

MINUTES
Town of Blowing Rock
Town Council Meeting
July 10, 2018

The Town of Blowing Rock Town Council met in regular session on Tuesday, July 10, 2018, at 6:00 p.m. The meeting took place at Town Hall located at 1036 Main Street, Blowing Rock, N.C. Present were Mayor Charlie Sellers, Mayor Pro-Tem Albert Yount and Council Members Jim Steele, Sue Sweeting, Doug Matheson and Virginia Powell. Others in attendance were Town Attorney Allen Moseley, Finance Director Nicole Norman, Public Works Director Mike Wilcox, Planning Director Kevin Rothrock, Fire Chief Kent Graham, Police Chief Tony Jones, Parks & Recreation Director Jennifer Brown and Town Clerk Hilari Hubner, who recorded the minutes.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Sellers called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and welcomed everyone.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Mayor Sellers advised the second item under New Business, Town Manager Evaluation Draft, he felt it should be discussed in a closed session.

Council Member Sweeting had a recommendation that she thought would be a much more productive way to handle the issue. She advised when the topic came up for discussion for Council to get out their calendars and pick a date to meet and discuss. She continued that she felt this was important for the citizens to know that Council's looking at an objective tool to evaluate the manager and give or not give raises based on this tool.

Council Member Powell made a motion for when the topic comes up on the agenda rather than discussing the draft, Council instead will select a date and time to meet and discuss the draft, seconded by Council Member Matheson. Unanimously approved.

SPECIAL RECOGNITIONS AND REPORTS

Mayor Sellers read a Resolution of Appreciation for long-time resident Betty Pitts and for Editor of the Blowing Rocket Jeff Eason. **Resolution of Appreciation for Betty Pitts and Jeff Eason – Attachments A and B**

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Council Member Sweeting made a motion to approve the minutes for the Budget Public Hearing held on June 5, 2018, seconded by Mayor Pro-Tem Yount. Unanimously approved.

Council Member Matheson made a motion to approve the minutes for the regular meeting held on June 12, 2018, seconded by Council Member Sweeting. Unanimously approved.

Council Member Sweeting made a motion to approve the minutes for the Mid Year Retreat held on June 25, 2018, seconded by Council Member Matheson. Unanimously approved.

SPEAKERS FROM THE FLOOR

Roger Hill of 175 Maple Street, spoke regarding the Cone Road Storage Yard. Mr. Hill advised he owned the lot directly behind of the storage yard and that he and his wife bought the lot knowing the storage yard was there and had the intention to build a house. Mr. Hill further advised their plans to build have changed due to, in his opinion, the eyesore the storage yard is now. He explained the site has gotten worse over the years and when he purchased his lot it was not as bad as it is now. Mr. Hill stated he and his wife purchased a home on Maple Street and have put their lot up for sale. He said however, potential buyers are turned off when they see the storage yard. He advised this has become an unmarketable lot largely due to the Town storage yard. Mr. Hill stated he and his wife felt “stuck”, knowing that the Town’s decided to keep the lot and clean it up. He would like to know what that cleanup will look like and how will neighbors be assured it stays cleaned up. Mr. Hill advised ultimately his hope is the Town will find an alternate site for the storage and convert that property back to residential. Mr. Hill further advised if the Town insists that the site is the only logical place for storage, then to please include the neighbors who have a financial stake and help develop a plan for cleanup and landscape. He thought the Town should also develop guidelines for the Town to follow that provides for continuous improvement and not a plan that changes when Council does. Mr. Hill concluded his concern stating, “good intentions today to clean it up now would stay there, but others will trash it back up tomorrow.”

