

MINUTES
Town of Blowing Rock
Board of Commissioners
Special Meeting-October 13, 2011

The Town of Blowing Rock Board of Commissioners held a special meeting Thursday, October 13, 2011 at 4:00 p.m. The meeting took place in the Town Council Chambers at Town Hall located at 1036 Main Street, Blowing Rock. Present were Mayor J.B. Lawrence, Commissioners Albert Yount, Phillip Pickett, Tommy Klutz, Doug Matheson, and Jim Steele. Others in attendance were Town Manager Scott Hildebran, Town Engineer Doug Chapman, Planning Director Kevin Rothrock, and Town Clerk Sharon Greene.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Lawrence called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. and welcomed representatives from the NC Department of Transportation.

DISCUSSION ITEM

The purpose of the meeting was for NCDOT to give an 80% Plan Review on the Hwy 321 Widening Project. Project Manager Missy Pair began by giving a power point presentation. Highlighted in the presentation were accomplishments to date, a walkthrough of the plans focusing on key features of the project, and traffic control during construction.

According to Ms. Pair, most of the right-of-ways that were needed had been acquired with a delayed right of entry on some of the parcels. Ms. Pair also advised there had been several meetings between the Town and NCDOT in order to work out the aesthetics, and the utility and betterment agreements recently adopted by the Town. She also mentioned that several meetings with the State Historic Preservation Office had been held regarding the Green Park Historic District.

Ms. Pair stated that concrete with simulated stone would be used on the retaining walls and black chain-link fencing would be used on the top portions of the wall as needed. If the Town chose to use black aluminum fencing instead of the black chain-link fencing, they could upgrade at an extra cost to the Town. She also stated a mock-up of the retaining walls would be done for Council's review prior to the beginning of construction. Ms. Bobby Ball, a prior member of Council stated that she thought the retaining walls were to be constructed from real stone not simulated stone. Representatives from NCDOT stated according to the Memorandum of Understanding between NCDOT and the Town, the retaining walls were to be constructed from concrete and simulated stone, but existing walls in the district would be replaced with actual stone walls.

Several visualizations were shown during the presentation that reflected how the highway would look after construction. As exhibited in the plans, a median was shown beginning a short distance before the 321 Business and Hwy 321 split. Ms. Pair spoke

regarding the benefits of having the median in place, stating it would be safer for vehicles, pedestrians, and bicyclists as well as be more aesthetically pleasing.

According to the plans, coach lights were not to be installed in the area along Chetola Resort. Commissioner Steele asked that NCDOT review this item further as he felt lighting was needed in that area.

Also discussed were planned crosswalk locations, intersection lighting, etc. Traffic control during the construction was also addressed. Ms. Pair presented a schedule of times when traffic lanes would be restricted from closing for construction. Ms. Pair also reviewed the blasting schedule.

In closing, it was advised that the bid opening for the project would be on November 15, 2011 and possibly awarded by December 1, 2011. She also advised there would be a “kick-off” meeting with the public prior to construction once a contractor had been selected. Several business owners present voiced their concerns regarding US 321 being closed and their businesses being affected.

Commissioner Klutz voiced concerns that he had regarding the use of Church Street stating he felt the street should be closed. Ms. Pair responded that Council could discuss this issue further and let the NCDOT know their decision.

Upon conclusion of the presentation, Ms. Pair and other NCDOT representatives accepted questions from the public.

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

MAYOR _____
J.B. Lawrence

ATTEST: _____
Sharon Greene