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## TRANSYLVANIA COUNTY PLANNING BOARD MINUTES

### Regular Meeting, July 19, 2018

#### Call to Order, Vice-Chair McNeely

The Transylvania County Planning Board met in regular session on Thursday, July 19, 2018, at 7:00pm in the Community Services Building Conference Room. Members present were Vice-Chair Mack McNeely, Kimsey Jackson, Bob Twomey and Sandy Watson. Chair Daryle Hogsed, Lauren Wise and Steve Woodsmall were absent (excused). Staff members present were Transylvania County Planning and Community Development Director Mark Burrows and County Planner Joy Fields. Also present were Nory LeBrun and Bart Renner. Media was not present.

- I. **Welcome:** Mack McNeely welcome board members and those attending the meeting.
- II. **Public Comment:** There was no public comment.
- III. **Approval of Agenda:** No agenda modifications were made by staff or board members.
- IV. **Approval of Minutes:** Sandy Watson moved to approve the minutes of the June 21, 2018 regular meeting. The motion was seconded by Kimsey Jackson, and carried unanimously.
- V. **Subdivision Approvals and Updates:** Joy Fields noted that the past month was slower with nine (9) exception plats, and one (1) 2-lot subdivision approved between June 22, 2018 and July 18, 2018.
- VI. **Variance Request for a Sign Permit:** Joy Fields introduced the request for a sign permit variance from the Toxaway Historic Foundation (THF). The request is to allow THF to change the sign face on a grandfathered sign located off NC 281 in the Sapphire area. The sign is currently an "on-premise" sign used by the Sapphire Community Center with a sign face of approximately 32 square feet. THF recently leased the sign from the community center and wants to replace the sign face with a new sign, paint the support structures, and add a cap to protect the sign. Staff noted that this section of NC 281 is a Transylvania County Scenic Corridor, which limits the size of off-premise signs to 20 square feet. Staff noted that NC 281 is also a NC Scenic Byway.

Mr. Nory LeBrun thanked the board for their considering the request and emphasized that the THF was trying to 1) make the area more attractive while supporting future growth, and 2) market the greater Toxaway community and promote the history and heritage of the area through new branding.

Board members noted that the existing sign was grandfathered and that only the sign face was changing – not the size of the sign or its support structure. After discussion, Kimsey Jackson moved to approve the variance request, seconded by Sandy Watson. The motion passed unanimously. Staff reminded Mr. LeBrun and the Board that it was the requirement of Mr. LeBrun and THF to seek approval from NC Department of Transportation regarding whether or not the sign could remain in a Scenic By-way.

**VII. Old Business:**

- A. Transylvania County Voluntary Agriculture District Ordinance (VADO): Mark Burrows started the discussion by introducing the topic of the Voluntary Agriculture District Ordinance and the request from the County Commissioners for the Planning Board to review the draft that was given to them by Bart Renner on behalf of the Transylvania Agriculture Advisory Board. Joy Fields noted that she had received updated information from Bart and that she had placed the information at board members seats. She then asked Bart to give an overview of the VADO.

Bart noted that he was staff to the Agricultural Advisory Board who is updating the VADO and he appreciated the opportunity to speak to the Planning Board. He observed that the VADO is a voluntary tool to support farming (and farmland) preservation in Transylvania County. The VADO is not zoning; however, farms that are designated have greater protection from nuisance lawsuits from neighbors concerned with noise, smell and other activity associated with farms. The major changes that the Agriculture Board is proposing include:

- 1) Removing the current requirement that qualifying farms must be enrolled in Present Use Tax Valuation.
- 2) Adding the “Enhanced District” component in order to provide greater benefit to those farms seeking cost share funds from NRCS.
- 3) Updating the current ordinance to make sure that the NC State Statute references are correct and up to date.
- 4) Removing acreage requirements for farms to participate in the VADO program.

Planning Board members and staff discussed the proposed ordinance at length and sought clarification on definitions, the purpose of the “Enhanced” Districts, the value of having three distinct districts, and farm sizes.

Following their discussion, Mark Burrows summarized the path forward by stating that he and Joy Fields would share their input directly with Bart Renner and then wait to receive a revised draft VADO from him prior to either the August or September planning board meeting. By consensus, board members thought that was a good idea.

- B. Other:** None.



VIII. New Business:

- A. **Planning & Community Development Department Director's Report:** Mark Burrows provided brief updates on the following topics.
- **Cedar Mountain Small Area Plan:** Staff continues to help the community understand the process. Joy Fields explained to the board that she and Kalen Lawson had attended a meeting at Sherwood Forest and talked to about 40 citizens. At this point, we are trying to help them determine the boundary of Cedar Mountain and what the concerns are of those living there.
  - **Comprehensive Bike Plan update:** Mark Burrows noted that the information gathering process is going very well and that he, Joy and Kalen had now hosted four community drop in sessions along with the Rosman RiverFest event.
  - **Workforce Housing Request for Proposal:** Staff presented the County Manager with a draft Workforce Housing RFP for her consideration.
  - Staff, working with the US Forest Service, City of Brevard Planning Department, NC Cooperative Extension Office and the TC Arts Council submitted an application for the **Appalachian Gateways Course** co-sponsored by the Conservation Fund and the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC). Out of 16 submissions, ours was the best application. The focus is to seek ways to help fund efforts to improve Sycamore Flats, Tannery Park and French Broad River Access.
  - Staff is assisting the Transylvania Economic Alliance and the Town of Rosman with an **ARC Grant to Extend Wastewater** from Rosman to Gaia Herbs.
  - It was noted that staff had a conflict with the August 16<sup>th</sup> planning board meeting due to vacation. **Board members agreed to move the regular meeting to Thursday, August 23<sup>rd</sup>. [Note: this meeting will be in the Board of Elections Conference Room.]**
  - Board members discussed their request to invite the Friends of the Ecusta Trail to the next meeting. All are interested in receiving an update, but the consensus was that unless the County Commissioners position on the rails to trail topic has changed, it would only be for information and that no-action would be taken regarding that topic.

- IX. **Public and Board Member Comments:** Nory LeBrun thanked the board and staff for their action to approve the variance request from the Toxaway Historic Foundation. He also noted that he enjoyed listening to the full meeting. Kimsey Jackson noted that he was very impressed by the depth of discussion by board members and the work of staff.

X. **Adjourn**

There being no further discussion, Kimsey Jackson moved to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Bob Twomey and unanimously approved.

  
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Kalen Lawson, Recording Secretary

MINUTES APPROVED

  
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Daryle Hogsed, Chair