Tim Gupton 235 Meadow Lane, spoke regarding the Public Works stockyard. Mr. Gupton started by thanking Council for the rule change allowing the public to speak before the meeting and that he felt it was a positive change the citizens greatly appreciate. Mr. Gupton advised he was speaking on behalf of thirty-nine (39) households in Mayview that advocate the relocation and restoration of the Cone Road storage yard. He advised this site is zoned residential, but the use of the site is grandfathered and has been used as a storage yard for the Town since the 1960’s. The site was originally wetlands next to a stream bed and was filled by the Town workers in the 1960’s. Mr. Gupton stated no such use would be approved in Mayview Park or any neighborhood after the adoption of the current land use plan or under current environmental rules. He stated the consensus among neighbors is the continuation of this use is inappropriate use and shouldn’t be allowed long-term. Mr. Gupton advised he and the neighbors appreciate the recent efforts to clean up the site and the removal of the 10,000-gallon tar tank, but feel the site is an “eyesore” that hasn’t consistently been maintained over the years. Mayview Park will be celebrating it’s 100th anniversary next year, and the decision recently made by Council at the Mid-year Retreat could negatively impact the future of the neighborhood. Mr. Gupton advised he as well as other neighbors were disappointed that Council made the decision at the Retreat held on June 25th only to clean up the site and didn’t allow for any public comment. Mr. Gupton concluded with a letter that was submitted to Council and Town Staff.

The letter Stated:

“We believe that the storage yard use is an Eyesore that is inappropriate in in neighborhood, an Economic Deterrent to increasing the tax base and an Environmental Risk.

We are requesting that the Council discuss and consider the following recommendation at a future Town Council Meeting.

1. Continued clean-up (and request to postpone building a storage building yet as that would cement the use of this property indefinitely)
2. Resolve that relocation is the right long-term decision for the Town
3. Ask the Town Manager and staff to assess and document the following before the winter retreat, preferably using professional engineering advice:
 1. Need and space requirements to store each type of material,
 2. Use of alternative sites owned by the Town to accommodate the materials at one or more of the sites.
 3. Environmental risk of continuing as a strong site.
4. Adopt a transition timeline after the report.
5. Ask BRAAC or a Special Task Force to work with Town Manager to:
 1. Set guidelines and a plan for clean-up, landscaping, fencing and maintenance of the site until relocation can occur.
 2. Evaluate alternative use of the site as a park or residential property for sale.”

Lee Rocamora - 412 Laurel Park Rd, spoke regarding trees. Mr. Rocamora stated trees are important to our community as confirmed by the Town’s recent replanting of trees in Memorial Park as well as the planting of new trees at Hwy 221 and Main Street and ending at Chestnut Street and Main Street. He further stated trees improve the appearance of our Town, provide shade on warm days and produce that wonderful color people come to the area to see in the Fall. He advised the Town code acknowledges the importance of trees and providing for retention and protection of healthy trees. Mr. Rocamora stated to ensure competent, consistent evaluation of trees that have an issue, he would like to request the Town consider having an on-call certified Arborist, as well as a back-up, to engage for code compliance. He explained an expense incurred for this use would be the responsibility of the homeowner. Mr. Rocamora concluded, in his opinion to reduce the conflict of interest, the certified Arborist should not be a resident of Watauga or Caldwell County.

Bill Carter – 401 Tarry Acres Circle advised he is Vice President of the Blowing Rock Civic Association where they currently have three hundred (300) members which are property owners and tax payers in the Town. He advised in the past five (5) years residents have

experienced a 37.7% increase in property taxes and a 26.76% increase in basic water/sewer fees. He further advised while his group understands the increased revenue has been used for much needed infrastructure, the poor condition of surface and lines on many Town streets are a constant reminder that a great deal more needs to be done. He explained this work will require more tax payer dollars and to avoid further tax increases that would likely drive citizens out of Town, they respectfully urge Council to avoid transferring tax payer owned assets without receiving full value. He further explained over the past several months reoccurring talk of transfer of Town assets for token amounts for sale or lease have caused significant concern. This lead to the association having one of their Law Firms; Johnson, Allison and Ford to research this matter in which Attorney McCloud submitted an opinion letter to the Town. In the letter Mr. McCloud explains State Law requires that Public Property must be sold or leased by competitive advertised bids, two (2) negotiated offers, sealed advertised an upset bid, public auction or full value exchange. Mr. Carter advised on behalf of his group it is strongly urged Council carefully adhere to these requirements of North Carolina State Laws. Mr. Carter concluded by thanking Council for the efforts to conserve and manage the Town's assets for the citizens.

Mayor Sellers thanked the speakers for their input.

