

Cullowhee Planning Council

Minutes

July 10, 2017

6:00 p.m.

Conference Room 101A, WCU Cordelia Camp Building

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	

Staff Present

Michael Poston, Planning Director
 John Jeleniewski, Senior Planner
 Shelby Cook, Administrative Assistant
 Heather Baker, County Attorney

Additions to the Agenda

Mike Byers added “Cullowhee Dam” to the agenda as Informal Discussion item A.
Jim Lewis made a motion to approve the agenda with its one addition. Rick Bennett seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

Approval of the Minutes

Jack Debnam made a motion to approve the minutes from June 12, 2017 as written. Jim Lewis seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

Public Comment

There were no public comments.

New Business

a) Public Hearing: “Solitude” modification

Chairman Scott Baker opened the public hearing at 6:02 p.m. The council disclosed any site visits, Ex parte communications, specialized knowledge relating to the case, fixed opinion, family, business, or other similar relationship with applicant, financial interest, or any other relevant information. All parties with standing were sworn in: Mike Poston and John Jeleniewski, Planning staff; and Van Stayton and Victor Lofquist, “Solitude” representatives.

John Jeleniewski presented the updated staff report. Van Stayton is proposing a planned development at PINs 7559-41-5828 and 7559-40-5733. The property is located on the corner of Old Cullowhee Rd. and Ed Norton Rd, and is zoned Single Family Residential – Manufactured Home (SF-MF) District. The proposed structures will be single family, designed in townhome style with attached garages where possible. There will be an HOA in place to govern interior appearance, maintenance issues, and have ownership of the open space. Existing perimeter vegetation will be preserved as much as possible, and all new landscaping will meet or exceed the Cullowhee standards. The immediate surrounding properties are private residential and student rentals. The development will be served by TWSA for water and sewer services.

The “Solitude” development was approved with conditions by the Cullowhee Planning Council on June 6th, 2016. The applicant has modified the site plan since the Special Use Permit approval. The modifications are as follows:

- The planned development will consist of 33 single detached duplex and attached townhome style units, instead of 38.
- Approximately 4.5 acres of the total 21.53 will be developed at this time, instead of 10.16 acres. Approximately 11.37 acres will remain in conservation.
- The development will be in one residential cluster, instead of two, consisting of all 33 units.

The proposed use and structures appear to meet the Special Use standards set forth in section 5-3. It is staff's recommendation to approve the Solitude Planned Development modifications with the conditions from the June, 2016 approval carrying over.

County Attorney, Heather Baker, asked John to clarify the notice process. Adjacent property owners received letters concerning the Solitude modification, the property was posted, and a public hearing notice ran in the paper for 2 weeks.

Victor Lofquist, project engineer, explained to the council that there's little difference in the original site plan and the new one. After hearing the Planning Board's concerns over the ridge last year, the applicant decided to utilize the lower section of the property for all of the units, creating a better site plan and a win-win for everyone. A few more retaining walls will be added to the lower section to accommodate for the development, and slopes will be 2/1. Van Stayton, property owner and applicant, said he has been in contact with the Cullowhee River Club concerning a sidewalk. The development will mainly focus on faculty and staff housing. The top portion of the property will be left in conservation. Room has been left to widen Ed Norton Road at the Old Cullowhee Road intersection.

Conditions from the previous hearing are as follows:

- The owner shall work with the Planning Department staff in the final design, construction, and landscaping of the overall project.
- The owner shall work with NCDOT to widen Ed Norton Rd. at the Old Cullowhee Rd. intersection to better accommodate two-way traffic at the intersection of the two roads.

Jack Debnam made a motion to approve the "Solitude" Special Use Permit, incorporate all findings from the previous hearing, add the 11.37 acre conservation as an additional finding, and carry forward all conditions from the previous hearing. Mike Wade seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

Informal Discussion

Cullowhee Dam

Mike Byers updated the council on the recent Cullowhee Dam study concerning dam removal or repair options. They will be working with American Rivers to work on discovering further opportunities and possibilities.

Staff Updates

The Comprehensive Land Use Plan was adopted by the Board of Commissioners on June 19, 2017.

Adjournment

With no further business to discuss, Scott Baker adjourned the meeting at 6:43 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,


Shelby Lequire Cook

Administrative Assistant - Planning



Scott Baker

Cullowhee Planning Council Chair