provide a baseline for planning purposes. **Planning Board supports a staggered approach to setback and building height limits such as (20 ft setback/35 ft building height; 25/40, 30/45, 40/50, and so on with a limit of 50 foot building height). Also consideration of additional side setbacks as building height increases.**
- The study suggests discouraging certain permitted uses. A separate zoning district established for the corridor would allow a chance to tailor allowed uses to fit the vision of the study. A review of GB allowed uses may need to be given priority by the Planning Board if there are allowed uses that are inconsistent with the vision for Valley Boulevard. Since uses not listed in the table of uses are not permitted, I am unsure what additional limitations would need to be specified for the corridor. **Can specifically limit permissible uses as long as not protected by Constitution (mobile homes, adult establishments, etc.)**
- The study assigns to the Planning Board the improvement of water quality standards in the existing stormwater management regulations. I would like someone from the town to give the Planning Board general guidance on existing rules and what changes could be made to the Code to make improvements. If the suggested improvements will place additional requirements on landowners and developers, we should craft clear guidelines to allow them to plan effectively. **McGill Associates will assist in developing some guidelines on addressing both water quality and storm water volume/detention. These guidelines can be codified in a comprehensive storm water management plan that would apply to the entire Town jurisdiction.**

Pete Page

- The stack-rock walls are a good idea and are beautiful. Did anyone look into the cost of doing such a project? What little I know about it tells me that this would be an enormous expense. Such an expense that it may have to be deferred.
- I did not see any mention of how many total parcels are available for development along the route. Identifying these parcels and finding out the owners' plans would seem to me to be required before getting started on changing the Plan.

- Something that could be done now without changing anything and would be a head start for development: clean up the sides of Valley Boulevard. There are trees, limbs and brush on the sides of the road; trash and junk visible; buildings in need of repair and painting.
- I think the "compatible" ratings for buildings along Valley Boulevard are too high in most cases. If they had used a five-box or ten-box scale, I think the average ratings would have been lower. and closer to the correct rating. Just my opinion.
- Incidentally, I will never vote to approve any kind of arch over the entrance to Sunset, (unless it says something like "See Rock City," or "What Happens in Vegas, Stays in Vegas.")

Pete Gherini

Kevin:

Enclosed are some of my thoughts having participated on the Ad Hoc Committee and having re-read the Valley Boulevard Study a number of times.

One of our major challenges in looking at the corridor on 321 will be the commercial uses. As the study points out, approximately 36 % of the corridor is considered

vacant. Commercial use is 16 %, while residential is 15 %. Most of the area the area coincides with the General Business (GB) Zoning and intends to give the widest range of commercial activities permitted.

Looking at the East side of VB, most of the land is limited to any kind of development. The exception, would be the land next to the fire station, which is for sale at \$2m.

The West side presents more opportunities and challenges for large scale development. Properties include: Woodlands BQ, Papa Joe's area, ABC/Twiggs, the property on the corner of Ramson and 321 (next to the furniture Mart, and the gas station on Sunset and 321.

The challenges with these properties will be: height, size, set backs and parking. Should each of these potential sites be handled case by case or establish a blanket coverage for them all? The West side should be one of our main points of interest as how we plan for any kind of development.

Design Requirements Modifications:

- 1) A general consensus must be agreed to and be brought forward that states what we want to see on the 321 corridors. Stand alone design requirements that are different than the downtown must be developed.

- 2) The color palette's need to have a narrow scope to better blend in with the existing buildings.
- 3) Limit exterior building materials by amending the land use code to limit the permitted primary cladding to materials that are wood and stone. The Planning Board will have better establish the guidelines for materials used and the meaning of equivalent materials.
- 4) Reduce maximum building heights. Amend the Land Use Code to create a maximum building height and associated set backs to better align buildings with the vision for the corridor. While GB Zoning District buildings may not exceed 50 feet, the preference from the public meetings would prefer 35 feet.
 Consideration should be given to a sliding scale that establishes a maximum height based on the building set backs and permitting taller buildings when set backs from the street are increased. Reducing the maximum building height to 35 feet could present problems on several parcels that have significant drop offs from the higher points of 321 down to the bottom.
- 5) Reducing the required front set-backs, several property owners on the corridor have stated that increasing the set backs from 20 feet to 30 feet would be an unfair taking of their property, as they have already had to give up property for the 321 expansion.
- 6) The extension of the Greenway. Is this a function of the Planning Board? Or should it be a function that the Council should handle? Once a plan is worked out, the Planning Board could amend the land use code. However, before any action is pursued, financial sources must be identified to provide the economic means to achieve these goals.
- 7) Must achieve # 6 before activating the Greenway Plan.
- 8) Integration of stone walls along the corridor would help establish the Blowing Rock character look. Could be coordinated with changes to the Landscaping requirements.
- 9) Clarify Natural Landscaping design. Better define Natural in the Land Use code.
- 10) Limit Roof mounted mechanical equipment. Generally, eliminate options for placing mechanical equipment on roof tops

Pete Gherini (cont)

1.1) Require additional architectural Elements. Where has this point-based system been used before? Would be helpful to know how it has worked and has it been successful?