CONSENT AGENDA

1. Annual Tax Settlement Report and Order of Tax Collection

Consideration of the Tax Collector 2017 Settlement Report and approval of an order of the Town Council for the collection of 2017 taxes representing revenues for fiscal year 2018-2019. **Annual Tax Settlement Report and Order of Tax Collection – Attachment D**

Council Member Matheson made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as presented, seconded by Council Member Sweeting. Unanimously approved.

PUBLIC HEARING

1. CZ 2018-01 Conditional Rezoning (TC to CZ-TC, Town Center) – 1150 Main Street

Planning Director Kevin Rothrock stated the Cardinal West Building Company, LLC is requesting a conditional rezoning of the former Blowing Rock Realty property from Town Center to Conditional Zoning – Town Center (CZ-TC). The 0.337-acre property is located at 1150 Main Street. The Applicant is proposing to demolish the former Blowing Rock Realty building and construct 2 retail or restaurant spaces and 6 condominium and/or townhome units.

The Town Center zoning district allows up to 5 units per acre for multi-family uses. The Applicant is requesting a residential density of up to 17.8 units per acre (0.337 ac on site) for a total of 6 units for the project. Allowing 17.8 units per acre would require a waiver of the residential density requirements in Section 16-12.2.3 of the Land Use Code. The

2014 Comprehensive Plan supports an increase in residential density to at least 8 units per acre in the most intensive residential zoning district. Town Center and the downtown area would be comparable areas of the most intensive residential zoning including R-6M, GB, and CB.

The Applicant has also revised the rezoning application to have the option to convert a portion of the planned retail area to a restaurant. If a restaurant is added, any additional required parking for building square footage or outdoor seating must be provided by satellite parking or payment into the parking fund.

The applicable street setbacks for Town Center is 15 feet and is measured from the back of the existing/proposed sidewalk along each street.

- Half of the proposed building front complies with the 15-foot setback, while the other half encroaches into the setback. The ordinance allows for the buildings to be offset and encroach into the setback no closer than 10 feet to provide visual depth.
- Along Pine Street, the proposed buildings meet the required 15-foot setback, but a covered pergola extends into the setback and will be about 5 feet from the back of the sidewalk. Since the pergola is supported by posts to the ground, a setback waiver will be needed to approve the design as submitted.
- All other side and rear setbacks are being met.

By the Land Use Code, the maximum building height is 30 feet from the finished sidewalk elevations. The proposed building height is shown at 34 feet above the sidewalk elevation. The increase in roof height is partially due to the 6/12 roof slope requirements. The proposed building height is comparable to the adjacent Village Shoppes buildings and the Town Tavern.

There have been several proposed building designs with various materials shown at the neighborhood meeting, to the Blowing Rock Historical Society, and other groups. The final design proposed received 33% of the favorable votes from the Blowing Rock Historical Society. All the designs have elements of the mountain resort style materials found in many commercial and residential structures in Blowing Rock. The materials include a dark gray taupe metal roof, sage green cedar shingles, burgundy window trim and architectural stone veneer.

The Blowing Rock Realty building is credited with 9 parking spaces based on the existing square footage.

The proposed project requires 19 parking spaces, 12 for the residential units and 7 for the retail space. With the credit of 9 spaces, 10 parking spaces are required and the applicant is providing 10 spaces in the parking garage.

If a different use is allowed for the retail portion in the future that would require more parking, the applicant would have to secure satellite parking or pay into the parking fund at the then prevailing rate.

The storm water runoff from the site will be conveyed to an onsite retention system and released to Pine Street.

Sewer will be connected to Pine Street.

All electrical service will be provided underground.

Garbage collection will be through roll-out containers which will be placed by tenants on the edge of Pine Street for collection.

All the trees on site, including the large pines along Main Street will be removed. A general landscape plan has been submitted for review. Once construction plans are finalized, a detailed landscape plan will be produced. All landscape materials shown on the final plans will meet the Land Use Code standards for species and size. At least three (3) shade/over story trees are proposed for the front of the building along Main Street, and two (2) along Pine Street.

