

Cullowhee Planning Council

Minutes

March 6, 2017

6:00 p.m.

Conference Room 101A – Camp Building, WCU

Members	Present	Absent	Members	Present	Absent	Members	Present	Absent
Rick Bennett	X		Myrtle Schrader		X	Jim Lewis	X	
Scott Baker		X	Joel Setzer	X				
Jack Debnam	X		Mike Wade		X	Mike Byers	X	

Others Present

Mike Poston, Planning Director
 John Jeleniewski, Senior Planner
 Caroline Edmonds, Planner I
 Shelby Cook, Administrative Assistant
 Jennifer Bauer, ALC Geologist
 Stephen Fuemmeler, ALC Geologist

Additions to the Agenda

Three new business items were added: B) Sandy Davis, C) Cullowhee Bridge, and D) Light at Wayehutta and Old Cullowhee Road Intersection

Jim Lewis made a motion to approve the agenda with the additions. Joel Setzer seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

Approval of the Minutes

Joel Setzer made a motion to approve the minutes from February 6, 2017 with no changes or additions. Jim Lewis seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

Public Comment

There were no public comments.

New Business

5a) Appalachian Landslide Consultants update

Appalachian Landslide Consultants (ALC) of Asheville has been working on a Jackson County landslide mapping project for about a year. Jennifer Bauer and Stephen Fuemmeler are the Principal Geologists who founded ALC. This project is designed to help the people of Jackson County better understand how landslides can affect them. As Jennifer explained, they make maps to indicate past, current, and impending landslides. They can also find landslide prone areas. ALC's main goal is to increase citizen awareness, and these maps can also help guide emergency management decisions.

There are four main types of landslides: Debris Flows, Debris Slides, Weather Rock Slides, and Rock Slides & Falls. While ALC's field mapping for the county is not yet complete, Jennifer said 23% of the landslides they've found so far are occurring on natural slopes, and 75% are on modified/constructed slopes. The other 2% of slides have not been field-verified yet. They have identified 241 landslides on modified ground and 74 on natural. Most natural landslides occur on lands that have an average slope of above 36%.

Jennifer and Stephen create maps with three layers – Where Debris Might Start, Where Debris Might Go, and Slope Construction Caution Areas. These can help property owners know where to build and where to avoid. They also do individual site evaluations upon request.

ALC has held stakeholder and community meetings, they send out press releases, and organize workshops. They are very interested in teaching the community about their work, and helping them use their maps and information. In the past, ALC has held workshops for local realtors to help them keep prospective property buyers informed. Jennifer said they would be very interested in holding a workshop for the Jackson County Board of Realtors. They also plan to have online map distribution once the Jackson County field mapping project is complete.

Those with questions are encouraged to contact Jennifer and Stephen at 828-209-8642 or info@appalachianlandslide.com.

5b) Sandy Davis, Speedwell Road

Jim Lewis expressed his concern with the outcome of last month's meeting when Sandy Davis, a Jackson County resident, came to speak to the council about the traffic hazard on Speedwell Road. He thinks there could be other solutions to the issue, like putting up caution signs on Speedwell Road that say "Narrow Road" or "Do Not Walk/Run/Bike Beyond This Point".

Joel Setzer gave insight to NCDOT's outlook on caution signs. They are largely ignored by the public, and Speedwell Road is a public road, so bikers and runners in the area have a right to use it. Even with the caution signs in place, people would surely continue to walk, bike, and run on the road. The issue really boils down to citizens driving without respect.

Sandy Davis has been to the Board of Commissioners and she went to the Jackson County Planning Board after speaking at the Cullowhee meeting. Mike Poston explained that the Planning Board recommended a speed study be done on Speedwell Road, and the County Manager has requested the speed study to DOT. The Planning Board also requested that DOT look at other possible connections to Highway 107.

5c) Cullowhee Bridge Design Choice

NCDOT has contacted the Planning Department about selecting a design choice for the Cullowhee Bridge before they order the forms. John Jeleniewski brought a couple samples to the meeting to get input from the council.

Rick Bennett and Mike Byers are in favor of taking the choices to Cullowhee Revitalization Endeavor (CURVE) members for their decision. CURVE has worked on the bridge project for several years, and the council feels that their thoughts on the design are important. CURVE meets again on Monday, March 13th, and Mike Byers will take the samples to them then get back to Planning staff with their choice.

5d) Intersection Light at Wayehutta and Old Cullowhee Road

Rick Bennett is concerned about the shortage of lighting at the new intersection at Wayehutta Road and Old Cullowhee Road. He has seen several accidents almost occur, and has nearly been involved in one himself, due to the poor lighting. Joel Setzer explained that getting a light from NCDOT is not likely. John Jeleniewski suggested Duke Power as a contact point. Also, the Town of Sylva received grant money about 20 years ago for the work on Highway 107 that included lighting, so that might be something to pursue.

Adjournment

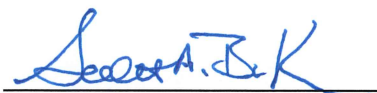
With no further business to discuss, Jack Debnam adjourned the meeting at 7:32 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Shelby LeQuire Cook

Administrative Assistant - Planning



Scott Baker
Cullowhee Planning Council Chair