

Planning and Zoning Board

Minutes

Thursday, April 17, 2008

7:00 p.m.

The Blowing Rock Planning and Zoning Board met on Thursday, April 17, 2008 for their regular scheduled meeting. Chairman West called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Members present were Debbie di Santi, Ada Webster, Nelda Miller, Greg Grana, Sue Sweeting, Web Alexander and Jim Steele. Staff members present were Planning Director Kevin Rothrock, Town Manager Scott Hildebran, Parks and Recreation Director Jennifer Brown, Town Engineer Doug Chapman and Administrative Assistant Sherrie Pitts.

Ms Sweeting nominated Jim West as chairman for the Planning Board. Debbie di Santi seconded the nomination. All members voted in favor of the nomination.

Mr. Grana nominated Sue Sweeting as vice-chair for the Planning Board. Mr. Alexander seconded the nomination. All members voted in favor of the nomination.

Mr. Steele made a motion to approve the minutes from February 21st meeting and March 20th meeting and was seconded by Ms. Sweeting. All members voted in favor of the motion.

Items of Business

RZ 2008-01 Gideon Ridge Rezoning

Mr. Rothrock gave the staff report to the board in reference to the annexation of the Gideon Ridge Area including the Blowing Rock visitor attraction that will be incorporated into the Town Of Blowing Rock limits on June 30, 2008. The properties included in the annexation are currently zoned under Caldwell County zoning. Upon the effective date of annexation, the Town staff recommends zoning all of the subject properties R-15, single-family.

The surrounding properties and those portions of the subject properties within the Town corporate limits are currently zoned R-15, single-family. The proposed R-15 zoning would be consistent with the zoning designations for the area.

Town staff will also provide a draft ordinance for consideration that would establish a Historic Properties Overlay District for the Gideon Ridge Inn, the Blowing Rock visitor attraction and the Green Park Inn. The purpose of the overlay district is to recognize the historic significance of these properties and provide some flexibility with regard to future expansion. The draft ordinance will be presented later in a separate agenda item.

A map showing the pending annexation areas being considered for rezoning was submitted in each board member packet.

Chairman West asked how Caldwell County had these properties zoned. Mr. Rothrock advised Caldwell County zoning was R-20 for those properties.

With no other question of staff the floor was opened to the public and closed with no question or comment.

Mr. Steele made a motion to accept the proposed zoning. Ms. Sweeting seconded the motion. All members were in favor of the motion.

RZ 2008-02 Troyer (444 Inc.) Property

Mr. Grana requested to be recused, stating that 444 Inc. was a tenant in his building.

Ms Sweeting motioned for allowing Mr. Grana to step down from this agenda item. Ms. Miller seconded the motion. All members voted in favor of the motion.

Mr. Rothrock gave the staff report to the board in reference to the Troyer property. The Troyer property located on Gideon Ridge Lane will be annexed into the Town of Blowing Rock corporate limits on June 30, 2008. This property is currently under Caldwell County zoning and is being developed as a single-family structure under the authorization of a building permit issued by Caldwell County. Consistent with the proposed zoning of the Gideon Ridge Area properties, Town staff recommends assignment of R-15, single-family zoning to the subject property, effective June 30, 2008.

Included in the board packet was a map showing the pending annexation property being considered for rezoning.

Mr. Alexander asked why the two vacant lots beside the Troyer property were not being annexed.

Mr. Rothrock advised at the time the Town started the annexation process for Gideon Ridge Area it did not qualify under state statutes, based on a percentage of developed property.

With no other questions of staff the floor was opened for public comment.

Ron Setzler asked about zoning of the two properties that were not to be annexed into Town limits. Mr. Rothrock said the zoning for Caldwell County was R-20, single-family. If the property is developed it will require voluntary annexation to obtain water service.

With no other questions or comments the floor was closed to the public.

Mr. Steele made a motion to accept the request for annexation. Mr. Alexander seconded the motion. All members were in favor of the motion.

Mr. Grana returned to the board.

Historic Properties Overlay District

Mr. Rothrock gave the staff report to the board in reference to a draft ordinance to establish a Historic Properties Overlay District for the Gideon Ridge Inn, the Blowing Rock visitor attraction and the Green Park Inn. The purpose of the overlay district is to recognize the historic significance of these properties and provide some flexibility with regard to future expansion.

Upon adoption of the R-15 zoning designation, the Gideon Ridge Inn and the Blowing Rock will become nonconforming uses. The Green Park Inn is zoned R-6M, multi-family and is also

currently a nonconforming use. All three properties have unique historic significance and are, in fact, included in the Green Park Historic District.

