

MINUTES

Blowing Rock Board of Commissioners

Tuesday, March 13, 2001

The Mayor and Board of Commissioners for the Town of Blowing Rock met in regular session on Tuesday, March 13, 2001 at 7:00 p.m. Present were Mayor J. B. Lawrence, Commissioners Barbara Ball, Terry Lentz, Michael Sweeting, Charles Travis, and Rita Wiseman. Also present were Town Manager Don Holycross, Town Attorney Allen Moseley, Town Engineer Marion Rothrock and Town Clerk Barbara Beach. Other staff members who attended the meeting were Director of Public Works Johnny Lentz, Police Chief Owen Tolbert, and Building Inspector John Warren.

Recognition of Citizen Volunteers

Mayor Lawrence asked Harvey Lucas to come forward. The Mayor presented Mr. Lucas with a plaque and thanked him for his years of service on the Blowing Rock Appearance Advisory Commission and the Board of Adjustment.

Mayor Lawrence then recognized Virginia Stacks and presented her with a plaque in recognition of her service to the Board of Adjustment for nine years. Mr. Lawrence praised her dedication to public service and her commitment to the Town in serving as chair of this Board.

Approval of Minutes:

Mrs. Ball made the motion that the minutes of the February 13, 2001 meeting be approved as submitted. Mr. Lentz seconded the motion, and it was approved unanimously.

Public Hearings:

1. Conditional Use Permit # 2001-01 - Kings Ransom Subdivision

Al Estee, President of SAL Properties, was sworn in to request a conditional use permit to construct a subdivision on a two-acre tract of land located on the east side of Ransom Street across from Henkle Street. The development would contain three lots and a duplex would be constructed on each lot, for a total of six residential units. Council members questioned whether the units are town homes or condominiums. Mr. Estee replied that his company has constructed both types of housing developments. Mr. Moseley believed that it is a town home development based on the information he had received. Mr. Sweeting asked whether the common green area includes the landscape buffer and the stormwater detention area. Council agreed that the final plat must be filed after construction of the units is complete to define these areas of the development.

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Ms. Wiseman asked about draft conditions pertaining to perpetual maintenance of green areas in the

subdivision. Mr. Moseley stated that these types of issues should be included in the Declaration of Restrictions. After further discussion, Mr. Sweeting made motion that the public hearing be closed. Mrs. Ball seconded the motion, and it was approved unanimously.

Mr. Sweeting moved that the project be approved as submitted with an additional item to require SAL Properties to make reference to the Conditional Use Permit in the Declaration of Restrictions to be recorded at the Register of Deeds office. Ms. Wiseman seconded, and all members voted to ratify the motion.

CUP No. 2001- 01 Attached as Exhibit A

2. Conditional Use Permit # 2001-02 - Chetola Resort

Mr. Kent Tarbutton was sworn to speak at the public hearing to request improvements to the entrance to the resort, and relocation and construction of a new guardhouse. Mr. Tarbutton explained that he has revised the grading plan since it was submitted to the Planning Board; he is not going to grade as extensively as he had originally planned. In view of this, he asked that Town Staff approve the final landscaping plan. Mr. Tarbutton reviewed the plans and after discussion, Mr. Sweeting made motion that the public hearing be closed. Mrs. Ball seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

Mrs. Ball moved that the draft conditional use permit be approved, and Mr. Travis seconded the motion. All members voted in favor of the motion.

CUP No. 2001- 02 Attached as Exhibit B

3. Conditional Use Permit # 2001-04 – Blowing Rock School Gymnasium

Randy Jones, architect for the Watauga County Board of Education was sworn to speak at the public hearing to request a permit to convert the old gymnasium at Blowing Rock School into three classrooms. The project includes improvements to the exterior of the building, new sidewalks, handicapped ramps, and landscaping. Mr. Jones explained the planned renovation and reviewed the project with Council. After discussion of Item # 2, which would require the Applicant to provide five additional parking spaces, Ms. Wiseman moved that the public hearing be closed. Mrs. Ball seconded the motion, and Council voted unanimously to approve the motion.

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Ms. Wiseman made motion that the draft CUP be approved as submitted, with the deletion of Item # 2. Mr. Sweeting seconded the motion, and it was unanimously ratified. In response to a query from Mr. Lentz, Council discussed the waiver of inspection fees and impact fees for the project. It was the consensus of the Council that these fees are waived for the renovation.

CUP No. 2001- 04 Attached as Exhibit C

New Business:

1. Bids for North Main Street Sidewalk

Town Engineer Marion Rothrock reported on the bid opening for the construction of a sidewalk along North Main Street. The sidewalk would extend from the Chetola entrance to Shoppes on the Parkway. Mr. Rothrock reviewed the bid tabulation sheets and Council discussed alternate components of the construction. After deducting contributions from NCDOT and Shoppes on the Parkway, the anticipated cost of the project would be \$125,122. Mr. Travis made motion that the Town accept the bid from R & G Construction, adding a walk bridge with a width of three feet across the Middle Fork, and that the Town seek reimbursement from NCDOT for the extra guardrail and corrugated metal pipe needed to reconstruct their lines in the area. Ms. Wiseman seconded the motion.

During discussion of the motion, Mr. Holycross suggested exploring other options for funding. NCDOT will pay \$80,000 of the expense. During the planning phase of the project, it was expected that their contribution would pay one half of the total cost. However, NCDOT required the addition of a retaining wall and other changes that increased the cost. Mr. Holycross indicated that federal funds would pay up to 80% for the construction of pedestrian walkways. He suggested that he could talk to NCDOT to discuss funding options, or investigate federal funding and that Council could discuss the matter further at a work session. Mr. Travis and Ms. Wiseman agreed, and withdrew the motion and second.

Mayor Lawrence called for a recess. The meeting reconvened at 8:40.

2. Draft Ordinances - Town Center Zoning District and Change in Setbacks in Business Districts

Mr. Holycross presented two draft ordinances pertaining to zoning and setbacks. The first would establish a Town Center zoning district in the Main Street area of the downtown where zero lot line construction exists and should be continued. Upon motion of Mr. Travis, second by Mr. Sweeting, the Council voted unanimously to send the draft to the Planning Board for their review.

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The second draft ordinance would establish a 15-foot setback around the perimeter of a property in the General Business District, the Hospital/Medical Center District, the Horse Show Grounds District, and the Parks and Green Space District. In Central Business District, it would enact a 15-foot front yard setback, a 10-foot side yard setback, and a 10-foot rear yard setback. It would also provide relief for the setback requirement on double frontage lots. Mr. Sweeting moved that the draft be sent to the Planning Board for their review and comment. Mr. Lentz seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

3. Closed Session

Mr. Sweeting made a motion that Council convene in closed session by authority of NCGS 143-318.11(6) to consider personnel matters. Mrs. Ball seconded the motion, and Council members voted unanimously to agree.

Adjournment

Upon reconvening, there was no further business, and Mayor Lawrence adjourned the meeting at 9:50 p.m.

J. B. Lawrence,
Mayor

Town Clerk