

Planning and Zoning Board

Minutes

Thursday, May 26, 2011

5:30 p.m.

The Blowing Rock Planning and Zoning Board met on Thursday, May 26, 2011 for their regular scheduled meeting. Chairman Jim West called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. Members present were David Laughter, Ray Pickett, Lisa Stripling, and David Harwood. Staff members present were Planning Director Kevin Rothrock, Town Manager Scott Hildebran and Administrative Assistant Tammy Bentley. Members absent were Debbie di Santi, Brenda Fairbetter, and Doug Pegram.

Chairman West asked if there were any changes to the minutes. There were none.

Mr. Pickett made a motion to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded by Ms. Stripling. All members were in favor of the motion.

RZ 2011-01 Rezoning of Watauga Medical Center (AHRS) Property:

Mr. Rothrock gave the staff report for rezoning a 43.393 acres tract that currently lies just outside the Blowing Rock ETJ. Criterion Healthcare is requesting rezoning to HMC to allow for the future development of a post-acute care medical campus.

The Board discussed the rezoning. Chairman West asked for a brief overview of the annexation. Mr. Rothrock said this satellite annexation was for water and sewer service and was initiated by the landowner. When the Petition for Annexation is filed it will go to the Town Council for consideration. The Town Council will set the date of the annexation. At that time the rezoning would be considered.

The Board also discussed access to the property, the Town's ability to offer water and sewer and trash pickup services; potential issues with crossing Blue Ridge Parkway property with water and sewer lines; and if this rezoning was in compliance with the Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Hildebran said that the town would be able to offer the services and that the Town has an easement to cross Parkway property with water and sewer lines. He also stated that the water lines and a sleeve for the sewer lines extend to Edmisten Road now. Mr. Rothrock said the intent of the rezoning complied with the Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Rothrock said that these infrastructure issues were too preliminary and that AHRS needs the rezoning approval before they can go before the State Board for approval of a Certificate of Need (CON). Mr. Rothrock said the infrastructure and other issues would be addressed later.

Chairman West asked the applicants for a timeline for the project. Mr. Tim Ford, CEO of Blowing Rock Hospital (part of ARHS) said that the State review does not start until June 1, 2011 and that review process could take up to 150 days. Chairman West asked Mr. Ford what the current need for beds at Blowing Rock Hospital. Mr. Ford said that the new facility would add 30 beds and that the existing facility is not conducive to expanding and providing services for post

acute long-term care and that they must start the process to show the State their good faith to make this project happen.

Mr. Pickett motioned to approve the Rezoning request. Ms. Stripling seconded the motion.

Chairman West suspended the motion to open the floor for public comment.

Mr. Keith Tester said this project was in compliance with the Comprehensive Plan in that it allowed the growth necessary to meet the twenty-first century needs of the citizens of Blowing Rock while the Town is able to maintain and control that growth.

Mr. Pickett motioned to approve the Rezoning request. Ms. Stripling seconded the motion. All members were in favor of the motion.

Amendments to Land Use Ordinance

Mr. Rothrock gave the staff report for the Subdivision section. The Board discussed the ordinance. Mr. Harwood expressed concern with the wording on page 5 regarding the licensing of architects as architects are not licensed by the state, but by the Board of Architects. He suggested the specific wording read “*licensed to practice architecture*” and “*licensed to practice engineering*”...

Mr. Laughter motioned to approve this section revision of the Land Use Ordinance. Mr. Harwood seconded the motion to approve as amended. All members were in favor of the motion.

The Board discussed the Commercial Design section. Mr. Pickett asked why single family structures located in General and Central Business did not have to comply with this section. Mr. Rothrock indicated that the zoning and building codes control single family dwellings and that commercial design requirements should be more stringent due to the increased traffic associated with commercial enterprises. Mr. Pickett said that the sidewalk requirement should apply equally to single family and commercial uses. The Board discussed the sidewalk language and the rest of this section. Mr. Rothrock said he would work on the sidewalk language to revisit next month.

Discussion of Planning Board By-Laws

The Board agreed to defer discussion of the Planning Board By-Laws until next month.

Chairman West thanked Keith Tester for this input.

With no further business Mr. Pickett made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Ms. Stripling. All members were in favor of the motion.

Adjourn

With no further business the Planning Board adjourned at 7:20 PM.

Chairman West

Tammy Bentley, Administrative Assistant