

**Cashiers Planning Council
Design Review Committee**

Planning Department Staff Report – February 5, 2024

Project: New Canoe Mixed Use
Applicant: New Canoe, LLC (Tim Green)
Location: Lot 2B Valley Road, Cashiers; PIN 7571-49-6041
District Zone: Cashiers Commercial Area – General Business District

Project Summary: This proposed mixed use development will be located on a property of 1.34 acres and located off Valley Road, Cashiers and approximately 300 lf Northwest of the Highway 107/Valley Road intersection. This property is located within the *Cashiers Commercial Area* and is in the *General Business District*. The owner/developer is going to maintain/improve the existing warehouse structure (1,152 s.f.) and construct two new structures; an additional storage/warehouse (1,188 s.f.) and a mixed-use structure with a retail showroom on the main level (1,224 s.f.) with a two-bedroom residential unit above (1,224 s.f.), for a grand total of 4,788 square feet. Access to the development will be from Valley Road which is an NCDOT road/right-of-way and a road (gravel) width of approximately 18'. Valley Road currently provides access to multiple residential and commercial properties. Site grading (cut and fill) will be minimal as the exiting topographic features of this property are flat. Water is provided by an on-site well and wastewater collection will be provided by TWSA. A concept site plan will be provided to the NCDOT for review and they will be coordinating their requirements for encroachment or driveway connection permits. Fire protection will be provided by the Cashiers Fire Department.

UDO Article III - Permits and Procedures
Section: 3.7.4 - Design Review (Regulated Districts):

- (a) *Purpose and Intent.*
 - (i) Design review is required for those projects within the Cashiers Commercial Area, the Cullowhee Community Planning Area, and the US 441 Gateway District that involve a substantial change in the appearance of a building or landscape. The review procedure seeks to encourage rehabilitation and new construction that enhances and preserves the character of the Regulated Districts, promotes visual harmony, and develops creative design solutions.

- (b) *Applicability.*
 - (i) Design review shall be required for all new construction; rehabilitation projects where the existing building will be substantially altered; special use permit applications, site plans, signage, landscaping, and exterior illumination. The relocation of a building shall also require design review.

 - (ii) The design review process is a mandatory review compliance program.

 - (iii) Design review shall be conducted by the Design Review Committee with assistance and recommendations provided by the Jackson County Planning Department.

 - (iv) Applicants are encouraged to implement their development plans in accordance with the design standards set forth in Article IX: Regulated Districts of this Ordinance. Projects for which design review is required will be evaluated for their compliance with said design standards.

- (c) *Design Review Procedure.*
 - (i) *Pre-application Conference.*

- 1) A meeting with the Jackson County Planning Department staff is recommended prior to the submittal of an application for design review. Advice regarding the information required for submittal and the review schedule can be provided in the pre-application conference.

(d) *Application Submittal.*

- (i) *Filing of application.* An application for design review shall be filed by the owner of the property or a duly authorized representative of the owner. The application shall be filed with the Jackson County Planning Department on a form provided by the Department.
- (ii) *Fees.* Any application fee, as designated by the Jackson County Board of Commissioners, shall be due and payable upon submission of the application.
- (iii) *Information Required.* Each application for design review shall contain a site plan prepared in accordance with the site plan requirements within Article IX (Regulated Districts), building elevations, and additional information regarding the design and materials of the proposed project.
- (iv) *Staff Review.* The Jackson County Planning Department shall review the application and related information for compliance with the design standards set forth in Article IX (Regulated Districts) of this ordinance within 15 working days of the submittal of the application. The Planning Department staff shall meet with the applicant upon completion of the review to discuss the review findings. Immediately following the completion of the staff review, the Jackson County Planning Department shall schedule the application for review by the Community Planning Council at their next available regular meeting.

(v) *Formal Review.*

- 1) For design review applications associated with projects requiring a zoning permit issued by the Planning Department, the Planning Council will review the application and related information for compliance with the design standards set forth in Article IX (Regulated Districts) of this Ordinance. This review by the Planning Council may approve proposed project if it complies with the design guidelines, may approve with conditions or recommendations, or may find the proposed project is not in compliance with the design guidelines.
- 2) For design review applications associated with projects that require a special use permit, the Planning Council will review the design guidelines set forth in Article IX (Regulated Districts) as a standard for the granting of a special use permit. The Planning Council may approve proposed project if it complies with design guidelines, may approve with conditions or recommendations, or may find the proposed project is not in compliance with the design guidelines.

