

Planning and Zoning Board

Minutes

Thursday, March 21, 2013

5:30 p.m.

The Blowing Rock Planning and Zoning Board met on Thursday, March 21, 2013 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, David Harwood, Doug Pegram, Alice Roess, and Lisa Stripling. Member Debbie di Santi was absent. Staff members present were Town Manager Scott Hildebran, Planning Director Kevin Rothrock and Administrative Assistant Tammy Bentley and Doug Chapman, Town Engineer. 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 Mr. Laughter. All members were in favor of the motion.

Installation of Board Members

Ms. Bovino was sworn to the Board.

Election of Officers

Chairman West asked for nominations for the Chair and Vice Chair, currently held by Mr. Pickett, for the Board.

Mr. Laughter made a motion to keep Chairman West and Vice-Chair Pickett. The motion was seconded by Mr. Pegram. All members were in favor of the motion.

CUP 2013 – 01 ARHS Appalachian Place at Chestnut Ridge

Ms. Bovino, an employee of Blowing Rock Hospital, declared a conflict of interest and asked to be recused from the proceedings.

Mr. Pegram made a motion to recuse Ms. Bovino. The motion was seconded by Ms. Roess. All members were in favor of the motion.

Mr. Rothrock gave the staff report. Appalachian Regional Healthcare System is requesting a conditional use permit to construct Phase I and II of a 112-bed post acute/skilled nursing facility on a 68 acre site located on Highway 321 off Summit Meadows Lane. The facility would also have a pharmacy and on-site clinic.

The property is zoned HMC and GB and is bordered by Highway 321, unzoned pastureland, an unzoned county subdivision and the Blue Ridge Parkway.

Chairman West asked the Board if they had any questions for Staff. Mr. Harwood clarified that the CUP was for Phase I and II. Mr. Rothrock confirmed that. Chairman West asked Mr. Chapman if the Town water and sewer system were adequate for this size project. Mr. Chapman replied that both were adequate. Mr. Harwood asked Mr. Chapman what the water capacity would be after project completion. Mr. Chapman said that we are currently at 50% of our maximum capacity and the water plant maximum is 1,000,000 gallons/day. The Board discussed the impact on any future water customers in that direction. Chairman West confirmed that anyone wishing to have Town water and sewer would have to request annexation first.

The Board discussed the access into the site from Highway 321, the grade of the access road, cut and fill and retaining walls. Mr. Chapman said that a short distance of the road, about 50 feet, is at a 15% grade. Mr. Chapman also indicated that the access road would be DOT maintained up to the fork and privately maintained past the fork. Mr. Chapman said he could not answer questions about retaining walls and cut and fill.

Chairman West opened the public hearing and asked who was representing the applicant.

Mr. Marcus Terry and Mr. Steve Onxley with RPA Design spoke for the applicant. Mr. Terry said that Mr. Rothrock had given a very good overview of the project. He also stated that 92 of the beds would be for skilled nursing, 20 would be assisted living. The facility would also contain physical therapy and rehabilitation, a medical clinic and a pharmacy. Mr. Onxley said that the lower level would have a library, hair salon, and administrative offices. He said that the facility would have a mountain cottage and very residential “feel” as indicated by the design and exterior finishes. They are working with DOT on the entrance road and have hired a local landscape architect to keep native plants. Their goal is keep the natural vegetation and trees as opposed to retaining walls. Chairman West asked if the stone would be natural or cultured. Mr. Onxley responded that they were leaning towards cultured stone. Chairman West confirmed with Mr. Onxley that the colors for the stone would be consistent with the samples submitted today.

Ms. Roess indicated that she was not crazy about the roof color. Mr. Onxley said that they had used this roofing on several projects. It blends in well with trees and actually looks better as it ages.

Chairman West asked about the parking as presented. Mr. Onxley responded that they are looking at creative alternatives and may have parking along the access road. They really want the project to “look like it has always been there”.

Civil Engineer Dean Hatfield told the Board that they are trying to “engineer” out of the retaining walls. Chairman West asked if the choice of materials for any required retaining walls would be similar to what is already along Highway 321. Mr. Hatfield confirmed this.

The Board discussed the safety of the proposed entrance on Highway 321 and the bridge on the access road. Mr. Hatfield said the intersection will be signalized. He also explained the layout of the intersection for the Board. He said the bridge will be a two span bridge and there will be no piers in the water and no materials in the floodway. The Board also discussed the fire lane access and materials used for same.

Chairman West opened the hearing to public comments.

Ms. Susie Greene introduced herself to the Board. She owns adjacent property to the south of the project. She asked about lighting for the project and how the road was going to be developed. She was specifically concerned about how the developers plan to work with the families and homeowners regarding access and noise.

Mr. Rob Hudspeth with Appalachian Regional Health Care System responded that they plan to be good neighbors and they had met with the Wrights earlier in the day for 1.5 hours. He stated they had not fully considered the lighting plan and were glad that they had met earlier so they can provide a lighting barrier. He reiterated that they plan to be good neighbors and communicate with the neighbors regarding access to the road not being blocked.

Mr. Herbie Hames with Criterion Health Care said they understand that they must maintain access at all times throughout construction. He also said that they plan to meet with the Wrights in May regarding the road and lighting. He indicated that they can direct the cone of light to reduce the impact.

Chairman West closed the public comment period.

The Board discussed how the Town Council could make a decision on the request at their next meeting on April 9th with so many items (bridge aesthetics, fire department access, etc) to be determined. Chairman West said that the Planning Board must make their recommendation to the Town Council within 60 days. Mr. Harwood asked the applicant when they plan to begin construction. Mr. Hudspeth responded that they want to begin as soon as possible. The Board asked the applicant if they could address the undetermined issues prior to the Town Council meeting on April, 9th. They responded that they could.

*Mr. Harwood made a motion to approve the request, if the applicant could provide information on the retaining walls, cut and fill, parking, fire department access road, and bridge aesthetics before the next Town Council meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Pegram. **All members were in favor of the motion.***

Ms. Bovino returned to the meeting.

Subcommittee Assignments

The Board discussed the subcommittee assignments.

The Planning Subcommittee members will be Mr. Laughter, Ms. Stripling, Mr. Pegram and Chairman West.

The Zoning Subcommittee members will be Ms. Roess, Mr. Harwood, Mr. Pickett, and Ms. Bovino.

Mr. Pickett agreed to serve on the Retail Strategy committee.

Other Business

The Board discussed the status of the 321 widening. Mr. Rothrock said that Maymead had been selected as the new contractor. The previous project manager will be employed by Maymead.

Mr. Rothrock informed the Board that Mellow Mushroom will request a CUP at the April meeting. He also said that RFPs have been requested for the Comprehensive Plan process.

Mr. Harwood thanked Chairman West for his continued service as Chair.

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

Adjourn

With no further business the Planning Board adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Chairman West

Tammy Bentley, Administrative Assistant