Comments on Procedural Modifications:

- 1) Remove Permission for Subjective modifications
- 2) Eliminate nonrestrictive language.

Permitted Modifications:

- 1) Discourage certain permitted uses.

Supplementary Recommendations:

- 1) Implement Wayfinding
- 2) Acquire Remnant Parcels
- 3) Beautify Valley Boulevard
- 4) Pursue Private Beautification Efforts
- 5) Partner for Stormwater Management

All of the above from Comments from Procedural Modifications are important and should be made part of any overall plan for Valley Boulevard.

Implementation:

- 1) The Study should be used as a road map for suggesting amendments to the Land Use Code.
- 2) There should be an active campaign to solicit the NCDOT for information about extra land that could be used by the Town for public purposes. How would this land be acquired? Would the State donate the land?
- 3) The thought process on extending the Middle Fork Greenway should start by initiating feasibility studies, along with environmental and preliminary engineering studies. While these are very basic first steps, it is critical to identify potential funding sources/non profits to see how much funding is out there to do this kind of project.
- 4) Develop a plan to encourage improvements to legacy sites. Actively seek out non profits (like the Village Foundation or the Chambers Economic Development group, to assist in setting up Grant programs to achieve these goals.

Pete Gherini (cont)

Conclusions:

Having spent many hours in meetings, along with two public gatherings, the Ad Hoc Committee and Benchmark Planning have formulated a number of ideas that should be considered by the Town Council.

Having gone through a previous overview at the direction of the Council before, it would be important to have a clear direction from the Town Council on what is expected of the Planning Board and have this in writing.

Certainly if we decide to form another committee to do the work, we can invite public input via work- shops and open forms.

Any changes to Codes, will be done in light of NCGS 160 D. You will provide direction and guidance (especially after you attend your upcoming work shop)

Planning Board Consensus Summary

- The Board agreed that the Town should not purchase the DOT property on the east side of Valley Boulevard, in part because two tracts have been sold or are under contract.
- The Board determined that the approved Town color chart is fine as is. Mr. Rothrock advised that staff works with applicants in this area, within reason.
- The Board agreed that minimum standards are superior to calculating points to ensure compliance.
- The Board agreed that there is no need for an overlay district as the current zoning, General Business, applies only to Valley Boulevard. Mr. Rothrock noted that the current Land Use Code could be amended for needed changes.
- The Board recommended staggering the building height based on the front and side setbacks. Mr. McCarter asked from where the building height is measured. Mr. Rothrock advised at the adjacent grade at the primary entrance to the peak of the roof. Mr. Mike Page and Mr. Carter both indicated that they want to look at this in more depth. Mr. Carter asked given the new highway and new look to the bypass if development can be uniform relative to the sidewalk.
- The Board agreed that parking areas should not be focal points unless it is not practical to do so. Mr. Mike Page noted that many current properties have parking in the front and asked if proposed projects, that are not able to provide parking on the side or back, would be closed out due to this portion of the code. Mr. Rothrock noted that parking should not be a focal point, unless having parking on the back or side is impractical. Mr. Rothrock indicated he finds the current Land Use Code language regarding parking acceptable. Mr. Mike Page agreed.

- Mr. Rothrock said that Town Engineer Doug Chapman can provide guidance on water quality standards that can be incorporated in the Land Use Code.
- Mr. Pete Page said that stacked rock walls are a good idea and they are beautiful. Mr. Rothrock said they look great but are very expensive and are a 'down the road' project.
- The Board reiterated the need for a sliding height to setback scale and to look at the side setback with is currently just 8 feet. The Board also discussed limiting roof-top mechanical equipment when reasonable.

TO: Mayor Charlie Sellers and the Blowing Rock Town Council
FROM: Kevin Rothrock, Planning Director
SUBJECT: CUP 2010-03 Foggy Rock Restaurant – minor amendment
APPLICANT: Burt Myers
DATE: June 3, 2020

REQUEST

Mr. Bert Myers is requesting a minor amendment to the conditional use permit issued for Foggy Rock restaurant to add an arcade in the basement. The arcade would have up to 8 video games and 2 pool tables. No food service would be available, but customers could take a to-go box down there and/or use the area waiting on a table in the restaurant.

Mr. Myers plans to open the arcade no earlier than 5:00 PM before the dinner shift begins.

The current CUP limits the basement area to storage and equipment. The proposed arcade requires one (1) parking space for each video game. Mr. Myers proposes to jointly use the parking spaces available at Sunny Rock restaurant, since it closes at 1:30 PM daily. Sunny Rock has 29 parking spaces on site and are currently used for Foggy Rock overflow parking from time to time.

Section 16-4.17.1 of the Land Use Ordinance allows minor design modifications or changes to permits to be approved by Town Council without a formal application or public hearing.