Section 9.3.5 – Site and Building Design Standards

Building Architecture:

(a) Building Architecture

- (i) Building design and architecture are critical components for quality development. Building and architecture design standards are intended to promote compatibility within a development and throughout the Cashiers Commercial Area, allow creativity and diversity of design, protect property values and neighborhood quality, and provide a safe and attractive environment for residents and visitors alike to uses in the community.

(b) Building Materials and Color

(i) **Materials.**

- 1) All buildings shall be constructed of stone, exposed timber, fiber cement siding, wood siding, shingle siding, or other high-quality material, as approved by the Design Review Committee. No building shall be covered with sheet or corrugated metal or with vinyl siding.

The submitted architectural plans indicate that the proposed exterior siding material will be board on board wood siding. The siding materials will continue to a masonry foundation.

- 2) Exterior building materials shall be continued to finished grade of any elevation in accordance with minimum manufacture specifications.
The submitted architectural plans indicate that siding materials will continue to a masonry foundation/finished grade.
- 3) Cornices shall be constructed of brick, stone, wood, pre-cast concrete, or other high quality, long-lasting material.
The submitted plans indicate that the proposed building materials shown for accent cornices comply with this standard.
- 4) Architectural accent materials located above the roof line shall be constructed of brick, stone, wood, pre-cast concrete, architectural quality steel, fiber cement siding or other high quality, long-lasting material.
The submitted plans do not indicate accent materials above the roof line.

(ii) Colors.

- 1) Color schemes used for buildings shall aesthetically integrate building elements together, relate separate (free-standing) buildings on the same lot or parcel to each other, and be used to enhance the architectural form of the building.
The applicant has stated to Staff that the color schemes will match the existing structure and be historic whites, grays, browns or colors from a rustic color palette.
- 2) Exterior colors for new buildings and structures, including roofs, should be the predominant colors of the historic Cashiers Summer resort traditions, historic whites, grays, browns or colors from a rustic color palette are recommended, along with white or black pronounced trim colors. Fluorescent colors shall be avoided.
The applicant has stated to Staff that the color schemes will match the existing structure and be historic whites, grays, browns or colors from a rustic color palette.
- 3) All building projections, including, but not limited to, chimneys, flues, vents, and gutters, shall match or complement in color the permanent color of the surface from which they project.
The applicant has stated that projections will be traditional colors suggested, such as, historic whites, grays, browns or colors from a rustic color palette.

(c) Building Massing and Configuration

- (i) Building scale. Buildings shall be small in scale and shall not exceed 45 feet in height. Buildings located on steep areas shall conform to hillside topography by stepping or staggering the mass of the proposed structure up or down the slope.
The submitted plans indicate that proposed building heights will not exceed 20 vertical feet.
- (ii) Visibility. Buildings with visibility from the public right-of-way or public street or pedestrian walkway in the Cashiers Commercial District shall be designed with the following specific limitations:
 - a) Building masses shall maintain a balance of scale and proportion using design components which are harmonious with natural landforms and landscaping.
This structure will be constructed on a property that is 1.34 acres in land area and flat with no landform to speak of.
 - b) Proposed structures shall not be sited atop peaks or silhouetted against the sky when viewed from any designated public right-of-way.

This structure will be constructed on a property that is 1.34 acres in land area and flat with no slopes or peaks.

- c) Retaining walls visible from the valley floor shall not exceed ten feet in height as measured from grade at face to top of wall. Multiple "stepped" retaining walls whose total height exceeds ten feet must each be offset by at least six horizontal feet. Visible walls shall be colored and textured to complement the background land and vegetation.

Retaining walls are not proposed for this project.

(d) Building Façade Character

- (i) Elements of articulation shall be employed on any building visible from the public right-of-way or public street or pedestrian walkway to reduce the apparent bulk and uniform appearance of large buildings, provide visual interest and variety, and reinforce local architecture.

- (ii) Building scale. At least four of the following elements must comprise 50 percent of front façade length and at least two of the following elements must comprise 30 percent of any façade length fronting a major public street and/or parking lot:

- (a) Trellises with vegetation.
- (b) Balconies.
- (c) Cornices.
- (d) Covered porches.
- (e) Roofline offsets.
- (f) Doors.
- (g) Window hoods.
- (h) Transoms.
- (i) Bulkheads.
- (j) Awnings or canopies.
- (k) Arcades.
- (l) Arches.
- (m) Outdoor patios.
- (n) Planters or wing walls that incorporate landscape areas or places for sitting
- (o) Ribs or columns.
- (p) Changes in texture or masonry.
- (q) Mansard Roofs or Parapet walls designed to meet the minimum requirements set forth of Section 9.3.5 (e) below.
- (r) Shutters

The submitted architectural plans indicate that the proposed structure will include at least four of the elements listed.