Mr. Rothrock informed the Board that early in the annexation process, representatives from the Gideon Ridge Inn and Blowing Rock visitor attraction met with staff to discuss options in case they wanted to expand the uses that exist on their respective properties. Understanding the historic nature of the properties and the impacts that annexation would have on future development, staff recommended an overlay district be established to provide some flexibility. Mr. Rothrock also pointed out that although R-15 zoning would be consistent with surrounding residential uses, it would virtually eliminate any possibility of expansion of the current uses of these properties. The nonconforming use regulations in the ordinance (Section 16-124) prohibit an increase in the total amount of space devoted to a nonconforming use.

Staff recommends that an overlay district be established for these three properties and provisions be incorporated into the ordinance to provide flexibility. Any flexibility would only be secure if the properties remain as they are currently used.

Ms. Sweeting asked who designates the Historic District. Mr. Rothrock advised the Historic Society in conjunction with the National Registry. This district was established in 1994.

Ms Sweeting inquired about the available uses of the properties if they were sold. Mr. Rothrock explained that the use could continue, but if the uses ceased for 180 days with no plan to reopen the nonconformity is lost.

The board discussed property use and intensity.

With no other questions of staff opened the floor to the public.

Mr. John Lacy, resident on Gideon Ridge Lane, commented on the Gideon Ridge Inn and the impacts on the area if it could be enlarged. The infrastructure of the neighborhood could not handle the use: the traffic, the narrow road and the fact that all the houses were on private septic would have a negative impact to the area.

Mr. Rothrock commented that any increase in the restaurant seating would require additional parking and they do not have it at this time. If an expansion was requested, the conditional use permit could dictate that the road be upgraded.

Mr. Cobb Milner, owner of Gideon Ridge, discussed the Inn size and expense of business. He said that if they could add four rooms they would generate revenue. Mr. Milner commented that dividing the acreage and adding single-family homes would actually generate more traffic than the Inn would.

With no other questions or comments the floor was closed to the public.

Mr. Steele made a motion to send the draft ordinance to subcommittee. Ms. Sweeting seconded the motion. Ms. Sweeting commented on the need to look at protecting the neighborhood and she would like more clarification. Mr. Steele stated that the subcommittee should study the intent of an overlay district. **All members voted in favor of the motion.**

Chairman West called for a 10 minute Break at 8:06. The meeting resumed at 8:16.

CUP 2007-14 Chetola Resort

Mr. Rothrock gave the staff report to the board in reference to RSK LLC d/b/a Chetola Mountain Resorts, requesting a conditional use permit to amend CUP 93-08 to construct two condo buildings just above and behind Shoppes on the Parkway. RSK is proposing to build a 4-unit building and a 6-unit building for a total of ten 3-bedroom units. A new access road will be extended from the end of Chetola Lake Drive. The subject property is zoned PUD-R6M and is located partially in both the WS-IV-PA and WS-II-CA watersheds.

The new condo buildings require a new access road connecting to Chetola Lake Drive. The end of the access road will have a turn-around constructed for emergency vehicles.

Storm water detention is required for the increased impervious areas. The applicant is proposing to provide storm water detention and convey the drainage leaving the detention system off-site and away from the Town reservoir.

Although a small portion of the access road and turn-around is located within the WS-II-CA watershed, any runoff from this area will be detained and discharged away from the Town water supply.

The ten units require 27 parking spaces. All required spaces will be provided in front of the buildings.

The proposed buildings will match the buildings constructed in the "Ponds" area of Chetola. The buildings meet the Land Use Code design standards and height requirements.

Mr. Grana asked when the last amendments were done and what the amendments were for. Mr. Rothrock advised the last ones were the Chetola Lodge and parking lot addition and the Ponds.

Mr. Grana pointed out a manhole that was near the reservoir boundary and asked about the construction that appeared to be near the boundary. He asked what was being done to increase water supply.

Mr. Doug Chapman, McGill Associates, Town Engineer, commented that if the dam is ever raised the Town will not expand onto Chetola property.

Ms. Sweeting questioned how these buildings would get water and if they could tap into the Town lines. Mr. Rothrock advised that they would be allowed to tap. He commented that the Town was not installing any new lines, but there was water near the building site.

Mr. Grana wanted to know the property size and questioned the density. There was some discussion on property size and density.

Ms. Sweeting wanted to know what the water usage impact would be with the new buildings.

Mr. Scott Hildebran, Town Manager, commented that looking at the past ten years the usage of water this year has been less than in past years due to new water saving fixtures and building standards has helped.

