

Town of Blowing Rock

Planning Board

Agenda

Thursday, March 17, 2022

5:30 p.m.

Call to Order

Approval of Agenda

Approval of Minutes

Swearing in Members

Selection of Chair and Vice-Chair

Business

- 1. Overview of Planning Board roles and responsibilities**
- 2. Discussion on Outdoor Dining/ Downtown Parking**

Other Business

Adjournment

Planning and Zoning Board

Minutes

Thursday, February 24, 2022

5:30 p.m.

The Blowing Rock Planning and Zoning Board met on Thursday, February 24, 2022, for their regularly scheduled meeting. Members present were Vice-Chairman Harrison Herbst, Mike Page, Pete Page, Bill McCarter, and Joe Papa. Members absent were Sam Glover and Sam Hess. Staff members present were Planning Director Kevin Rothrock, and Zoning Officer Brian Johnson.

Vice-Chairman Harrison Herbst called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

Vice-Chairman Herbst asked if there was a motion to approve the November 15, 2021, minutes. *Mr. Mike Page made a motion to approve the minutes as amended, seconded by Mr. Pete Page.* **All members were in favor of the motion.**

Vice-Chairman Herbst asked if there was a motion to approve the agenda. *Member Mike Page made a motion to approve the agenda, seconded by Member Pete Page.* **All members were in favor of the motion.**

1. SUP 2021 – 01 Blowing Rock Country Club Pro Shop

Mr. Kevin Rothrock provided an overview of the project and stated that an application was made in 2021 but was suspended until they were ready to come back before the board. The Blowing Rock Country Club is requesting a Special Use Permit to construct a new pro shop between the current clubhouse and cart barn/fitness center. The location is where the old previous cart barn was removed. The property is 5.5 acres and is split zoned R-15 and R-6M, multi-family. Mr. Rothrock stated that the pro shop use is allowed within both zoning districts.

Mr. Rothrock stated the first site plan submitted did not show the required street setback. A newly revised site plan was submitted moving the building back seven (7') feet. The pro shop requires twenty (20) parking spaces. The parking lot created as part of the new fitness center has more than enough parking for the fitness center as well as the new pro shop. Well over 100 parking spaces have been provided and will be sufficient for both.

Mr. Rothrock stated he is working with Alan Crees, P.E. of Municipal Engineering Services to find an optimal location for a handicap parking space and ADA accessibility to the new pro shop building. This requirement will be reviewed and approved during the building permit approval process.

From an architectural point of view, the materials being used will be compatible with the existing fitness center and clubhouse. Mr. Rothrock stated that the club has planned for a while to replace the old cart barn and construct a new pro shop. The project will also meet the height requirements in the Land Use Code.

Mr. Rothrock opened the floor to questions from the Board.

Member Joe Papa asked that no variances were being requested. Mr. Rothrock replied no.

Member Mike Page asked why the property was spilt zoned with the R-15 and R-6M given the past historic use of the property. Mr. Rothrock stated he did not know. The properties were zoned in the late 1970s, early 1980s and most of the property was residential in nature. The R-15 zoning district is residential but allows for golf course uses and the club is over 100 years old.

Vice-Chairmen Herbst asked if the project will meet ADA handicap parking requirements. Mr. Rothrock replied it will have to meet building code and for a building permit to be issued and they have parking in the immediate area. The building also has an elevator inside.

With no further discussion, Vice-Chairman Herbst asked if there was a motion to close public comment. *Member Mike Page made a motion to close public comment, seconded by Member Pete Page. **All members were in favor of the motion.***

*Member Mike Page made a motion to approve the project to the Town Council as presented, seconded by Member Pete Page. **All members were in favor of the motion.***

2. Ordinance Amendment to Short Term Rental Definition

Mr. Rothrock gave an overview that in 2000 the Town adopted a new definition for short-term rental and a short-term rental overlay district. The same definition has been used since 2000 and later in 2018 added short-term rental applications and defined a process trying to clarify short-term rental use. One of the issues raised is the word "Use" and the very general application of the word "Use" and the intention of short-term rental definition was never to prohibit the weekend use of the homeowner or the use of family and friends on the weekend.

Mr. Rothrock outlined to the Board the current and proposed language as written below:

current definition:

Short-Term Rental of a Dwelling Unit. The rental, lease, or use of an attached or detached residential dwelling unit for a duration that is less than 28 consecutive days. Short-term rental use does not include rooming houses, boarding houses, or bed and breakfast establishments, which are specifically addressed as separate uses within the Table of Permissible Uses.

proposed definition:

Short-Term Rental. The rental, lease, or offer to make available, any attached or detached residential dwelling unit, or portion thereof, by way of a rental agreement, lease, license, or any other means, (whether oral or written) for compensation or consideration, for a duration that is less than 28 consecutive days.

