

## **MINUTES**

### **Town of Blowing Rock Board of Commissioners**

**December 1, 2008**

The Town of Blowing Rock Board of Commissioners held a special meeting on Monday, December 1, 2008 in the Town Hall Council Chambers. Present were Mayor J.B. Lawrence, Commissioners Bobby Ball, Keith Tester, Tommy Klutz, Phillip Pickett, and Albert Yount. Others in attendance were Town Manager Scott Hildebran, Town Engineer Doug Chapman, Planning Director Kevin Rothrock, Public Works Director Johnny Lentz, and Deputy Town Clerk Erica Cline.

#### **CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Lawrence called the meeting to order at 4:08 p.m. and welcomed those in attendance.

#### **STREETSCAPE MASTER PLAN**

Town Engineer, Doug Chapman, greeted Council and began with notes from previous years. He reviewed positive comments from the public that were previously said about the streetscape, including that it creates a friendly atmosphere and a great park. Mr. Chapman commented on the overall buildings designs along Main Street and went on to read the mission statement and action plan from the 2004 Comprehensive Plan.

Mr. Chapman presented to Council a large map of a color rendition on what is proposed for Main Street. Most improvements are to the sidewalk such as adding cobble walkways.

Mr. Chapman informed Council that NCDOT is concerned with what is outside the curb and parking. He stated that the plan eliminates several parking spaces due to NCDOT requirements. With the plan, there is new curb, gutter, and strips of cobblestone or brick pavers on the east side of the street. There would be three (3) feet due to extra space on that side. Mr. Chapman informed Council that 36 new trees would be added along Main Street and that there has been discussion with NCDOT about adding an additional crosswalk.

Mr. Chapman stated that one of the major changes to Main Street is the traffic light at Sunset and Main Street. NCDOT is restricting parking around the traffic light giving an opportunity to make that intersection an entry feature to catch people's attention. The type of traffic light has not been decided and is still being discussed with NCDOT. They are reviewing diagonal mast arm poles on the corner.

Another noticeable change Mr. Chapman addressed was moving the kiosk to a different location to allow pedestrians coming up Wallingford from the parking facility to have it in view once they reach Main Street.

Mr. Chapman informed Council that the estimated cost of the project is \$850,000, not including overhead utility cost. NCDOT has asked to have the project broken down into phases, which Mr. Chapman stated, could be set up on a priority system.

Mr. Chapman stated that there would be significant disruption of traffic on Main Street during the project. One option would be to close parking spaces and reroute traffic to the opposite side of the street.

Commissioner Tester asked if there was a timeline for the project. Mr. Chapman responded that each phase would take several months to complete.

Mr. Chapman stated that Phase One would cost \$144,000 and Phase Two would cost \$229,000. Phases Three through Six would cost between \$90,000 and \$138,000 each.

Town Manager Hildebran stated that the Town can afford to do Phase One in the spring. He stated that contact with NCDOT should be made to determine if funding for Phase Two would be provided. He also stated that Phase Two may not be #2 for construction but #2 for planning. Mr. Hildebran recommended beginning construction in the spring and then again in the fall, taking several years to complete. He stated that he would like to see this project completed before the Hwy 321 widening project begins due to potential higher levels of traffic on Main Street.

Commissioner Klutz inquired about having construction at night. Mr. Chapman responded there would be an increase in cost if work were to be completed at night.

Mr. Hildebran stated that there would be more money available in five years due to the retirement of current debt.

Mr. Chapman stated that the cost depends on the contractor and the economy. The contractor may be willing to work at night without increasing cost or may not.

Commissioner Yount inquired about the swimming pool bid and if the same situation is applied to that project. Mr. Chapman replied that last year the swimming pool bid would have been higher and that they should eventually rebid the swimming pool project.

Commissioner Tester asked what the process is for bidding to begin. Mr. Chapman informed Council that there wasn't much more to complete before sending it back to NCDOT.

Commissioner Tester questioned whether it is possible for Phase One to be approved without knowing whether the other phases will be approved by NCDOT when presented. Mr. Chapman responded that it is possible the next phases could be rejected and the town then have different crosswalk design.

Mr. Hildebran stated that NCDOT has had an increase in turnover. He suggested taking the plan to the planning board and then coming back to Council with bids beginning in the spring and fall.

Commissioner Klutz suggested beginning Phase One since the money is available and then asking the appropriate questions to NCDOT about the remaining phases.

Commissioner Tester commented that he doesn't want to begin with Phase One just because the money is available and then the public come back later and say they don't want any of the changes. He stated that Council is looking at this as an initial proposal and it should go to planning board and then come back to Council with final bids.

Commissioner Yount inquired more about NCDOT and the issue of rejecting phases after completing previous phases. Mr. Chapman explained that NCDOT is not concerned with the sidewalk but rather with the outside curb.

Commissioner Tester suggested adding a crosswalk where the kiosk is currently located. He stated that people need to know where to go when they come to the sidewalk from the parking facility. He also stated that for the majority of people, the kiosk is on the wrong side of the street and is an invitation for people to jay walk. Commissioner Tester suggested having the planning board look at moving the power lines to the back of the buildings. He inquired what the impact of lighting on the street would be by adding the 36 trees.

Commissioner Klutz asked how the trees were to be watered.

Mr. Chapman stated that there were several negatives and positives with the plan. He stated that a store owner might not like the trees because it could obstruct the view of the store sign. He also stated that the issue with watering the trees would need to be resolved.

Commissioner Ball stated that the trees would soften the street and there needs to be more green on that side. She inquired who is making the decisions on what types of trees are to be planted and asked if there was an expert involved.

Mr. Chapman stated that maples and redbuds are on the plan currently. He stated that McGill has four landscape specialists, but Council would make the final decision.

After further discussion a motion was made to forward the Streetscape Master Plan to the Planning Board to begin the review process by Commissioner Ball and seconded by Commissioner Klutz. Unanimously Approved.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

Mr. Chapman presented a waterline graph to Council. He discussed how the water pressure from Boone to Blowing Rock was to be maintained. He suggested having two valves and flushing the lines to keep the water fresh and pressurized. Mr. Chapman stated that it should be flushed every week or every other week and more frequently in the summer months.

Mr. Chapman stated that there will be a pump station at the water plant in the future. He also stated that there will be a water tank between Blowing Rock and Boone in the future, but that it could wait until there are water customers between Boone and Blowing Rock.

Mr. Hildebran presented two options the Town has regarding water payment. The first option would be to go back and pay per gallon and the second would be to invest in the plant.

Commissioner Yount inquired when the waterline would be ready for bid. Mr. Chapman replied by March, when interest rates are hopefully down.

**Adjournment**

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 5:45 p.m.

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

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_  
Erica Cline, Deputy Town Clerk