

**MINUTES**  
**Town of Blowing Rock**  
**Board of Commissioners**  
**September 8, 2008**

The Town of Blowing Rock Board of Commissioners attended a meeting on Monday, September 8, 2008 at the Hayes Performing Art Center beginning at 7:00 p.m. Those present were Mayor J.B. Lawrence, Commissioners Bobby Ball, Keith Tester, Phillip Pickett, Albert Yount and Tommy Klutz. Others in attendance were Town Manager Scott Hildebran, Planning Director Kevin Rothrock, Finance Director Nicole Norman and Town Clerk Sharon Greene.

During the meeting Mr. Doyle Hyett of HyettPalma, Inc. a national consulting firm specializing in the economic enhancement of downtown areas presented the Downtown Retail Strategy Report. The report was funded by the Blowing Rock Tourism Development Authority (TDA).

Mr. Hyett stated Blowing Rock had many strengths; such as its quaintness, uniqueness, vibrancy, building appearance, landscaping, etc. He also mentioned the quality restaurants, shops, historic buildings, trails, attractions, etc. During the public input discussions, residents and business owners wanted to maintain these qualities while enhancing the downtown area.

As recommended in the retail strategy study, the suggested overlay district would protect the core of downtown from Globe Road to U.S. 221. Several downtown business owners had expressed there were too many offices downtown. For example, real estate agencies were occupying too many spaces on Main Street where they felt restaurants and retail shopping should be located.

Prior to this meeting, HyettPalma conducted a meeting in July to receive public input regarding the preferred vision of what the downtown area should be. Several recommendations were made during this meeting by the public.

According to Mr. Hyett, the retail study incorporated the following recommendations:

A local historic district in the downtown area be created along with designation on the National Historic Register.

Design guidelines be developed for exterior improvements to structures on Main Street

A study of the downtown area (Sunset Drive, Morris Street) to determine what standards for mixed uses would complement Main Street.

Enhancements made to the entrances to Main Street by adding attractive signage, landscaping, and lighting.

Extend free parking times from 2 hours to 3 hours with strict enforcement.

That a warning ticket be given to first-time parking violators.

Signage installed at crosswalks requiring vehicles to yield to pedestrians.

A public art plan created.

Retailers allow the public to use in-store restrooms.

Relax parking requirements for outdoor dining.

Create a plan to aid hotel/motel facilities in enhancements to their facilities.

Extend retail shopping hours to at least 7:00 p.m.

Recruit specialty food markets, fine dining, moderately-priced and ethnic restaurants, home décor, art galleries and gift shops to the downtown area.

Establish a Downtown Partnership to assist in the implementation of the recommendations.

Several audience members participated by asking questions regarding the retail strategy report.

In closing, Mr. Hyett thanked everyone for their participation in this study. With no further discussion the meeting ended at 8:30 p.m.

**Retail Strategy Report attached as Exhibit A.**

**Mayor** \_\_\_\_\_  
**J.B. Lawrence**

**Attest** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Sharon Greene, Town Clerk**