The applicants proposed conditions:

1. Density – Density to be modified to allow 6 residential units for the project. Since the project is in the Town Center (urban core) it is thought that a higher density is warranted. (Based on lot acreage, 0.337, and current ordinance maximum of 5 units per acre, only two residential units would be allowed.)
2. Height – To accommodate a full level of both commercial and residential uses with a peaked roof meeting the Town's 6/12 slope requirements, it is requested that the ridge line of Building A be allowed to be 34' (4' above the 30' maximum allowed.) The peak of the roof at the adjacent Village Shoppes appears to be almost 40' high and the Town Tavern approximately 32' high.
3. Parking – Although the proposed development can provide the required parking on-site, if additional parking is required to support any use such as restaurants, the Applicant will pay into the parking fund at the prevailing rate or provide satellite parking.
4. Green/Open Space – In spirit with the Town's new streetscape, the project would like to incorporate more pedestrian space and therefore, requests a reduction of the required greenspace. (Planters will be raised 18" to 20" to provide seating with brick pavers added that match the Town's streetscape.)
5. Encroachment Agreement – There is a recorded easement for both water and sewer service from Village Shoppes across the subject property. Once the location is confirmed it is requested that we work with The Village Shoppes and Town personnel to locate in an appropriate area that does not impede the proposed development.
6. Trellises – The proposed trellis along Pine Street and the roof overhangs at entries and at the two balconies facing Main Street are transitional elements between the busy streets and the businesses inside. These features reduce the scale from the

big outdoors to a more intimate pedestrian friendly level and offer screening from the sun and some protection from the weather. Section 16-21.4.4 of the Ordinance encourages the use of these architectural elements.

A neighborhood meeting was held at Town Hall on February 27, 2018. Approximately 30-35 neighbors and other citizens attended the meeting. The Applicant shared with the group their vision for the property, and the historical nature of the property.

For this project to be approved, the following waivers must be granted:

1. Residential density increased from 5 units/acre to 17.8 dwelling units per acre.
2. Street setback reduced from 15 feet from the back of the proposed sidewalk on Pine Street to allow construction of a covered pergola on the front half of the main building.
3. Building heights increased from 30 feet to not more than 34 feet measured from the sidewalk elevation on Main Street.
4. Reduction in green space area between the sidewalk and building to allow for more pavers/sidewalks and raised planters for pedestrians.

At the April 19, 2018 meeting, the Planning Board recommended approval of the conditional rezoning request as submitted with the applicant's proposed conditions.

Council Member Sweeting asked if there should also be a variance for the tree replacement and explained her interpretation of the tree ordinance. Mr. Rothrock explained and clarified the ordinance and explained they did not have to put back as many trees as they remove.

Council Member Powell stated if applicant would allow for more green space then they would need more trees since they're asking for more pavers. She asked about the need for the trellis since it was an exception they were asking for. Mr. Rothrock advised he would let the applicant explain that.

Council briefly discussed the parking and the parking fund.

Mr. Steve Hetherington, applicant, addressed the Board. He said that this process has been a great experience and that he wants to project to feel like it "organically grew" here.

Sue Glenn spoke and advised she has been a Real Estate Broker since 1972 and was a tenant of the building from 1989 to 2013, she gave a brief history of the building. The house was built in 1887 by Odgen Edwards. It was used as a summer home until 1973 by various owners. In 1973 Guy and Marty Hill bought the property and used part of the house for their businesses, Lamp Post Antiques and Guy Hill Real Estate, and also lived in the house. In 1989 Ken and Faith Barnebey bought the property, which is now owned by their trust. The property has been on the market and unoccupied since 2013. Ms. Glenn said the house has no fine finishes indicating summer home intent and that the building is not structurally sound. Ms. Glenn has attempted to preserve the building, but the poor condition and cost to repair/renovate, and floorplan precluded preservation.

Ms. Glenn advised that during some of the Public Meetings questions were asked about rules regarding historic preservation which caused some additional research. She explained that she had contacted Annie McDonald, the Preservation Specialist with the North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office in Asheville. Ms. Glenn advised Ms. McDonald visited the building and provided a letter concerning the house, in which Ms. Glenn read the letter.

Ms. Glenn explained the property has been for sale for a long time. Any prospective buyers are turned off due to the condition of the property which is very poor and not financially feasible for any of the suggested options of use; retail, bed and breakfast, restaurant or residential.

