

JACKSON COUNTY PLANNING BOARD

MINUTES

Date: November 15, 2016								
Time Begin: 6:00 p.m.								
Time End: 7:15 p.m.								
Location: Jackson County Department on Aging, Heritage Room								
Members	Present	Absent		Present	Absent		Present	Absent
Scott Baker	X		Kent Moore	X		Steven Johannessen	X	
Kirk Stephens	X		Bonnie Claxton	X		Scott Ogle	X	
Burt Kornegay	X		Ken Brown	X		Julie Painter	X	
Vickey Wade	X		Dickie Woodard		X			

Others Present:

Michael Poston
 John Jeleniewski
 Heather Baker
 Shelby Cook

Call to Order and Quorum Check

Chairman Scott Baker called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. A quorum was present.

Approval of the Agenda

Scott Baker added “Board Membership” as agenda item 6C.
Kirk Stephens made a motion to approve the agenda with its one addition. Steven Johannessen seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

Approval of the Minutes

Bonnie Claxton made a motion to approve the minutes from October 13, 2016. Kirk Stephens seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

Public Comment

There were no public comments.

Public Hearings: Cashiers Sign Ordinance

Scott Baker opened the public hearing on the Cashiers Commercial Area Land Development sign regulation amendments at 6:02 p.m. The amendments were passed by the Cashiers Planning Council on October 24, 2016:

- (Sec.11-2) Construction signs—Construction sign height is now at 8 ft. max.
- (Sec.11-4) Computation of sign area—The surface of a sign shall include the entire display area, including any border or accessory area, but excluding base supports.
- (Sec.11-4) Village Center sign requirements will now be 8’ max height and 32 square foot max size per face. General Commercial sign requirements will now be 8’ max height and 32 square foot max size per face.
- (Sec.11-4) Tenant identification signs—Tenants in a multi-tenant development can no longer have their own free-standing sign.

As Mike Poston explained, the main purpose of these amendments is to standardize the height and square footage of signs in Cashiers. The Statement of Consistency states the proposed amendments

will be consistent with goals found in Jackson County's Land Development Plan, more specifically: to provide for sound and orderly development. Scott Baker closed the public hearing at 6:09 p.m.

Steven Johannessen made a motion to approve the amendments to the Cashiers Commercial Area Land Development Sign Regulations and the Statement of Consistency. Burt Kornegay seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

Old Business:

Wireless Communications Ordinance

Mike Poston presented a memo of the full list of changes to the Wireless Communications Ordinance made by the board and Planning staff. These amendments reduce redundancies, organize the ordinance, and clean up the application/approval process. The amendments are as follows:

- Section 30-20 - Page 2
- Section 30-23(b)(2)(b) - Page 15
- Section 30-22(a)(2) - Page 6
- Section 30-23 (a)(3) - Page 7
- Section 30-20- Page 3
- Section 32-22 (a)(2) - Page 6
- Section 30-23(b)(3)(a) - Page 16
- Section 30-23-(b)(3)(b)(3)- Page 16
- Section 30-23 (d)(2)(b)(2) - Page 19
- Section 30-21 (d) - Page 5
- Section 30-21 (d) and (e) - Page 5 and 6
- Section 30-22 (a) - Page 6
- Section 30-22 (c) - Page 7
- Section 30-22 (g) - Page 8
- Section 30-22 (h)-(m) - Page 8 and 9 (formerly Section 30-23 #s 19-23, 26)
- Section 30-23 (b)(3)(a)(b) - Pages 15 and 16
- Section 30-23 (b)(3)(iii) - Page 16
- Section 30-23 (b)(5) - Page 16 and 17
- Section 30-23 (c)(2)(b) and (c)(6) - Page 19

The Statement of Consistency states that these amendments are supported by the Jackson County Land Development Plan, more specifically: to promote twenty-first century infrastructure (broadband, etc.) to meet the needs of high-tech business.

Bonnie Claxton made a motion to approve the amendments to the Wireless Communications Ordinance and the Statement of Consistency. Steven Johannessen seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

Mountain and Hillside Development Ordinance

Jackson County's GIS Director, Kevin Jamison, came to October's meeting to discuss the MHDO and what it will take to map protected ridges in the county. Once the board decides on an official definition for "adjacent valley floor", the GIS department can create a map depicting what they want to see, Kevin said.

Planning staff brought a collection of varying "valley" definitions from different dictionary sources to see where the board might want to start. Kevin gave two potential definitions when he came to speak, both very similar: "Where two slopes come down and meet at the low point," and "The point where the water flows." The only fundamental difference is the addition of water in the second description, which could lead to confusion if there's no water in a valley. From an enforcement standpoint, words mean everything, said John Jeleniewski; the definition they choose to go with has to be clear and comprehensible. Burt Kornegay came up with the following definition by combining several of

them: "A valley is an elongated area of lowland between ranges of hills or mountains. Typically, but not always, there will be a river or stream running through it."

To make things easier to enforce, board members inquired about ridding the ordinance of the "adjacent valley floor" component all together. Bypassing the valley floor question, they could just pick an elevation and say that everything above it is a protected mountain ridge. As Heather Baker explained, that could be an easy way around the issue, but it might be subject to a legal challenge and court interpretation.

As Scott Baker explained, this conversation began with the proposed Solitude development project in Cullowhee. It would have been a different situation if the developer had submitted the application in two parts for the two different sections of development, but it was submitted together, so the board had to approve it all at once.

When looking at the protected ridge issue through a long-range lens and discussing how restrictive they'd like to be, board members agreed that they want to use the most restrictive method possible. Bonnie Claxton suggested staff come up with the most restrictive language that they think is enforceable and bring it to the next meeting. Ken Brown does not believe it would get challenged legally since it is so costly to build on a ridgetop. The possibility is still there though, and it could cost the county money if lawsuits were filed.

John Jeleniewski said staff can come back to the next meeting with some graphics and language to better express the restrictiveness the board is seeking. If the board does decide to get rid of "adjacent valley floor" and just choose an elevation, John thinks a lot more parcels will be effected than there is currently. Kirk Stephens said he would like to vote on the issue at the next meeting. Bonnie Claxton asked if staff could address environmental impact within the Statement of Consistency for next time.

Board Membership

Five board member positions are up for reappointment, as well as the chair position, at the end of the year. Kent Moore, Kirk Stephens, Dickie Woodard, Julie Painter, and Burt Kornegay are the five members whose terms have expired. Only Kirk and Julie are eligible for reappointment. The membership terms are staggered in one and two year terms so that roughly half the board is cycled off every calendar year.

Informal Discussion

The next Planning Board meeting is scheduled for Thursday, December 8th, 2016.

Board members were given a list of community meetings coming up around the county regarding the Comprehensive Plan in progress. Meetings will be held in Sylva, Tuckasegee, Whittier, Cashiers, and in the Savannah community of Sylva.

Adjournment

With no further business to discuss, Chairman Scott Baker adjourned the meeting at 7:15 p.m.

Submitted by:



Shelby LeQuire Cook,
Administrative Assistant - Planning

Approved by:



Scott Baker, Chairman