

Planning and Zoning Board

Minutes

Thursday, June 19, 2012

5:30 p.m.

The Blowing Rock Planning and Zoning Board met on Thursday, June 19, 2012 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, Doug Pegram, Alice Roess and Lisa Stripling. Staff members present were Town Manager Scott Hildebran, Planning Director Kevin Rothrock, Administrative Assistant Tammy Bentley and Taylor Gupton, Intern. Members Debbie di Santi, Brenda Fairbetter and David Harwood were absent.

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.

Chairman West added an item to the agenda. Two Town Commissioners wanted clarification on who gets what information and when from the Planning Board.

CUP 12 – 01 Maple Lodge and Blowing Rock Ale House

Ms. Stripling asked to be recused from the proceedings as she is a principal in the Maple Lodge. *Chairman West made a motion to approve Ms. Stripling's recusal. Ms. Roess seconded.* **All members were in favor of the motion.**

Mr. Rothrock gave the staff report. Mr. Rob Dyer, principal of RG Investments is requesting a conditional use permit to add a restaurant and micro-brewery for onsite consumption to the Maple Lodge located on Sunset Drive. The brewing operation will be located in the 2 bedroom cottage and will produce Blowing Rock Ale.

The applicant has secured ABC Permits for alcohol sales at the Maple Lodge. Additionally, Blowing Rock School Principal Patrick Sukow and the Watauga County Board of Education have provided written notice that they are not opposed to the brewery being located next to the school auditorium.

Chairman West asked if there were any questions for the staff.

Chairman West asked if the Maple Lodge would have valet parking and if the valet parking now at the Ragged Garden would continue. Mr. Rothrock said that Mr. Dyer could answer that question. Mr. Dyer responded that there would not be valet parking at the Maple Lodge and that the valet parking at Ragged Garden would continue.

Mr. Dyer then introduced Mr. Todd Rice and Mr. Jeffrey Walker, owners of Blowing Rock Ale. They said that this would be a small operation for mostly onsite consumption and that 5 gallon kegs and growlers (a reusable container that holds 4 beers) would be filled.

The Board discussed the increased loading traffic, the total production capacity, and impact of the brewing process on surrounding properties. Mr. Dyer said that the loading and unloading should not be an issue. Mr. Rice and Mr. Walker said that the production capacity is limited by the size of the equipment and would be a maximum of 500 to 600 gallons per week. The production will be based on demand in the restaurant and sales of 5 gallon kegs and refilling growlers and will not include any production for distribution. Mr. Dyer said that they plan to be very sensitive to the neighboring properties and the Maple Lodge guests.

Chairman West then opened the public comment period. There were none.

Mr. Pickett made a motion to approve the conditional use permit. Ms. Roess seconded. Chairman West asked that “primarily onsite consumption” be added to the permit. *Mr. Pickett made a motion to approve the permit as amended. Ms. Roess seconded.* **All members were in favor of the motion.**

Ms. Stripling returned to the meeting.

Comprehensive Plan/Survey

Mr. Rothrock gave the staff report on the survey and thanked Chairman West for preparing the memo.

The Board discussed how the online survey will work. Mr. Pegram asked if someone could “cook the books” and take the survey multiple times. Mr. Rothrock responded that each household will have a unique code for the survey as a control.

The Board then discussed the survey page by page.

On page 3 Chairman West asked if there is a limited amount of expansion for the answers for questions 13 and 15. Mr. Rothrock responded that the expansion space is limited.

On page 4, Mr. Pegram asked if “Park Avenue”, in item 18(e), was too specific. The Board discussed this and decided to change it to “Park Avenue/Wallingford Street area.”

On page 5 Chairman West asked if some other potential development sites should be added to question 22.

On page 8 Mr. Pegram said that using the term tax increase in question 30 made it a weighted question and we may be setting ourselves up for no response. The Board discussed other ways to word this. Mr. Hildebran suggested replacing “*Would you support a tax increase*” with “*I am willing to pay more*”. The Board decided to change the wording in this question and also in question 26(b) on page 7.

On Page 9 Ms. Stripling noted that the word “with” needs to be inserted after satisfied in question 31(d).

Ms. Roess noted that on the first page at the fourth bullet point under Instructions for Completing the Survey needs to be reworded to read “*More than one adult*”.

Mr. Pegram made a motion to approve the survey with the agreed upon changes. The motion was seconded by Ms. Stripling. All members were in favor of the motion.

Chairman West said we should distribute the edited survey to Council prior to the July 12 meeting.

Mr. Rothrock will forward the survey to NC State for edits and will send it to the Board for one last review and then forward to Town Council.

Other Business

Chairman West said two Town Council members asked him make hard copies of any Planning Board items available to them as soon as possible and definitely before they become “public”. They want to be aware of any pending business so they are informed when asked by citizens. He stated that this precluded anything regarding Conditional Use Permits, but would include drafts of the 2012 Survey. He also stated that the Planning Board has been asked to be more prudent in the future so that the Council was not left out of the loop and blindsided.

Mr. Rothrock stated that the Land Use Code has been updated and is online.

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

Adjourn

With no further business the Planning Board adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

Chairman West

Tammy Bentley, Administrative Assistant