Mr. Mike Trew, Project Engineer, thanked Mr. Rothrock and Public Works director Mike Wilcox for their time and help with meetings to make sure the design met all the requirements. Mr. Trew advised their team had worked hard to make sure the design fit with the rest of downtown Blowing Rock. He stated as far as the reduction in Green space, what they have tried to do is provide more of a streetscape to allow a place for visitors to congregate, sit and enjoy themselves.

Council Member Powell asked Mr. Trew about the pavers and the trellis, she explained how she was not a fan of seeing the nice lawn that is currently in front of the building be lost. She continued to explain she knows the new projects design has some green space around the side of the building, but again stated how much she hated to see the side that faces Main Street lose that beautiful lawn to pavers. Council Member Powell asked if the trellis was necessary. She further stated if the trellis wasn't there the applicant wouldn't need a variance. After some discussion Council Member Powell reiterated that her two concerns were she wasn't a fan of the trellis and the loss of green space and asked if the applicant would be willing to reconsider those two things.

Mr. Hetherington advised the reason why his team went with the trellis design was they were trying to create this streetscape where people could walk with an ice cream, cross the road and sit down on the planters to relax. He further advised it was just a good area that could be a cover from the rain or shade from the hot sun and really serves as an amenity to the visitors and not as a functioning purpose of the building. Mr. Hetherington further stated the less green space was to create the planters and have some trees, so people could sit along the planter's edge under the shade of the trees and create an oasis. This design feature is very similar to that of the Hannah Building.

Council Member Powell stated she understood his vision, but in her opinion the green space that is currently there is such an oasis and there is not much grass in Town anymore other than in the parks.

Council Member Steele asked if the plan has any grass in the very back. Mr. Trew advised there is not, it's not a suitable place for grass to grow, but that there is a landscape buffer. Mr. Trew further advised there would be grass in front of the Town

Homes area, but the front of the building, which is the Main Street side, the best use is the streetscape and a place for people to congregate.

Mayor Pro-Tem Yount stated he felt the trellis softened the building.

Mr. Bill Dixon, Architect for the project, said that he had worked on several projects in Blowing Rock including Mellow Mushroom, the Hanna Family building, and United Community Bank. He said had worked hard to make this one feel like Blowing Rock. He stated he was the one that designed the trellis and felt it was a good transitional area, but if the trellis is a problem they can remove it. Mr. Dixon further stated they had reduced the height based on the neighborhood meeting and pointed out there are surrounding properties that are higher.

Parking was again briefly discussed.

GiGi Poole, 147 Dogwood Lane, spoke regarding some of the concerns she had and advised she had already emailed those to Council, but wanted to explain some of the highlights.

- Density and proximity – this project has eight (8) units on .33 acres of land
- Supply and demand – Do we really need more condos on Main Street when there are some already sitting empty as well as some retail and restaurants that are sitting empty in Town
- Blowing Rock Charm – taking out evergreens and green grass and putting planters in – feels this would overwhelm Main Street
- Competition with well-established inns/hotels – concerned with the competition this will cause these families that have contributed to Town
- Finances – has it been discussed about adequate finances; the Town nearly avoided a 7 plus acres project
- Noise – trees and grass absorb noise and replacing trees with planters wouldn't offer the same noise buffer.
- Parking – she advised she doesn't fully understand

Ms. Poole advised she is just speaking her thoughts as a citizen. She commended Ms. Glenn for how elegantly she spoke about the property and the poor condition of it. She further stated she had spoken to twenty-five (25) citizens about their thoughts and it was in two types of responses: 1. "It's really run down inside", 2. "It's a shame to lose this building, but what can we do". Ms. Poole stated what she takes from those responses is a "resigned position", and the thought of "well, we don't have anything else, so might as well say yes". She stated, "Mayor and Council, I believe that is not the question. The question before you to answer is should this project be accepted and is it good for Blowing Rock?" Ms. Poole concluded her answer to that question is no.

