

MINUTES

Blowing Rock Board of Commissioners

Tuesday, August 14, 2001

The Mayor and Board of Commissioners for the Town of Blowing Rock met in regular session on Tuesday, August 14, 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 attending the meeting were Director of Public Works Johnny Lentz, Police Chief Owen Tolbert, Building Inspector John Warren, Kevin Rothrock, Planning Director, and Tom McRary, Water Plant Supervisor.

Approval of Minutes

Mrs. Ball made a motion that the minutes of July 10, 2001 meeting be adopted as submitted. Ms. Wiseman seconded the motion, and it was approved unanimously.

Introduction of New Employee

Mr. Holycross introduced Kevin Rothrock, new Planning Director, to the Council and the assembled citizens. He commented that Kevin has been on the job since July 23. Mayor Lawrence and the Council welcomed Mr. Rothrock to the meeting and to service with the Town. Mr. Sweeting praised his work on the planning of the Greenway Trail while he was employed with the Town of Boone.

Public Hearings:

1. Amendment to Code to Allow Independent Living Units in the Hospital/

Medical Complex Zoning District

Mayor Lawrence asked to be excused from the meeting for the discussion and action on the first two public hearings because of his position on the Board of Directors of the Blowing Rock Hospital. Mayor Pro-tem Travis opened a public hearing to hear testimony on the following matters.

Mr. Holycross explained that the hospital has filed an application for a Conditional Use Permit to construct 60 units of independent living housing on 9.8 acres of hospital property. It was the opinion of Mr. Moseley that a text amendment would be required before the proposed units could be constructed in the Hospital Medical Center district.

August 14, 2001

Page two

Tony diSanti, attorney for Blowing Rock Hospital was sworn to speak. He briefly described the plan and offered to answer questions from the Council. There were

none, and by motion of Mr. Lentz, second by Mr. Sweeting, the public hearing was closed.

Mr. Sweeting made motion that the text amendment to Sections 16-15, 16-136, and 16-146 of the Land Use Ordinance be ratified as drafted. Ms. Wiseman seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

Ordinance number 2001-03 Attached as Exhibit A

2. CUP for Senior Housing at Blowing Rock Hospital

Mr. Travis opened a public hearing to receive comment on the request from Blowing Rock Hospital for a conditional use permit to construct 60 units of senior housing. Mr. diSanti had already been sworn by the Town Clerk in the previous public hearing, and Mr. Travis ruled that he did not have to be sworn in again. Sworn to speak were David Ramseur, CEO of the Longview Group, architects for the project, Sherwood Webb, contractor, Roscoe Lindsey, and Earl and Carol Horne.

Mr. Ramseur answered questions from the Council about the proposed development. Mr. Lentz asked whether the development would affect the historic walkway between South Main Street and the hospital property. Mr. Ramseur stated that there is a sixteen foot undisturbed buffer between the project and the walkway and Mr. Holycross explained that the Town has recorded easements for the footpath.

Roscoe Lindsey, property owner at Village Green condominiums, was concerned about blasting during construction, water runoff, and the lack of a vegetative buffer along the access road where it adjoins the Village Green property line.

Carol Horne spoke on behalf of adjacent property owner Suzanne Wilson. The access road for the project would border Mrs. Wilson's property and she is asking for Council's consideration of a vegetative buffer to screen the road from her property, or for the road to be moved further away from her property line.

Council members engaged Mr. Ramseur in extensive discussion about the access road, opaque buffers and retaining walls, lighting, and the possibility of constructing a sidewalk on the eastern side of the access road between the Davant and Wilson properties. Mr. Ramseur explained they would need an additional five feet of property from Dr. and Mrs. Charles Davant to install it on the eastern side. Dr. Bunky Davant stated that he did not believe that it would be a problem to acquire the additional property from his parents.

August 14, 2001

Page three

Upon motion of Mr. Sweeting, second by Mr. Lentz, Council voted unanimously to close the public hearing. Mr. Sweeting made motion that the draft CUP be adopted with the following changes: 1) the sidewalks as shown on the detailed blueprint showing the access across the submitted drawings must be constructed, 2) all lighting to be constructed on the east side of the access road off Chestnut, 3) spacing of the lighting shall be to

the benefit of the adjoining property owners, that is, to minimize the effect of the lighting on adjacent properties, 4) number of units in the 45-unit building may be modified as long as the total number of units for the project does not exceed seven (7) units per acre. Mr. Lentz seconded the motion. After further discussion, Mr. Sweeting added another condition to the motion, that plantings be added between the retaining wall and the property line on the west side of the access road across the Davant property. Mrs. Ball suggested that the motion be amended to mandate the retaining wall be extended so that as much as possible, the rhododendron that currently exists be allowed to remain between the subject property and Village Green Condominiums. Mr. Sweeting and Mr. Lentz agreed to the amendments, and the vote was called. All members voted in favor of the amended motion, and it was unanimously ratified.

