

Planning and Zoning Board

Minutes

Thursday, August 20, 2009

7:00 p.m.

The Blowing Rock Planning and Zoning Board met on Thursday, August 20, 2009 for their regular scheduled meeting. Chairman West called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Members present were Debbie di Santi, Brenda Fairbetter, Sue Sweeting, Ada Webster, Web Alexander and Jim Steele. Staff members present were Planning Director Kevin Rothrock, and Administrative Assistant Sherrie Pitts. Members absent were Nelda Miller and Greg Grana.

Ms. Sweeting made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Alexander. All members were in favor of the motion.

Items of Business

Extensions of Nonconforming Situations

Mr. Rothrock discussed the staff report with the board in continuation from the July meeting and the subcommittee meeting regarding extensions and enlargements of nonconforming situations. The consensus of the subcommittee was to allow expansions in certain circumstances. Included in the board packet is the current ordinance text and proposed text amendments.

There was discussion about the setbacks and Mr. Rothrock said it needed to be defined at either 15 or 20 feet.

Chairman West asked for the definition of porch and deck. Mr. Rothrock stated porches generally have a roof, while decks do not. These definitions are not defined in the Land Use Code, but taken from the dictionary and the NC Building Code.

The board discussed expansion in the street yard and side/rear yards and what may be reasonable and allowable.

The board consensus with respect to expansion/conversion in the street yard is as follows:

1. Allow lateral expansion and conversion of decks if at least 20 feet from edge of road.
2. Allow lateral expansion and conversion of covered porches if at least 20 feet from edge of road.
3. No expansion of single level nonconforming heated space into second level unless second level meets applicable setbacks. Allow enclosure of a lower level.
4. Allow nonconforming porches and carports to be enclosed if at least 20 feet from edge of road
5. Allow enclosure of a lower level.

The board consensus with respect to expansion/conversion in the side or rear yard is as follows:

1. Allow lateral expansion of decks but no closer to property line.
2. Do not allow lateral expansion of covered porches.
3. Do not allow conversion of decks to porches.

4. No expansion of single level nonconforming enclosed space into second level unless second level meets applicable setbacks, but allow enclosure of a lower level.
5. Allow nonconforming porches and carports to be enclosed if at least 20 feet from edge of road.

The board discussed and agreed with keeping a minimum 20-foot setback along roads in applying the nonconforming expansion provisions.

There was discussion and a few changes in the proposed draft language. The board requested staff prepare and email an updated document.

Discussion of Town Center District

Mr. Rothrock gave the staff report to the board in reference to proposed Town Center District and Central Business Dimensional Regulations. He briefed the board in reference to recommendations of the HyettPalma Downtown Retail Strategy and a request from the Retail Strategy Steering committee, and advised the zoning subcommittee held discussion on a draft ordinance to establish a Town Center District. The discussion resulted in a preliminary map to establish the boundaries of a Town Center District and ordinance text to describe the district along with applicable dimensional regulations.

There was some board discussion on the zoning change, building setbacks, heights and about the draft ordinance language.

Mr. Rothrock advised the Town Center zoning change requires a public notice. The changes will be updated and the public notice will be sent to affected property owners and adjacent property owners for the September Planning Board meeting.

With no other comments or questions the Planning Board closed discussion on the Town Center District.

Adjourn

Ms. Sweeting made a motion to adjourn. Ms. di Santi seconded the motion. All members were in favor of the motion.

With no further business the Planning Board adjourned at 8:23 PM.

Jim West, Chairman

Sherrie Pitts, Administrative Assistant