

Blowing Rock Appearance Advisory Commission  
Minutes  
September 5, 2019  
Town Council Chambers 9:00 a.m.

Members Present: Melissa Pickett, Curt Andrews, Carol Knapp, & Bo Henderson

Staff Present: Chris Pate & Jennifer Brown

Guest: Charles Hardin

Begin: 9:01 a.m.

End: 11:30 a.m.

**Approve August 1, 2019 Minutes:** Bo made a motion to approve the August 1, 2019 minutes, Carol seconded, and it was a unanimous vote to approve.

**Budget Update/Annual Fundraising Collection/Hanging Basket Collection:** Jennifer stated that BRAAC has received \$1,535 in donations and have only spent \$88.10 since July 1, 2019 and the donation letter has not been sent out yet.

**Annual Fundraising Letter:** Jennifer stated that the tax information for Blowing Rock taxpayers and Blowing Rock fire district had been sent and she went through the list several times in hopes to eliminate numerous letters being sent back. She stated that the donor recognitions as well as the letter went to the printer that morning. Bo asked if we could send the letter to Town vendors and Jennifer stated that she would talk to the Finance Director and ask.

**Economic Development Council and Village Foundation (Charles Hardin) – Village Entrance Design:** Charles Hardin presented a conceptual design of the Sunset and Valley Boulevard intersection. He stated that the Village Foundation hired the same design team that designed the Mayview Plaza project and they took elements from the Mayview project and incorporated them into this design. He stated the columns are similar to Mayview Plaza's columns except these will have hanging baskets, lights on top, and down lighting on them. They are proposing adding pavers at the intersection as you drive on Sunset as well as pavers on the sidewalks. Mr. Hardin stated they have been in contact with DOT on the requirements for the roadway and they must be a certain length away from 321 and they must have a specific loop under them for the traffic light.

Bo stated that he was not in favor of tearing up the new sidewalks that have been poured and recommends that they coordinate with the contractor who is working on the Sunset Streetscape project now. He also suggested removing the proposed grass in the corners of the sidewalk and curb because grass will not grow or stay there so it needs to be pavers or concrete. Carol asked how much of the sidewalk is completed and how much would have to be torn up. Charles stated that the sidewalks on the corners are completed; however, he did not think the sidewalks are completed past the bridge.

Curt asked if there will be plaques on the columns and Charles stated that there will not be plaques on the columns because TDA is funding the project. Mr. Hardin stated that if there was not enough money then the Village Foundation would have to raise the difference. Melissa asked if once the project was completed would the maintenance be turned over to the Town and Charles said yes.

Bo stated that he would like all the entrances into downtown to look the same and he would like the Blowing Rock signs to match the Blowing Rock signs that we currently have. He also stated that he liked that the design is drawing attention to downtown from Valley Boulevard. Mr. Hardin stated that they are working with a group of students at Appalachian State University to rebrand the signs but most of the feedback that they have received is that they like the current Blowing Rock signs. Curt stated one of the criticisms he has frequently heard about Mayview Plaza is that the color of the pavers does not look to be native. He asked why they have again chosen this "yellowish" color other than that it is

contiguous with Mayview Plaza. Carol stated that she agreed with Curt and that a gray color looked much better. Charles stated that he believes that color was chosen because it was more prominent and didn't look like the sidewalks.

Carol asked again if the TDA was funding the entire project and Mr. Hardin responded that if more money is needed that the Village Foundation would raise funds. Curt noted that he did not support permanent bronze billboards on the columns lighted by taxpayer monies and suggested that more tasteful recognition for donors be developed than those that were installed on Mayview Plaza.

Curt asked for confirmation that the Village Foundation did not consider this to be a Town Council approved plan and Mr. Hardin said it was not. Melissa stated that this is a conceptual drawing and asked Mr. Hardin if he would be bringing a final draft back to BRAAC for consideration before it is brought to Town Council and he stated that he would.

**Public Art Request 2019-3 (Blowing Rock Inn):** Melissa recused herself. Curt asked if she has talked to her neighbors about the art piece and she stated yes. Carol made a motion to approve the art piece, Bo seconded it, and it was a unanimous vote to approve.