Conditional Use Permit Number 2001-09 Attached as Exhibit B

3. Royal Oaks Short Term Rental Overlay District

After a short recess, Mayor Lawrence reconvened the meeting at 8:45 p.m. and opened a public hearing to hear the petition for a creation of a short-term rental overlay district for the Royal Oak Condominiums on Ransom Street. Kim Johnson, association manager for Royal Oaks, was sworn to speak. After she finished, no one else rose to speak, and upon motion of Ms. Wiseman, second by Mr. Sweeting, the public hearing was closed.

Mr. Lentz moved that the creation of a short-term rental overlay district be approved with the adoption of draft ordinance 2001-04. Ms. Wiseman seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimously in favor of the motion.

Ordinance Number 2001-04 Attached as Exhibit C

New Business

1. Rusty Water Problems

Mr. Holycross provided an update on action the Town has taken to remedy the recent problems with rusty water. He advised that an additional intake valve would be installed at the reservoir so that raw water can be drawn from the top of the lake. Also, the clearwell tank has been drained and cleaned, and the interior of the three million-gallon storage tank on Green Hill has been thoroughly cleaned.

August 14, 2001

Page four

Other steps that have been taken are to backwash filters at the water plant after midnight, and plans have been prepared for State approval, which would change the backwash process to use water from the clearwell instead of the Green Hill tank. Mr. Holycross assured Council that the Town staff would continue to work on the problem until it is solved. Ms. Wiseman requested a monthly update on progress in the water situation until the end of the year.

Council also debated the merits of delaying the scheduled water billing rate increase from the effective date of July 1 to later in the year. Ms. Wiseman made a motion that the increase be put off for an additional two

months. Mrs. Ball seconded the motion for purposes of discussion. Mr. Lentz and Mr. Sweeting asserted that the revenue is needed to make the water fund self-supporting, and when the vote was called, only Ms. Wiseman voted in favor of the motion. The motion failed.

2. Discussion of Highway 221 Sidewalk

Susie Greene was present to request the Council reconsider the location of the Route 221 sidewalk that was approved at the February meeting. She spoke on behalf of the citizens on Green Street. They ask that it be constructed on the south side of the highway because of safety issues, cost, and destruction of green space.

Council members discussed the proposed project and the ramifications of moving the location of the sidewalk. Mr. Sweeting moved that the Highway 221 sidewalk project be dissolved, and redirect the \$40,000 Town match to more appropriate areas of Town where sidewalks are needed. There was no second.

After further debate, Mrs. Ball made motion that the Town eliminate the Route 221 sidewalk construction project. Mr. Sweeting seconded the motion. Voting for the motion: Ball, Sweeting. Voting against the motion: Wiseman, Lentz, and Travis. The motion failed.

After additional deliberation, Council members agreed by consensus to ask Mr. Holycross to contact NCDOT to inquire whether an extension of time may be granted for submission of preliminary designs, specifications, and cost estimates. The current deadline for these documents is October 10. Also, Council asked Marion Rothrock to compute a cost comparison for moving the sidewalk to the south side of the highway. They will report on their findings at the September meeting.

August 14, 2001

Page five

3. Art in the Park Dates for Summer, 2002

Mr. Howard Gray, Executive Director of the Blowing Rock Chamber of Commerce, was present to request approval for the following schedule of Art in the Park for the summer of 2002.

May 11 August 17

June 8 September 7

July 20 October 5

Upon motion of Mr. Lentz, second by Mrs. Ball, these dates were unanimously approved as requested.

4. Rezoning Request by Leon and Claudine Silver

Mr. and Mrs. Silver submitted a petition for the rezoning of two parcels of land located on Morris Place and adjacent to Blowing Rock School. They request that the parcels be rezoned from R-10S, Single family residential, to CB, Central Business. Mr. Lentz made motion that the request be denied because this use would

intensify the heavy school traffic on that street. Mr. Sweeting seconded the motion, and all Council members voted in favor of the motion.

5. Closed Session

Ms. Wiseman moved that Council convene in closed session by authority of NCGS 143-318.11(3) to consult with the Town Attorney. Mr. Lentz 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 12:15 a.m.

J. B. Lawrence,
Mayor

Barbara G. Beach, Town Clerk