Mr. Lee Rocamora, 412 Laurel Park Rd spoke regarding trees. He advised a lot of discussion has centered around replacement of trees, but not really talked about trees in planters and that trees in planters don't react the same way as trees planted in the

ground. Mr. Rocamora further advised trees have been re-planted in the ground in Memorial Park as well as along Main Street. He asked are we going to allow this area to be treated any differently. He further agreed with Council Member Powell's point, there is no green space and the planters would be on top of pavers.

With no further comment, Mayor Pro-Tem Yount made a motion to close the Public Hearing, seconded by Council Member Matheson. Unanimously approved.

Council Member Steele advised if this project were to be approved, it's imperative to have the different heights of the roof and to let them have it at 34 ft would be a wise decision. He advised he felt Ms. Poole made a good point about the financing and would not want to see the project started and get half way through and the developer run out of money leaving the project incomplete, but he would like someone to address that at some point in the future. He also stated he liked the comment about trees and likes to go down the street and see trees and maybe that is something the applicant could look at. Mr. Steele commented he wasn't concerned with the density and he didn't feel it would look too bad from Main Street. He concluded that legally the developer has every right to build what he wants to as long as it doesn't conflict with the ordinance.

Council Member Sweeting advised her concerns are the density is three (3) times what the ordinance states and if the Town has ordinances, why are we continuing to go over what it says. She advised she is concerned about the open green space being reduced by 25% and thinks landscaping can be added instead of the trellis to soften the building. She stated she didn't have a problem with the height and thought that is necessary to make the building look the way it should. She further stated she has a problem with fifteen (15) or sixteen (16) trees being removed and only three (3) remaining in planters. She would rather see the planters gone and have more green space provided. Her final issue is with the parking. She advised there are eleven (11) bedrooms and only ten (10) parking spots, not including retail or restaurant. She commented she is hoping Council has learned from Mellow Mushroom that was supposedly a "walkup" restaurant that didn't need parking and now the Town has a parking issue which is a concern.

Council Member Matheson advised the density doesn't bother him with the location being that it's the center of Town and the design has been done very well. He advised he agreed with Mayor Pro-Tem Yount that the trellis softens the building. Council Member Matheson advised he would like the applicant to consider doing away with the planters and mirroring more of the Town's current landscape with planting trees in the ground, adding a grate around it etc. as well as adding a few more trees.

Mayor Pro-Tem Yount advised the financial aspect must be left up to the attorney as he didn't want to get on "thin ice". Town Attorney Allen Moseley advised the Main Street 7 acers project that was referred to, the Town had the applicant post a security bond for infrastructure because it was a huge financial commitment. Mr. Moseley advised we don't have that situation in this case and the Town is not in a position to require the applicant post a bond for completion of this project. He stated furthermore the Town is

in a position to be assured that if there were an issue associated with this project stopping, the Town wouldn't be in the mess it would have been with the Main Street project. Mayor Pro-Tem Yount commended Ms. Glenn for all her hard work, research and willingness for public input. He further stated the Town doesn't get a developer of this nature too often.

Council Member Matheson made a motion to accept the project with the suggestion that the applicant take into consideration Council's landscaping suggestions, adding some more trees and removing the planters, Mayor Pro-Tem Yount seconded. For: Council Members Matheson, Steele, Powell and Mayor Pro-Tem Yount; Against: Council Member Sweeting. Motion approved.

Mr. Hetherington advised he was happy to make changes and make this project a part of Blowing Rock.

The meeting recessed at 8:10 p.m. for a short break and reconvened at 8:20 p.m.

Old Business

1. Old Firehouse – Presentation

Mr. Jim Pitts presented via Power Point an update on behalf of the Task Force for the Old Firehouse project. Mr. Pitts advised this was an update on what the Firehouse Task Force has been working on the last year since entering into a due-diligence agreement with the Town. He advised this would be a Cultural Arts Center, not just a Theater, noting that is something the Town doesn't currently have. Mr. Pitts advised the request is that the Town let them know if they should continue to explore this option or if they need to just move onto another option. He further stated if they receive the go ahead then next steps would be to schedule a workshop with Council to discuss details further and the Task Force will continue to work with the Town to help solve the storage issue.

