

Planning and Zoning Board

Minutes

Thursday, March 16th, 2023

5:30 p.m.

The Blowing Rock Planning and Zoning Board met on Thursday, March 16th, 2023 for their regularly scheduled meeting. Members present were Chairman Bill McCarter, Gregg Bergstrom, Catherine Perry, Chris Squires, Tom Barrett, Joe Papa and Harrison Herbst. Staff Members present were Zoning Officer Brian Johnson, Director Kevin Rothrock and Taylor Miller.

Chairman McCarter called the meeting to order at 5:32 p.m.

Chairman McCarter asked if there was a motion to approve the agenda. *Mr. Harrison Herbst made the motion, seconded by Mr. Tom Barrett.* **All members were in favor of the motion.**

Chairman McCarter asked if there was a motion to approve the minutes from the February 16th, 2023 meeting. There was a correction in the minutes, page 2, paragraph 7 in regards to The Hampton's property owners. *Mr. Tom Barrett made the motion to approve, seconded by Mr. Harrison Herbst.* **All members in favor of the motion.**

Chairman McCarter pointed out that we have a new member on the board to swear in. Taylor Miller swore in the new member, Mr. Gregg Bergstrom.

The board selected a Chairman and a Vice Chairman for the new year. Mr. Joe Papa recommended Bill McCarter remain Chairman. Chairman McCarter asked if there was a motion to approve. *Mr. Joe Papa made the motion to approve, seconded by Mr. Chris Squires.* **All in favor.**

Chairman McCarter asked if there were any nominations for Vice Chairman. Member Catherine Perry nominated Mr. Chris Squires. They noted that Mr. Harrison Herbst is the current Vice Chair. Mr. Joe Papa pointed out that we have had Mr. Harrison Herbst on the board for longer. Chairman McCarter asked if there were any members opposed to Harrison Herbst remaining Vice Chairman. **All in favor, none opposed.**

1. Special Use Permit 23-01 – 151 Valley, LLC

Mr. Brian Johnson presented the staff report to the board. He noted that Anne Furr is planning to renovate and update the existing property. The applicant is requesting many different uses for this property. There will be a new parking lot added as well as a new curb cut on Highway 321. There will be storm water detention added. This property

is located in the watershed. The applicant will be providing 24 total parking spaces for the property.

Susanne Todd, Anne Furr's attorney, spoke to the board. She advised there would be some upfitting and renovating of the current building. She said that the property will most likely be a multiple use property, so they need flexibility for the site.

Member Catherine Perry asked about where a sidewalk would be placed so people could enter from the front side of the building. Mr. Brian Johnson pointed out that there is a sidewalk in front of the building as well as behind that comes from the parking lot.

Member Catherine Perry asked how many doors there would be. Ms. Todd responded that there would be 3 doors in the front and 3 doors in the back - each unit would have a front door and a back door.

Chairman McCarter stated that with 3 doors, there would be the possibility of 3 tenants in the building.

Ms. Todd responded that they could not say if that's how many there would be.

Mr. Harrison Herbst asked who is responsible for the curb upkeep now. Mr. Brian Johnson advised the tenant would be responsible. The existing curbs would most likely remain and the tenant would cut a new one.

Chairman McCarter asked about the "Daycare" possibility on the usage list.

Ms. Todd clarified that the purpose behind the "daycare" use would be for an "adult daycare" – both she and the applicant have elderly mothers that they bring to a facility like this during the day. The idea of pre-school or child daycare was not what they had in mind.

Mr. Brian Johnson noted to the board that the parking the applicant currently has is adequate but their building size is going to limit a lot of what they could do there.

Director Kevin Rothrock informed the board that Adult Daycare is a different use from a regular child daycare. Adult daycare is a permitted use in Blowing Rock but only in the Hospital/Medical Complex zoning district. The applicant's property is zoned General Business and Adult Daycare is not allowed in that district.