- (iii) Windows. Front building façade must be comprised of a minimum of 30 percent window or glazed area.

The submitted architectural plans indicate that this structure will be in compliance with this ordinance standard.

- 1) All sides of the building shall include articulation, materials, and design characteristics consistent with those on the primary front façade in terms of quality and detail, unless the public's view of a rear or side building elevation from a public right-of-way or private street or pedestrian walkway is blocked by intervening buildings, topography, a solid screen wall at least six feet high built using materials consistent with the building, or landscaping measuring at least 15 feet in height at maturity.

The submitted architectural plans indicate that this structure will be in compliance with this ordinance standard.

(e) Roof Form and Articulation

- (i) The roof of any building shall present a distinctive profile and add interest to larger buildings and complement the character of other buildings included on the same lot or parcel.

The submitted plans indicate that the existing and proposed structures on this property will complement each other in color and style.

1) Flat roof buildings.

- a) The roof of any building with a flat roof shall include parapets to conceal the roof and roof-top equipment from public view. The average height of such parapets shall not exceed 15 percent of the height of the supporting wall, unless required for in Section 9.3.5 (f) Rooftop Equipment Screening, and such parapets shall not at any point exceed one-third of the height of the supporting wall.

Flat roofs are not proposed for the proposed structures.

- b) Parapets used to conceal the roof and roof-top equipment for any building shall not extend a constant height for more than 100 feet in length.

Rooftop equipment is not proposed for this project.

1) Slope roof buildings. The roof of any building with a slope roof shall include the following to maintain proportional building architecture:

- a) Overhanging eaves, extending no less than one foot past the supporting wall;
b) Sloping roofs that do not exceed the average height of the supporting walls, with an average slope greater than or equal to 5/12 pitch (5 inches of horizontal rise, 12 inches horizontal run). This would not apply to shed roofs or covered walkways.

The submitted architectural plans indicate that the proposed structure complies with this ordinance standard.

2) Additional requirements.

- a) Consistent roof treatments, whether flat or sloping, shall be provided on all sides of the building.

The submitted architectural plans indicate that the proposed structure complies with this ordinance standard.

- b) The back side of all cornices, parapets, and roofline that are visible from an adjacent public right-of-way shall be finished with materials consistent with the associated building.

The submitted architectural plans indicate that the proposed structure complies with this ordinance standard.

(f) Rooftop Equipment Screening

- (i) Screen requirements. All rooftop mechanical equipment and vents greater than eight inches in diameter shall be:

- 1) Screened from the line of sight of public rights-of-way, private roads, parking lots, public sidewalks, greenways, and internal pedestrian ways except for instances where site topography precludes reasonable compliance with the minimum screening requirement;

Rooftop equipment is not proposed for this project.

- 2) Screened by either a parapet wall along the building edge or a freestanding screen wall on the roof of a material, color, and design architecturally compatible with the building, that is at least as high as the equipment and vents for which the screening is designed to hide.

Rooftop equipment is not proposed for this project.

(g) Franchise Architecture

- (i) To maintain the unique character of the Cashiers District, buildings shall not be constructed or renovated using franchise architecture. Franchise or national chains may be permitted in the Cashiers District but must follow the standards of this section to create a building that is compatible with the Cashiers District.

Franchise Architecture is not proposed for this project.

(h) Architectural Unity

- (i) All buildings within the same lot or parcel shall be architecturally unified. Architectural unity means that buildings shall be related and compatible in style, color, scheme, quality, and type of exterior building materials.

The existing and proposed structures for this project are architecturally unified in style, color, scheme, quality, and type of exterior building materials.

Comments:

These proposed mixed use structures were reviewed applying the *Cashiers Commercial Area Ordinance*. This project will be required to meet or exceed the standards set forth in this ordinance and any other Jackson County ordinance that may apply.

Staff Recommendation:The *Architectural Design Standards* meet or exceed the regulations set forth in the *Cashiers Commercial Area Ordinance*. Staff recommends approval of the architectural plans regarding style, features and materials as presented.