Mayor Pro-Tem Yount asked Parks and Recreation Director Jennifer Brown to present a slide show of pictures showing how the Town is currently using the Old Firehouse, which is for storage. After going through the slides, Ms. Brown stated it's approximately 3,600 square foot of storage space and that the Town would have to find a place to move it.

Council Member Sweeting advised she is very much in favor of The Arts and Music, but some of the hurdles in her opinion are; what is the Town going to do with the equipment that is currently stored there, and should taxpayers be asked to pay for that, be it a new building or another piece of land. She advised she didn't feel that was fair to the taxpayers. Council Member Sweeting further advised she's not been convinced that this requested space is different from the Blowing Rock School Auditorium and feels like that us a very usable space.

Mr. Pitts acknowledges the fact that the Town is using the Old Firehouse and the Task Force wants to help be a part of the solution. He explained that they are wanting to find a solution where the Town could get industrial activities out of the Village and put it somewhere else and put public facilities inside the Village that will continue to build the legacy of the Village. He reiterated their willingness to work with the Town on these solutions.

Council Member Powell advised she's feeling pressure from everybody that wants the Town's property. She advised she too is all for The Arts and would love to see more activities for families and locals, especially in the winter months. Council Member Powell stated, while she does recognize all the options presented would be great and educational she just worries about the future needs and using the Town property for private use.

Mr. Pitts advised ultimately the Task Force wants what Council wants and if this is not something Council wishes to pursue then there is nothing more they can do but stated the purpose of this presentation was to develop a vision.

Mayor Pro-Tem Yount advised where he stands is the Task Force build the Town a nice building three (3) or four (4) blocks from the Old Firehouse and pay for it then then he would be on board with the project.

Mr. John Aldridge, a Task Force Member, asked where all the stuff was kept when it was a functioning Fire Department. Ms. Brown advised it was kept at a house where BRAHM sits now and when that house was donated to BRAHM, Parks and Recreation had to move everything and at that time moved into the Old Firehouse.

Council Member Matheson advised back then we didn't have as much equipment as Parks and Recreation does now and when the Fire Department moved out since nobody had come forward to claim the building the Town started using it as warehouse. He advised "it's our fault for letting it grow that much".

Council Member Steele stated emotionally everyone would like to have what has been suggested. It sounds good and the presentation was great. He continued that timing is everything and the Town currently has a full plate of items that must be prioritized. He also stated that the Town does not have unlimited budgets to be able to go out and build storage buildings to make that space available for a new project. Council Member Steele further suggested perhaps it would be worth looking into using the basement of the American Legion building or further pursue the use of Blowing Rock School.

Council Member Matheson advised, for a quick answer, he leaned more to pursuing the School as an option. He further stated he would like for a joint workshop to be scheduled to discuss further and be able to answer more questions.

Council left the option open for the Task Force to pursue and come back with more information at a later date.

New Business

1. Sunset Drive Improvements – Proposal

Town Engineer Doug Chapman presented a plan proposal for Sunset Drive. Council reviewed the plan and offered some suggestions that could be added later as the purpose was to approve the plan to move forward.

Council Member Steele asked Mr. Chapman to meet with Manager Evans to discuss the financial aspects.

Mayor Pro-tem Yount made a motion to approve the plan and move forward with the project, seconded by Council Member Matheson. Unanimously approved.

2. Town Manager Evaluation – Review Draft

Council Members set a special Meeting for July 23, 2018 at 5:00 pm to discuss the Town Manager Evaluation Draft form.

OTHER BUSINESS

None

EXECUTIVE SESSION

None

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss Council Member Matheson made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:40 p.m., seconded by Council Member Powell. Unanimously approved.

MAYOR _____
Charlie Sellers, Mayor

ATTEST _____
Hilari Hubner, Town Clerk

ATTACHMENTS

Resolution Honoring Betty Pitts – Attachment A

Resolution Honoring Jeff Eason – Attachment B

Letter from Resident Tim Gupton – Attachment C

Annual Tax Settlement Report and Order of Tax Collection – Attachment D

CZ 2018-01 Conditional Rezoning 1150 Main Street – Attachment E

Old Firehouse PowerPoint – Attachment F

Sunset Drive Proposal – Attachment G