

## Planning and Zoning Board Minutes

Thursday, February 15, 2007

7:00 p.m.

The Blowing Rock Planning and Zoning Board met on Thursday, February 15, 2007 for their regular scheduled meeting. Chairman West called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Members present were Ron Mace, Nelda Miller, Albert Yount, Sue Sweeting, Web Alexander and Jim Steele. Staff members present were Planning Director Kevin Rothrock, Town Manager Scott Hildebran, Town Engineer Doug Chapman and Administrative Assistant Sherrie Pitts.

*Mr. Yount made a motion to approve the minutes as presented, seconded by Mr. Steele. All members were in favor of the motion.*

### Items of Business

#### CUP # 2007-01 Village Hardware Major Amendment

Mr. Rothrock gave the staff report to the board in reference to CUP # 2007-01. Mr. Robert Johnson is requesting a major amendment to the Conditional Use Permit #1997-04 to fully enclose the existing retail storage area, expand the upstairs living unit and modify the exterior of the Village Hardware store. The retail area will not be expanded beyond the current limits established by the conditional use permit. The addition will include a one-car garage, office, storage and a public bathroom. The subject property is located at 312 Green Street and is zoned R-6M, multi-family.

The applicant proposes to construct a new one car garage to be used for storage of the current merchandise located within the covered fenced-in area to the west of the building. The area devoted to retail and storage will not increase beyond the area allowed by CUP #1997-04(amended). An ADA-accessible bathroom will be added between the proposed garage and existing hardware store. A roof is proposed over the second floor deck for use by the residential tenant. Any existing overhead utilities must be placed underground.

No additional parking is required for the retail space. No additional bedrooms will be added to the residential space therefore requiring no additional parking for the second floor modifications.

No additional impervious areas are proposed. The existing graveled area in front of the proposed garage will be paved and striped as required by the ordinance.

Additional landscaping will be required between the proposed garage and the adjacent home to the west.

Chairman West asked if in the future someone wanted to enclose the covered deck could they. Mr. Rothrock stated that they would be able to because that was residential.

With no questions or comments of staff the floor was opened to the applicant.

Mr. Robert Johnson, representing the Village Hardware, explained the reason for the amendment request is to upgrade the facility and clean up the building to make it more presentable to the surrounding area.

Ms. Sweeting, board member, asked about the request to reduce the buffer.

Mr. Johnson explained, using the plan on the board, not buffering actually helps the neighbor, Sonny Howard. Mr. Howard uses that area for a turn around.

With no other questions of the applicant the floor was opened to the public and closed with no question or comment.

*Mr. Steele made a motion to approve as presented with flexibility on screening along the Howard property. Mr. Mace seconded the motion. **All members were in favor of the motion.***

Draft Ordinance to Prohibit Wind Energy Systems

Mr. Rothrock gave the staff report to the board. At the January meeting, the Town Council discussed the draft wind energy ordinance and the prohibition of wind energy systems. The Council asked for more information on

what was being restricted and clarification of terms associated with wind energy. The Town Council also adopted a 3-month moratorium on all wind energy systems until a draft ordinance could be adopted. A draft ordinance has been amended to include definitions and provide clarification of what type of wind energy systems are being prohibited and is attached in the planning board packets. Text added since the January Town Council meeting is highlighted.

Ms. Sweeting asked to strike windmill from the title because wind energy is what the ordinance is about.

With no other questions of staff the floor was opened to the public.

Mr. Dennis Scanlin, Appalachian State Professor, commented that he would like to see the ordinance addressed in a positive way. Mr. Scanlin discussed positive and negative aspects of harnessing wind energy. He stated that creating larger setbacks could reduce noise pollution. Mr. Scanlin commented that providing permitting policies with specifics would create a much better approach to these issues.

Mr. Scott Suddreth advised he had degrees in renewable energy and works in Boone. Mr. Suddreth discussed the economic impact of green energy. He mentioned Mr. Scanlin remarks and advised that he works with and agrees with his commentary.

Mr. Todd Summerville stated that he worked with Mr. Suddreth. He commented on the green energy movement and requested that the board address specific issues such as limiting height and create larger setbacks. Mr. Suddreth asked the board not to totally ban the possible use of wind energy systems.

Ms. Karen Brown asked the board to think openly about possibilities of green energy.

With no other question or comments the public hearing was closed.

Chairman West advised that the board should look at three options:

- 1 – recommend the ordinance to the Council
- 2 – table the discussion to look into changes

3 – turn down the ordinance

*Ms. Sweeting made a motion to table, to ask Council for an extension of 90 days and refer this ordinance back to subcommittee. Mr. Alexander seconded the motion. All members voted in favor of the motion.*

### **Magazine and Newspaper Stands**

Ms. Sweeting discussed subcommittee information on newspaper/magazine racks. She advised there were a total of 51 racks on Main St. The subcommittee does believe restrictions need to be set on public designated locations and there should be uniformity in colors of the racks.

Chairman West asked the Board's opinion. All members agree that regulation is needed.

Scott Hildebran, Town Manager, stated that McGill Associates were working on a streetscape plan. Mike Norris might be able to help with locations and help work on private regulation.

### **Other Business**

Mr. Rothrock advised the board that Jim Steele had been reappointed to the Board along with Doug Drury and Ada Webster effective in March.

With no questions or comments the floor closed.

### **Adjourn**

*Mr. Mace made a motion to adjourn. Ms. Sweeting seconded the motion. All members were in favor of the motion.*

With no further business the Planning Board adjourned at 9:12 PM.

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Jim West, Chairman

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Sherrie Pitts, Administrative Assistant