



**Jackson County Board of Commissioners**  
**Regular Meeting**  
**March 5, 2015**

**Agenda Item:** Cullowhee Community Development Standards

**Presenter:** Gerald Green

The Cullowhee Community Planning Advisory Committee has recommended adoption of development standards, with a development district map, for the Cullowhee community. The preparation of the development standards and map is authorized by Section 153A-342 of the North Carolina General Statutes. In addition to authorizing counties to adopt development standards for portions of the county, the legislation establishes standards for the area:

- Minimum of 640 acres
- At least 10 separate tracts
- At least 10 separate owners

The Cullowhee Planning Area contains approximately 1700 acres with approximately 400 separate properties and approximately 350 separate owners.

The Advisory Committee worked for almost a year and a half to formulate the development standards, incorporating several opportunities for community input during the process. Community meetings were held prior to the initiation of the effort to determine if the community supported the effort. Based upon comments made at these meetings, the Board of Commissioners appointed the Cullowhee Community Planning Advisory Committee in August 2013 and charged them with the following tasks:

- Determine whether planning is needed in the Cullowhee community.
- Recommend the boundaries of the Cullowhee planning area.
- Determine if development standards are needed for the Cullowhee planning area and, if so, to recommend appropriate development standards.
- Solicit and incorporate community input into their recommendations.

The recommended development standards provided for the Board's consideration are the results of the Committee's efforts. The Committee identified the need and support for managing the growth of the Cullowhee community, identified appropriate boundaries for the Cullowhee planning area and the need for development standards in this area, and incorporated community input into their recommendations. A dedicated website was created for the effort to provide information to community residents, property owners, and others interested in the project. Two community meetings were held to solicit community input on the initial draft development standards, with letters mailed to all property owners in the designated area informing them of

the meetings. In addition, individual meetings were held with some members of the community to answer their questions.

Based upon input provided on the initial draft of the development standards, they were revised and the boundaries of the area were adjusted. The revised development standards and map were made available to the community and a third community meeting was held to solicit input on the revised draft. The Advisory Committee directed additional revisions to the proposed development standards and adjustments to the map based upon comments received during this comment period. The recommended development standards and map are provided for your consideration.

The proposed development standards would establish criteria for the development and major redevelopment of property located within the designated area. Existing development would not be addressed by the standards and all existing uses could remain. Standards for single family development are minimal and a variety of uses could be made of single family properties, from home occupations to student rentals to bed and breakfasts. Development standards for multi-family residential are more extensive and include standards to assure that adequate infrastructure (water, sewer, transportation) are available to meet the needs of the development. In addition to infrastructure, the proposed development standards address:

- Density
- Lot size and setbacks
- Building height
- Parking and access
- Landscaping and buffers
- Signage

The Cullowhee Planning Area map designates the following districts and identifies their location:

- Single family
- Single Family – manufactured home
- Townhome – Low density multi-family
- Medium density multi-family
- High density multi-family
- Institutional
- Commercial
- Parks/Open Space

In most cases, the designation of the property reflects the current use of the property or the anticipated future use as identified by the property owner.

The next step in this process is the consideration of the Cullowhee Community Planning Advisory Committee's recommendation by the Board of Commissioners. Should the Board decide to move ahead with possible adoption of the development standards and accompanying map, a public hearing is required. Adequate public notice, which includes publication of the map and mailed notice to all property owners in the area, must be provided for the public hearing.

**Recommendation:** The Cullowhee Community Planning Advisory Committee has recommended adoption of the Cullowhee Community Development Standards and the Cullowhee Planning Area map. The scheduling of a public hearing to receive community input on the proposed standards and map is requested.