Chairman McCarter asked the applicant if it was okay for them to strike the daycare use from the proposed usage list. The applicant said that was fine.

Member Catherine Perry asked about the Storage and Parking use. She asked the applicant to explain what that would mean.

Ms. Todd referenced the ordinance relating to a business like Pest Control or a contractor who would use the building for an office, they may need some equipment or storage vehicles out in the parking lot. Ms. Todd also noted that one of the previous tenants was an antique store and they had a delivery truck that was parked in the parking lot frequently.

Mr. Brian Johnson advised they had two calls from adjoining neighbors. One was concerned about the manufacturing use. The other neighbor was in favor of whatever happens, they just wanted to see it redeveloped.

Chairman McCarter asked the applicant and her attorney to explain the manufacturing use.

Ms. Todd said that they were trying to cover their bases in case someone like the High Country Press wanted to come in. They do most of their things online but they make pamphlets and different paper products and they didn't know if that was considered manufacturing. She also mentioned someone doing something like cabinetry work. If they had an office up front and did some manufacturing in the back. The idea of pottery or anything being "made".

Mr. Brian Johnson noted that staff is just concerned about what exactly that manufacturing would be or what the process would be.

Catherine Perry clarified the square footage of the building being approximately 3,600 sq. ft. She asked if there were three tenants in the building, would each unit be approximately the same amount of square footage.

Ms. Todd said that each unit would be around the same square footage. Not completely even but around the same size.

Catherine Perry acknowledged that the spaces are not that big so the "manufacturing" side of it would definitely be limited.

Chairman McCarter asked if there were any comments about the list or if there were any other things on the list that would need to be removed.

Mr. Brian Johnson asked if there were any conditions that needed to be placed on any of these uses.

Mr. Harrison Herbst asked if they would be held to having three separate tenants or if they could have just one tenant. Mr. Brian Johnson said they were not limited to having three tenants, they could have less if they wanted to.

Member Joe Papa asked what the tenants would do with trash.

Mr. Brian Johnson advised each unit has roll-out trash bins.

Member Gregg Bergstrom asked about signage and what would be allowed there.

Brian Johnson noted they would have to meet any sign ordinances that we have in place. It would have to be consistent with what you already see going up Hwy 321. Each tenant would have their own sign and the option of having free-standing signs.

Catherine Perry made a motion to approve the proposed uses. Seconded by Mr. Joe Papa. Mr. Chris Squires wanted to make sure the motion clarified that they are approving the proposed uses excluding the Nursery, Schools and Daycare Centers use.

Mr. Brian Johnson pointed out the veterinarian use on the list and that the board should be conscious of noise levels. No board members were in favor of striking Veterinary use from the list.

Chairman McCarter made the motion to approve with the exception of striking the Nursery, Schools, and Daycare use from the proposed list. Chairman McCarter asked for all those in favor or opposed. **All members were in favor.**

2. Establishment of the Comprehensive Plan Subcommittee

Chairman McCarter announced that Town Council would like for there to be four Planning Board members on the committee to help with the Comprehensive Plan.

Catherine Perry, Chris Squires, Tom Barrett and Bill McCarter volunteered to be on the committee.

Director Kevin Rothrock announced that in the previous Town Council meeting, they approved a contract with Benchmark Planning. Benchmark did their 2014 update as well as helped rewrite our sign ordinance and assisted with 321 study in 2019. Mr. Rothrock outlined the timeline for how this process will play out. We may try to loop this project in with our downtown standards project.

Mr. Rothrock noted that some of the Planning Board members may have seen the notice that went out with the water bill asking for public input on the Downtown standards project. He said he received 4 comments so far.

*Vice Chairman Harrison Herbst made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mr. Tom Barrett. **All in favor.***

Meeting adjourned at 6:24 p.m.

Chairman Bill McCarter

Taylor Miller
Planning & Zoning Support Specialist