ATTACHMENTS

1. CUP 2010-03 amendment
2. Aerial of Foggy Rock and Sunny Rock Restaurants

NORTH CAROLINA

WATAUGA COUNTY

**MAJOR AMENDMENT
 TO TOWN OF BLOWING ROCK CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT
 Foggy Rock Restaurant
 CUP No. 2010-03
 (Amendment to CUP No. 2007-08)**

On the date listed below, the Board of Commissioners of the Town of Blowing Rock considered the following application for a proposed major amendment to the Conditional Use Permit that was previously approved for the Holli’s Biscuits Restaurant (CUP No. 2007-08), approved on September 11, 2007, and recorded at Book of Records 1335, Page 761 of the Watauga County Public Registry.

Applicant: Burt Myers

Project Name: Foggy Rock Restaurant

Property Location: 8180 Valley Blvd

Tax Parcel No.: 2817-05-9999-000

Property Owners of Record: 8180 Valley Blvd, LLC.

Proposed Use of Property: Restaurant

Current Zoning Classification of Property: GB, General Business

Meeting Date: September 14, 2010

Having heard all of the evidence and arguments presented at the above-referenced meeting, the Board finds that the application complies with all applicable requirements of the Code of Ordinances of the Town of Blowing Rock, and that, therefore, the application to make use of the above-described property for the purpose indicated is hereby approved, subject to all applicable conditions of the Land Use Code and the following additional conditions:

1. Based on the parking provided, no more than 12 outdoor seats may be used on the existing deck. Any modifications to the deck to bring into compliance with the NC Building Code must be completed prior to use.
2. Any rooftop mechanical and electrical equipment shall be screened from the view of streets and adjacent property. Any other ground-mounted HVAC must be reasonably shielded from adjacent properties by landscaping. The existing propane tank shall be painted, buried, or screened with landscaping and perpetually maintained.

- 3. The Land Use Ordinance requires a total of 33 parking spaces for the proposed project. The Applicant will provide at least 33 spaces on site, including 2 handicap-accessible spaces.
- 4. The restaurant is bound by the restrictions of the Town Code and noise ordinance regarding service and/or consumption of food or beverages outside a fully enclosed structure. In addition, no amplified live outdoor music shall be permitted on site.
- 5. The Applicant shall be responsible for the perpetual maintenance of all trees, plants and landscaping required herein. Any dead, unhealthy, or missing vegetation, or any vegetation disfigured by severe pruning, shall be replaced with new vegetation.
- 6. All sidewalk requirements required through CUP 2007-08 have been completed.
- 7. The dumpster screening shall be painted to match the building materials. Shrubbery shall be added around the sides of the screening to soften the appearance.
- 8. The Applicant is required to comply with the Town Code recycling ordinance and to properly dispose of recyclables.
- 9. Based on the available parking, the basement of the restaurant building may be used for storage and equipment areas only.
- 10. Failure to comply with any provision herein shall subject the Applicant to forfeiture of the Permit and a stop work order on any further construction.
- 11. If any of the conditions affixed hereto or any part thereof shall be held invalid or void, then this Permit shall be void and of no effect. All conditions of the original conditional use permit (CUP 2007-08) shall remain in effect, except as amended herein.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the Town of Blowing Rock has caused this Permit to be issued in its name and the undersigned being property owner(s) and/or agent(s) of the property owner(s) does hereby accept this Conditional Use Permit, together with all of its conditions as binding upon them and their successors in interest.

TOWN OF BLOWING ROCK

By: _____
 J.B. Lawrence, Mayor

ATTEST: _____
 Sharon H. Greene, Town Clerk

(CORPORATE SEAL)



MEMORANDUM

TO: Shane Fox, Blowing Rock Town Manager

FROM: David Graham, High Country RPO Transportation Planner

SUBJECT: Watauga County Municipal Representative Appointment Request for the High Country RPO Rural Transportation Advisory Committee

DATE: June 5, 2020

The High Country RPO's Rural Transportation Advisory Committee (RTAC) is the RPO's governing board and is comprised of one county commissioner from each county, one municipal elected official from each county, one elected official from each municipality with a population of 10,000 or more, and one member representing the NC Board of Transportation.

Albert Yount, Blowing Rock Town Council Member has been serving as the Watauga County Municipal Representative on the RTAC. Since Albert Yount is no longer interested in serving on the RTAC, I respectfully request a Town Council Member from Blowing Rock to fill Albert Yount's vacancy on the RTAC until December 31, 2021.

The RTAC's regular meeting date and location is typically the third Wednesday of February, May, August, and December at the High Country Council of Government offices in Boone unless circumstances require modification to the set schedule.

Please consider Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin when deciding on an appointment to the RTAC.

I will be happy to answer any questions you may have regarding this matter. You may contact me at 828-265-5434, ext.135 or dgraham@regiond.org.

cc: Phil Trew, Director of Planning and Development, High Country COG