

Draft

Planning and Zoning Board

Minutes

Thursday, May 15, 2014

5:30 p.m.

The Blowing Rock Planning and Zoning Board met on Thursday, May 15, 2014 for their regularly scheduled meeting. Chairman West called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm. Members present were David Laughter, Lisa Stripling, Alice Roess, Wes Carter, Ginny Starnes, Rich Scheurer and Natalie Bovino. Member David Harwood was absent. Staff members present were Planning Director Kevin Rothrock and Administrative Assistant Tammy Bentley.

Chairman West asked if there were any changes to the minutes. There were none. *Ms. Stripling made a motion to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded by Ms. Roess. All members were in favor of the motion.*

Draft Comprehensive Plan Update and Presentation

Jason Epley and Vagn Hansen with Benchmark Consulting presented a quick overview of the draft plan. Chairman West noted that the priority list was to be denoted with bullet points as opposed to being numbered. Mr. Epley said he would change that and the revision would be available during the next meeting scheduled for June 19, 2014.

Mr. Rothrock told the planning sub-committee that he appreciated their time and effort on the plan. The Board discussed how much of the last plans objectives had been accomplished and that some of the new items needed to be commenced soon. The Board discussed the specifics of the priorities and the implementation of same.

Chairman West thanked Mr. Epley and Mr. Hansen for their presentation.

Draft Ordinance – Metal Roofing

Mr. Rothrock gave the staff report for the revised amendment based on the Board's comments at the March Planning Board meeting limiting the total metal roof surface allowed.

Mr. Carter asked if existing metal roofs could be replaced with the same roofing material or would the new roof material have to meet the proposed requirements. Mr. Rothrock said yes. Chairman West asked if the existing metal roof surface exceeds 25% could the amount exceeding 25% be replaced. Mr. Rothrock responded yes.

The Board discussed amending the wording to read “An existing metal roof may be replaced in its current or lesser dimensions meeting new material standards”.

Ms. Roess made a motion to approve the ordinance as amended. Ms. Stripling seconded. All members were in favor of the motion.

Draft Ordinance – Sandwich Boards

Mr. Rothrock gave the staff report with the revisions to the draft ordinance discussed at the March 2014 meeting. Chairman West said the number of sandwich boards allowed per business was not clear and suggested that “per business” be added after “board” in section 16-17.12.2.7.6. Mr. Carter asked about the sandwich boards being left out overnight. Ms. Bentley suggested that “overnight or” be added after “displayed” in section c.

Mr. Doug Beach, owner of Twigs Restaurant said that a larger sandwich board sign is needed on Highway 321 bypass, as a 2’ x 2’ sign would not be visible. Mr. Rothrock responded that sandwich board signs would not be allowed in the General Business zoning district as they are intended for foot traffic in Central Business. Mr. Beach said that allowing sandwich boards signs on Highway 321 should be addressed since sidewalks would be installed with the widening of the highway.

The Board discussed when to address sandwich boards in the General Business zoning districts and thought it would be best to wait until the sidewalks are installed.

Mr. Laughter made a motion to approve the ordinance as amended, seconded by Ms. Starnes. All members were in favor of the motion.

Holiday Lighting Discussion

Mr. Rothrock gave the staff report and explained that when staff contacted businesses, to request compliance with the string lighting ordinance, several business owners requested the continued display of white string lighting in their landscaping, trees and bushes.

Mr. Scheurer asked if the lights would be displayed year-round. Mr. Rothrock confirmed.

Mr. Beach said that he has lights in the trees and bushes and still has icicle lights on the eave of his restaurant. He said that the businesses along the bypass are very hard to see at night and that the lights help define the building.

The Board discussed how to best define the lighting to be allowed and if icicle lights should be allowed to remain year-round in the General Business zoning district. The Board also discussed how to define “landscaping.”

Mr. Carter made a motion to allow white string lighting in trees and bushes throughout the year, seconded by Mr. Scheurer.

The Board then discussed whether string lighting should be allowed on non-building structures such as fences.

*The board then voted on the motion. **The motion failed with 5 opposed and 3 in favor.***

Ms. Bovino made a motion to allow white decorative string lighting in landscaping and fences year-round, seconded by Mr. Laughter.

Mr. Carter asked if the ordinance would apply to residences. Mr. Rothrock responded yes, but that the ordinance is mainly designed for businesses attracting customers.

*The board then voted on the motion. **The motion passed with 7 in favor and one opposed.***

Other Business

With no other business *Ms. Roess made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Ms. Starnes. **All members were in favor of the motion.***

Chairman West adjourned the meeting at 7:50 pm.

Chairman Jim West

Tammy Bentley, Administrative Assistant