

**MINUTES OF A PUBLIC HEARING
OF THE JACKSON COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
HELD ON
JULY 07, 2020**

The Jackson County Board of Commissioners held a Public Hearing on July 07, 2020, at 5:45 p.m., Justice & Administration Building, Room A201, 401 Grindstaff Cove Road, Sylva, North Carolina.

Present: Brian McMahan, Chairman	Don Adams, County Manager
Boyce Deitz, Vice Chair	Heather C. Baker, County Attorney
Mickey Luker, Commissioner (via Zoom video conferencing)	Angela M. Winchester, Clerk to Board
Ron Mau, Commissioner	
Gayle Woody, Commissioner	

Chairman McMahan called the public hearing to order and stated the purpose of the public hearing was to receive public input concerning a proposed text amendment to the Cullowhee Planning Area Development Standards.

Caroline LaFrienier, Planner II, stated that members of the Cullowhee community addressed the Cullowhee Planning Council during public comment concerning the Special Use Standard allowing five unrelated persons to dwell in a home if it was $\frac{3}{4}$ mile or less from WCU's campus and three unrelated persons if the home was more than $\frac{3}{4}$ mile from WCU. After hearing the concerns from the public, the Cullowhee Planning Council requested that Planning staff research what other jurisdictions similar to Cullowhee allow in this regard. After being presented the research, the Cullowhee Planning Council voted to amend Table 9.9: List of Permitted Uses to allow "unrelated persons" as a permitted use in the multi-family low density district and in Section 9.4.4 Additional Standards: Special Uses to state that the maximum number of unrelated persons in a home shall be three.

The Cullowhee Planning Council held a public hearing on March 2nd to give the public an opportunity to comment on the proposed amendment. The Cullowhee Planning Council approved the text amendment with a unanimous vote on March 2nd. The Planning Board reviewed and recommended approval of the text amendment on May 14th. Both the Cullowhee Planning Council and the Planning Board found the amendment to be consistent with a goal identified in the Cullowhee Small Area Plan. More specifically, the goal was: to protect the character of existing neighborhoods near campus and in potential growth areas. She requested that if the regular meeting recessed, to add this item to the reconvened meeting agenda for consideration.

Commissioner Woody stated that she received an email asking the Board to consider three people. She requested that Ms. LaFrienier refresh her memory on what the ordinances stated.

Ms. LaFrienier stated that the ordinance had a distance requirement from WCU within $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile there could be five people and further away they could have three. This would change it to a blanket of three people.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

(a) Karen Kandl (via Zoom video conferencing) requested that the Board limit the number of unrelated individuals living in a single-family dwelling to no more than three individuals in the zoned areas of Cullowhee, regardless of where the zoned areas were located. It should not matter whether or not the dwelling was closer to or further away from WCU. This would serve the community well by protecting the quality and character of the existing neighborhoods.

(b) Joe Pechmann (via Zoom video conferencing) stated that he was in support of the proposition to reduce the number of unrelated people that could live in a house from five to three in areas zoned single-family within $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile of WCU. This would make the definition of single-family housing consistent across the Cullowhee Community Planning Area and consistent with most places in the county and elsewhere. Single-family neighborhoods near WCU should be treated the same way and given the same protections as other neighborhoods.

(c) Hiddy Morgan (via Zoom video conferencing) stated that it should not make a difference how far a house was from WCU to be designated to be single-family. She encouraged the Board to vote in favor of the proposed text amendment, as recommended by the Planning Board.

(d) Catherine Carter (via Zoom video conferencing) stated that she supported reducing the number of unrelated people that could live in a single-family dwelling from five to three. There was a place for student housing, but she did not believe it was in the residential neighborhoods.

There being no further public comment, Commissioner Mau moved that the public hearing be adjourned. Commissioner Woody seconded the Motion. Motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 5:57 p.m.

Attest:

Approved:

Angela M. Winchester, Clerk

Brian Thomas McMahan, Chairman