

Cullowhee Planning Council
Minutes
September 9th, 2019
6:00 p.m.
Conference Room 101A, Cordelia Camp Building
Western Carolina University

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

Staff Present

Michael Poston, Planning Director
 Caroline LaFrienier, Planner II
 Heather Baker, County Attorney
 Allison Kelley, Administrative Assistant

Others Present

Jake Petrosky, Stewart Inc.
 Tommy White, Jackson County Planning Board

Call to Order

Chairman Scott Baker called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and a quorum was present.

Additions to Agenda

Jack Debnam made a motion to approve the agenda as written. Rick Bennett seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Approval of Minutes

Jack Debnam made a motion to approve the minutes from the August 5th, 2019 meeting. Rick Bennett seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Public Comment- Sign-up sheet- 3 minutes per speaker

There were no public comments.

New Business

a. Cullowhee Small Area Plan

Jake Petrosky presented an overview of the Cullowhee Small Area Plan. The plan is a policy guide for future development and address issues within the area.

They will ask the public in a community meeting what needs to be a priority. He stated they are in the final phase of the plan, they had completed the analysis and have had public engagement. The next step is to hold a public meeting and then move forward with the adoption process.

Mr. Petrosky presented under the Vision & Goals section on Page 32 the new modified vision statement the Council request be made as follows: *“The Cullowhee community will grow and prosper for existing and future residents as well as businesses by continuing cooperative relationships with WCU, creating a more inclusive sense of community, identifying partnerships to help manage, fund and improve existing infrastructure to respond to growth, and implementing practices that reflect the*

values of the community and honors its history. The vision for Cullowhee includes more diverse housing, accommodating growth while reducing conflict, protecting and enhancing natural resources, improving outdoor recreation options, revitalizing Old Cullowhee, and improving active transportation coming years."

Mr. Petrosky presented the list of updated goals from the Steering committees feedback as follows:

1. Build Cullowhee's image and identity and promote business and economic development
2. Grow in a predictable, context appropriate manner
3. Increase housing options
4. Provide recreational opportunities and protect, enhance and respect the area's natural beauty
5. Enhance multi-modal transportation options

The future land use map is a guide for land use decisions in regards to growth and development within the Cullowhee area. Mr. Petrosky presented the recommended highlights of the future land use map as follows:

- Encourage redevelopment in the River District
- A Walkable Campus Edge
- Single Family and Neighborhood Preservation Areas
- Environmental Conservation

Jack Debnam asked to include an outline of the current Cullowhee Planning District on all maps within the document for the community. Joel Setzer asked to include language of how the Study Area was developed, and why it is bigger than the regulated district. In addition, he asked to add a disclaimer that the future land use map is a guide for policy purposes for the county.

Mr. Petrosky informed the Council of recommendations, and objectives within the document. The recommendations are included as follows:

- Extend the Tuckasegee River Greenway and increase public access opportunities along the river
- Study preservation, environmental education and restoration opportunities along the Tuckasegee River and Cullowhee Creek.
- Encourage environmentally sensitive design
- Protect cultural resources in the Cullowhee area

Rick Bennett stated on Page 65 the bridge in the River Park area will be removed due to flooding. Mr. Petrosky stated they would review and determine if there is another potential path to cross the Tuckasegee River in the future in the River Park area.

Mr. Setzer inquired if the plan mentioned an incorporation being involved with street parking and lighting. He stated those that plan to invest their private money into this vision would want the insurance of having a return on investment, and so far those in the free market has not made that decision.

Mr. Debnam asked Mr. Petrosky to review the figures on Page 19 as he felt the study area average income was too high. In addition, on Page 21 the figures do not match up with the information on Page 19 and to clarify the diversity index on Page 19. Mr. Debnam asked to review the figures on Page 22 & 23 as they do not match up with rental housing being 70% within the area. Mr. Petrosky asked the Council to email any additional feedback regarding the plan to Caroline LaFrienier. The Council asked to push the public meeting regarding the Cullowhee Small Area Plan until late October to allow more time for feedback for the document.

b. Old Cullowhee Road and Waychutta Road Intersection Parking Concerns

Mike Poston stated he met with Chris Lee (District Engineer of Jackson County), and discussed the concerns of individuals parking on the bridge in a bump out area. He stated Mr. Lee mentioned they planned to proceed with treatment options that would make parking less attractive. There

currently is signs that state “No Parking” in the right-of-way. Mr. Baker stated the apartments near the bridge do not allow for visitor parking, and believes the visitors may be parking in this area to avoid being towed from the apartments. In addition, he stated there is enough parking for the apartment tenants, however, parking in the DOT right-of-way, and bike lanes are creating a hazard. Mr. Poston stated he would update the Council when he receives more detail of a potential solution to this issue.

Adjournment

With no further business, Chairman Baker adjourned the meeting at 7:42 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Allison Kelley
Administrative Assistant- Planning



Scott Baker
Planning Council Chair