

## Planning and Zoning Board

### Minutes

Thursday, May 21, 2009

7:00 p.m.

The Blowing Rock Planning and Zoning Board met on Thursday, May 21, 2009 for their regular scheduled meeting. Chairman West called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Members present were Brenda Fairbetter, Ada Webster, Greg Grana, Nelda Miller and Jim Steele. Staff members present were Planning Director Kevin Rothrock, and Administrative Assistant Sherrie Pitts. Members absent were Web Alexander, Sue Sweeting and Debbie di Santi.

*Mr. Grana made a motion to approve minutes as presented. Ms. Miller seconded the motion. All members were in favor of the motion.*

### Items of Business

#### **Amendment to parking requirements in the Land Use Code**

Mr. Rothrock stated that at the April 14<sup>th</sup> Town Council meeting, board members approved an amendment to the Blowing Rock Art and History Museum CUP. The amendment reduced the required parking from 77 parking spaces, at a rate of 1 space per 300 square feet, to 58 parking spaces at a rate of 1 space per 400 square feet.

Prior to the approval of the amendment, staff researched similar jurisdictions and found at least 6 other municipalities in NC that have rates for museum parking less than the Blowing Rock Land Use Code. This is based on the fact that museums are rarely occupied to full capacity except during major events.

Whenever the Board allows a deviation in the parking requirements and finds that the standard is erroneous, it shall make a request for a code amendment. The staff concurs with the parking standard for museums recommended by Town Council at a rate of one space per 400 square feet. It is very unlikely that another museum will be built in downtown and the standard is in line with that of other similar communities.

There was discussion on required numbers of parking spaces and requirements on spaces per types of business.

Ron Oberle, resident, commented on Hickory and Newton parking requirements and how they had on street parking that allowed lower required parking facility spaces.

*Mr. Grana made a motion to recommend the amendment to allow 1 space per 400 square feet be approved. Mr. Steele seconded the motion. All members were in favor of the motion.*

#### **Grand Opening Banners**

Mr. Rothrock gave the staff report advising that the zoning subcommittee had met and recommended the following changes to the draft ordinance for grand opening banners:

- To allow business anniversary date banners after 5 years and every five years thereafter.
- To allow businesses to display “grand re-opening” banners after a major renovation of at least \$50,000.00 and after business relocations.
- To decrease the size of grand opening banners from 24 square feet to 16 square feet, consistent with other temporary sign sizes.

The subcommittee also recommended amending the definition of a window sign to reflect the current enforcement policy. The subcommittee recommended removing language from the window sign definition about the signs being visible from beyond the property line. This revision would provide more flexibility to the display of window signs and continue to allow the tradition of placing special event placards in store front windows.

The subcommittee also recommended no enforcement of one-time signs for business after hours events. They agreed that business after hours signs do not promote one specific business and are allowed by Section 16-278 (11) or 16-287 (12)

*Mr. Steele made a motion to approve as presented. Mr. Grana seconded the motion.*

With Boy Scout Troop 101 in the audience, Mr. Ed Dehus, Scout Master, asked how the banner issue had come about. Chairman West explained the issues and how the changes have come about.

**All members voted in favor of the motion.**

### **Other Business**

There was some discussion on subcommittee meetings.

Mr. Grana talked about loading zones and how in the Comprehensive Plan page 14-1.D.5. an alternative study has been listed as an action statement.

Mr. Rothrock stated to the Board that in setting subcommittee meetings members must keep in mind that a 48 hour notice has to be given and the meetings are public. If a meeting is to be at a private residence it is still to be available to the public.

Mr. Rothrock advised that he had received a lot of updated information on the Land Use Code update and as soon as it is organized the subcommittee will be advised.

Mr. Ron Oberle, resident, commented on Main Street parking and loading zones. He advised that he had attended meetings where truck drivers had stated that specific time frames for delivery did not matter to them since they could deliver anytime. Mr. Oberle mentioned that recently he had observed a truck delivering that had enough room to park in parallel spacing but parked in the road and unloaded for about 20 minutes blocking one lane.

Scout Master Dehus asked about the truck issues. Chairman West explained some of the background and safety issues that had led to Board discussions.

Mr. Rothrock updated the Board advising that Town Council had approved dogs in the Memorial Park only on the concrete bench pads in the front of the park, on the trail at Davant Field, Annie Cannon Park and the Glen Burney Trail.

**Adjourn**

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

With no further business the Planning Board adjourned at 8:00 PM.

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Jim West, Chairman

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Sherrie Pitts, Administrative Assistant