

MINUTES
Town of Blowing Rock
Board of Commissioners
Special Meeting- June 7, 2010

The Town of Blowing Rock Board of Commissioners held a special meeting on Monday, June 7, 2010 at 5:00 p.m. The meeting took place at Town Hall located at 1036 Main Street, Blowing Rock. Present were Mayor J.B. Lawrence, Commissioners Albert Yount, Phillip Pickett, Tommy Klutz, Doug Matheson, and Jim Steele. Others attending were Town Manager Scott Hildebran, Planning Director Kevin Rothrock, Police Chief Eric Brown and Town Clerk Sharon Greene.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Lawrence called the meeting to order at 5:05 p.m.

UPDATE

Town Manager Hildebran advised that Phase I of the Streetscape Plan had been completed for a total contract price of \$155,870.00 and \$1,081.00 would be remitted back to the Town. A motion was made by Commissioner Klutz to approve the close-out of Phase I of the Streetscape Plan as presented, seconded by Commissioner Matheson. Unanimously approved.

Downtown Streetscape Improvements Phase 1 Change Order No. 2 – Exhibit A

Mr. Hildebran also mentioned that GDS had agreed to pick up residential recycling weekly for \$3.00 per month and the Town had received bids for the recycling bins.

Mr. Hildebran presented Council with a revised agenda for the regular meeting to be held on June 8, 2010 at 7:00 p.m. due to the deferral of Up on the Hill Subdivision.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

1. Parking Ratios

Planning Director Kevin Rothrock began the discussion by explaining the handout given to Council regarding the proposed changes to the Town Code's current parking requirements. He reviewed each use category and any proposed changes, for example: for retail use, 1 space per 400 square feet would be required instead of 1 space every 200 square feet. Mr. Rothrock stated with the proposed changes, parking requirements would be significantly reduced. The only instances where additional parking would be required would be with added square footage from new construction or additions, or if the use was changed to a restaurant. All other changes in use would not require additional parking.

Commissioner Klutz suggested the Town allow anyone to pay over an extended period of time if additional parking was required and the business chose to pay into the parking

fund. Mr. Rothrock stated the Town might consider allowing them to pay over a three-year period if needed.

Commissioner Klutz also suggested the Town purchase the vacant lot across from Town Hall for additional parking. Other Council members felt this would not be cost effective.

Mr. Hildebran mentioned that he had been approached about adding parking meters to the downtown area. He felt this would potentially create problems and may be a detriment to business in the current economy. Mayor Lawrence also stated the Town could lose sales tax because visitors might decide to go elsewhere.

Commissioner Klutz pointed out that he felt parking should not be enforced at all.

Chief Brown commented that in the last year, parking had been strictly enforced more so than in previous years, and had generated approximately \$8,000.00.

Council consensus favored the changes to the parking requirements as proposed by Planning Director Kevin Rothrock.

2. Town Center District

Planning Director Rothrock presented Council with a handout regarding a Town Center District. He stated that Council had discussed this issue during their Retreat. In addition, the Planning Board made several recommendations during their October 2009 meeting which were included in a draft ordinance presented to Council in November 2009. During that meeting, Council agreed to postpone the Town Center District discussion until a later date.

Mr. Rothrock stated this meeting was only for Council to decide which properties should be included in the Town Center District.

Mr. Rothrock spoke regarding setback requirements for the east and west side of Main Street possibly being different. Commissioner Klutz disagreed by stating he did not want to see any changes to the setbacks on Main Street and he did not think this was suggested in the HyettPalma study. Mr. Rothrock advised a Town Center District was one of the items recommended in the HyettPalma Retail Strategy not setback requirements. Commissioner Steele spoke in favor of a Town Center District because it would allow for more flexibility if a separate zoning district was distinguished. Commissioner Yount advised that several merchants felt a Town Center District was being discussed in order to tax the businesses in that district. Mr. Rothrock stated at this time Council needed to determine where the Town Center District should be located.

Due to a previous engagement, Commissioner Steele left the meeting at 6:13 p.m.

Mr. Rothrock stated a Town Center District would allow for preservation of the area.

Commissioner Klutz stated he would like to see zero setbacks. Mayor Lawrence stated that parameters were needed.

Town Manager Hildebran suggested a consultant might aid with Town Center District plans. It was also Council's consensus to further review allowing different setback requirements on the East and West sides of Main Street. Commissioner Matheson inquired if another public hearing would be held to allow residents/business owners to comment on this issue. Mr. Rothrock advised that notices would be sent to everyone within 150 feet of the proposed Town Center District as well as anyone included in the proposed district notifying them of the public hearing.

Council agreed to continue the Town Center process and further discuss the issue with the Planning Board.

Town Manager Hildebran reminded Council of their joint meeting with the Planning Board on June 17, 2010 at 6:00 p.m. He also mentioned a citizen survey for comprehensive plan purposes was scheduled to be completed sometime in the winter.

ADJOURN

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 6:55 p.m.

MAYOR _____
J.B. Lawrence

ATTEST _____
Sharon Greene, Town Clerk

ATTACHMENTS (06-07-10)

Downtown Streetscape Improvements Phase 1 Change Order No. 2 – Exhibit A