Land Use Code Section 16-10.12 will also be amended to reflect the proposed definition of short-term rental.

Mr. Rothrock outlined the short-term rental overlay district for the Board where only multi-family within the R-6M and R-10M zoning districts may apply to be included. Royal Oaks Condominiums is the only development to apply. Other multi-family only within the R-6M and R-10M zoning districts and has a homeowner's association may apply for the short-term overlay district. The only zoning districts that short-term rentals are allowed by right are the (GB)General Business, (TC)Town Center, (CB)Central Business, and (OI)Office Institutional.

With no public comment, *Vice-Chair Herbst made a motion to approve the amendment as written, seconded by Member Pete Page. All members were in favor of the motion.*

Other Business

Member Mike Page stated it appears the Rainey lodge project is underway. Mr. Rothrock replied it is and they are having retaining wall material discussions, but the project is moving forward.

Mr. Rothrock advised that an organizational discussion of the Board to elect a new Chair and Vice-Chair will need to take place at the March 17, 2022, Planning Board meeting when new members will be seated. Also, a sub-committee for discussion of downtown regulations, parking, and outdoor dining will be discussed.

Mr. Rothrock advised that we will be looking to find someone to help with the comprehensive plan update later in the summer. Mr. Rothrock stated that the comprehensive plan is typically updated every 10 years.

Mr. Rothrock said the Scotchman project has been doing more investigation of the building to see if they can structurally keep the building intact. They have stated that there is a possibility of having to take the structure down and build back from the ground up. Mr. Rothrock advised it must be rebuilt back in the same footprint and building elevations the Board previously approved.

Having no further business Member Mike Page made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Member Pete Page. All members were in favor of the motion.

Vice-Chairman Herbst adjourned the meeting at 6:02 p.m.

Vice-Chairman Herbst

Brian Johnson
Zoning Officer

MEMORANDUM

TO: Blowing Rock Planning Board

FROM: Kevin Rothrock, Planning Director

SUBJECT: Downtown Outdoor Dining and Parking Discussion

DATE: March 11, 2022

Over the past two years, the COVID-19 pandemic has affected normal life and the way we used to do things. Just a simple visit to a restaurant has changed in response to social distancing restrictions and patterns of behavior. In Spring of 2020, restaurants and other food type establishments found creative ways to continue serving customers and provide food/beverages to the public. Additionally, restaurant owners wanted to maintain their staff and employees and the livelihood of those that serve our community. Expansion of existing outdoor dining or the creation of new patios, decks, and outdoor service areas helped to maintain service to customers.

The number of visitors to Blowing Rock has increased exponentially in the past 18 months resulting in long lines at restaurants that were not as common pre-pandemic. The Land Use Ordinance places restrictions on the number of outdoor dining seats/tables and is tied directly to the availability of off-street parking. Some restaurants are limited by a Special Use Permit, or a number of outdoor seats established about 15-16 years ago.

Enforcement of the outdoor dining limitations was suspended during the pandemic. In the fall of 2021, staff sent letters to restaurants that they had to remove any outdoor seating and return to the pre-pandemic number. Restaurant owners have asked Town Council to consider some changes to the regulations on outdoor dining and the related parking requirements. At the March meeting, the Council asked the Planning Board to evaluate and recommend some potential changes to the Land Use Ordinance taking into consideration:

- a) Downtown parking availability
- b) Safety
- c) ADA requirements
- d) Hwy 321/GB-zoned restaurants
- e) Other related factors

I have included the section of parking requirements from the Land Use Ordinance for review. I suggest an open discussion at the Planning Board meeting and then creating a subcommittee to evaluate the issue in detail.

Section 16-20.3 Parking Requirements for Central Business and Town Center Districts: The following table is intended to provide the required parking spaces needed for new construction and additions in the Central Business and Town Center zoning districts. Most of the Use Codes have been combined to group similar use categories together with a similar parking requirement.

Use Codes	Type of Use	Proposed Parking Requirement
8.100	<i>RESTAURANT No carry out or drive thru</i>	1 space per (250) square feet of gross floor area
8.200 8.300	<i>RESTAURANT No carry out or drive thru service outside allowed</i>	Same as 8.100 plus 1 space for every six (6) outside seats. No spaces required if four seats or less. If more than 40 outside seats, rate is 1 space per 4 seats. (amended 3/9/10)

16-20.3.1 Changes from one use category to another generally do not require additional parking with the exception of restaurants. If a proposed use change is to a restaurant use with more than 12 indoor and/or outdoor seats, only half of the net parking spaces shall be required. For all other changes in use, no additional parking is required.

16-20.3.2 A one-time addition of bathrooms, storage or equipment areas less than 250 square feet is not required to provide additional parking.