



Comments Thursday, August 17, 2017 to the Planning Board
regarding the proposed Revisions to the Sign Control Ordinance for Transylvania County

My name is Jan Nickerson. I happen to be a business person, with a Cornell MBA, a Big 5 CPA and 40 years of corporate management or consulting. This evening I speak on behalf of Friends of 276 Heritage, several of whom are here this evening.

The tall bright yellow sign that Dollar General usually uses was a wake-up call for many local residents, as we realized how that wouldn't fit on our beloved 276. Appreciative of Dollar General's response to our outreach to them, and their resulting commitment to adapt their signage and building design to fit into our Route 276 mountain aesthetic, many residents along Route 276 formed **Friends of 276 Heritage**, a grass roots organization committed to preserving and protecting our mountain forest highway.

Our concept of heritage includes economic heritage – such as tourism, camps and agriculture; ecological heritage – including storm water management; natural heritage, experienced by bicyclists, mountain bikers, and hikers enjoying a waterfall in DuPont; as well as cultural heritage, such as the arts and crafts that proliferate Route 276 South, as they do the county in general. Why are we so committed? So that we and generations to come can continue to enjoy the beauty and the environment that attracts residents and tourists alike to Transylvania County.

We have extended our civic interest to the county-wide impact of the **Sign Control Ordinance** in providing suggestions for how signage in Transylvania County could reflect the county's brand that sustains interest by residents and tourists, and that sustains our economy. We have reviewed the proposed revisions to the Sign Control Ordinance for the county, and are delighted to see provisions:

1. **Enhancing sign safety**, by prohibiting flashing, moving, strobe or mirrored signs, or those that prevent free ingress/egress.
2. **Minimizing light pollution at night**, by prohibiting lights aimed upward or toward the street, and limiting the amount of illumination at night.
3. **Restricting on-premises signs on scenic corridors** to a maximum of 15 feet high and 32 square feet. As you may recall from the photostudy of 276 South I presented last month, businesses there have self-opted for signage that already fits within these criteria. In driving from the NC/SC border to Wilson road yesterday, we found only 3-4 signs that would need to be grandfathered.

While we are hopeful that you and the Commissioners will also support and approve the extension of the application of scenic corridors to include 276 South, we nonetheless believe that the proposed revisions for discussion this evening are for the benefit of all of Transylvania County. We believe these revisions will help sustain the attractiveness of Transylvania County which, as a whole, is good for every business and property owner.

We have talked to planning staff and while we understand their concerns about the challenges of several other changes we proposed, we are disappointed to not see addressed 2 safety concerns: signs near curves and tall signs; nor the replacement of grandfathering with amortization for existing signs.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you this evening.

Jan Nickerson

On behalf of Friends of 276 Heritage

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Martha Bridges, Al and Susan Brothers, Carol Dugger, Kathy Figiel, John Graham, Jan Nickerson (884-3514), Tom Oosting, Harriet Walls and many others