Chairman West wanted to know what the overall density of Chetola PUD was. There was discussion on the total acreage and number of buildings. It was understood that Chetola development was well within their allowable building density.

Mr. Grana inquired for an estimate of water captured and transferred through piping. He also questioned the impervious turnaround area and any issues these would bring to the WSII, WSIV watershed area. Mr. Rothrock advised that it did not exceed the standards in the ordinance.

Mr. Grana had questions about the Town's experience of long-term maintenance with private properties draining into the supply.

With no other questions of staff the floor was open to the applicants.

Mr. Randy Jones, architect for the project, discussed the plans and storm water. He commented that in lieu of a concrete sidewalk they plan to create a walking trail that goes northwest around Chetola's property toward the Cone Estate property.

Mr. Kent Tarbutton, representing Chetola, discussed plans and commented in reference to the density they were well under the allowable density. He had no intentions of building any more at this time.

Mr. Michael Trew, with Municipal Engineering, commented to the removal of trees between Chetola property and Shoppes on the Parkway. He explained the amount of the construction footage away from the building site and storm drain area and advised that would still leave 40-50 feet of trees between the properties.

Mr. Grana asked if the water from the drainage ditch flowed into the reservoir. Mr. Trew stated that it did not.

With no other questions of the applicant the floor was closed. The floor was open to the public and closed with no questions or comments.

Mr. Grana commented that his concerns were primarily the reservoir conservation and the risk of construction density there.

*Mr. Alexander made a motion to approve as presented. Mr. Steele seconded the motion. **Members in favor of the motion were Chairman West, Ms. di Santi, Ms. Webster, Ms. Miller, Ms. Sweeting, Mr. Alexander and Mr. Steele.** Mr. Grana abstained from the vote. (Abstention from voting is an affirmative vote. Ref. N.C.G.S. 160A-75)*

CUP 2008-02 Grover C Robbins Memorial Pool

The Town of Blowing Rock is requesting a conditional use permit for significant construction to the Grover C. Robbins Memorial Pool. The town proposes to construct a new pool, new pool house and showers, new public restrooms and a new picnic shelter with playground equipment. The property is located at 173 Lakeside Dr. and is zoned PGS, Parks and Greenspace.

The new pool will be built in the same location as the current pool but with different amenities. The pool will feature a "zero-entry" access, splash play area, general play and lap swim lanes. The pool house will be more functional with updated restrooms and showers, and the covered picnic area will be expanded. Two public restrooms will be added to the parking lot side of the building,

accessible from the outside. Outside the pool area, a new playground area is proposed along with a new picnic pavilion. The new picnic shelter will be 30 feet by 50 feet and will be similar in design to the new Memorial Park picnic shelter.

The new pool house will have a 6:12 pitch hip roof including the new shelter roof. The siding will feature a board and batten style finish, fieldstone wainscoting and a covered entryway.

The picnic pavilion will be similar in design but approximately twice the size of the new shelter in Memorial Park.

Mr. Doug Chapman explained that there were two sets of restrooms, one is in the pool facility while the second set is on the exterior of the pool facility and would be accessible to people year round that may be walking in the park lake area. This would allow people restroom access without walking back to Memorial Park.

Mr. Steele stated that it was his understanding that the reason for the picnic area and the playground was that there was a need.

Chairman West commented that renovation was a long time coming. He was glad to see restrooms on the outside of the pool facility. He did not think losing the three large shade trees was a good trade off for another pavilion and play area, however he did like the pool layout.

Mr. Hildebran, Town manager, stated that in the master plan three years ago the opinion from residents was that they wanted a picnic shelter and play area. The pool could be rented privately after hours. The project currently should be already paid for at the start of construction.

Jennifer Brown, Parks and Recreation Director, commented on the plan and on the amount of use of the current facility. She explained the benefit of the picnic shelter to the pool area and to groups using the pool.

With no other questions of staff the floor was opened to the public and closed with no questions or comments.

*Ms. Sweeting made a motion to approve subject to ADA access to the playground area. Mr. Alexander seconded the motion. **Members in favor of the motion were Ms. di Santi, Ms. Webster, Ms. Miller, Ms. Sweeting, Mr. Alexander, Mr. Steele and Mr. Grana. Chairman West voted against the motion.***

Adjourn

*Mr. Grana made a motion to adjourn. Ms. Webster seconded the motion. **All members were in favor of the motion.***

With no further business the Planning Board adjourned at 9:57 PM.

Jim West, Chairman

Sherrie Pitts, Administrative Assistant