

JACKSON COUNTY PLANNING BOARD

MINUTES

Date: June 8, 2023

Time Begin: 6:06 p.m.

Time End: 7:33 p.m.

Location: Department on Aging, Heritage Room

Members	Present	Absent		Present	Absent		Present	Absent
Emily Moss	X		Nathan Shepherd	X		Thomas Taulbee	X	
Sandy Davis		X	Ollin Dunford	X		Beverly Crespo	X	
Brian Barwatt	X		Joyce Cooper	X		Elmer Rhodie Humbert	X	
Adam Holt		X	Ken Brown		X			

Staff Present:

Michael Poston- Planning Director

Allison Kelley- Administrative Assistant III

Call to Order and Quorum Check

Chair Thomas Taulbee called the meeting to order at 6:06 p.m. and a quorum was present.

Oath of Office

Allison Kelley, clerk to the Board read the Oath of Office for new member Elmer Rhodie Humbert, and he affirmed to execute the duties of Planning Board Member according to the best of his skills and abilities.

Approval of the Agenda

Nathan Shepherd made a motion to approve the agenda as written. Beverly Crespo seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously.

Approval of the Minutes

Nathan Shepherd made a motion to approve May 18, 2023 minutes. Joyce Cooper seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously.

Public Comment

There were no public comments.

New Business

a) Recodify Cashiers Update

Mr. Poston stated Recodify Cashiers is a project that is a rewrite of the Cashiers zoning regulations that is currently being led by the Cashiers Planning Council. This ordinance rewrite will come before the Planning Board for comment and review in the upcoming months. The Recodify Cashiers project came about after adopting the Cashiers Small Area Plan document that had suggestions about what changes they should consider making to the zoning regulations to help achieve the type of community that the Cashiers residents envisioned. In 2021, the Cashiers Area Chamber of Commerce helped organize and bring in the Urban Land Institute (ULI) the conducted a workshop with the community. In addition, he stated throughout the ULI process

they were able to reaffirm many of the concepts that were included in the Cashiers Small Area Plan. The ULI study discussed housing and other community aspects that go into developing a community. Mr. Poston stated that Cashiers was the first area of the county that was zoned, and the Cashiers Commercial Area Zoning Ordinance was adopted in 2004. The Cashiers Commercial Area Zoning Ordinance was designed to regulate non-residential development due to concerns in the community, and they did not include regulating residential development. The Cashiers Commercial Area included two commercial zoned districts (Village Center, General Commercial) with comparable regulation standards. Mr. Poston stated the current ordinance was built and designed for Cashiers that existed in the early 2000s, and Cashiers has changed and evolved over the last 18 years. In addition, he stated the tools that they have been using since the early 2000s are still not achieving the goals that the community had in mind and they have made amendments on the immediate issues since the adoption of the Cashiers Small Area Plan, and planned to budget for an ordinance rewrite.

Mr. Poston stated the County Commissioners approved some funding in the previous budget that allowed us to hire CodeWright Planners as the consulting firm to help rewrite the entirety of the ordinance. He stated the ordinance rewrite project is a big scale that the Planning staff could not manage an ordinance rewrite and continue to keep the department functional for day-to-day operational purposes. The founder and principal at CodeWright Planners is Chad Meadows and he has been writing zoning codes in North Carolina for 30 years in different formats, and he specializes in code writing. Mr. Poston stated that the process kicked off with a project initiation to discuss the goals of the project in January of this year with the Cashiers Planning Council. CodeWright Planners will create a new zoning ordinance that makes the regulations concise, clear and legally defensible, and that is consistent with the Cashiers Small Area Plan and the ULI study report. Mr. Poston stated they are also considering changing and moving away from the quasi-judicial process, as there are legal liability issues for the County. The Cashiers Planning Council would be moving towards a conditional zoning process with rules and regulations that would become a legislative decision that would go through the Cashiers Planning Council and Planning Board for review and recommendation to the Board of Commissioners for the final decision. Mr. Poston stated Mr. Meadows came back in February to discuss policy guidance, and met with eight different stakeholder groups from the area (design professionals, developers, real estate professionals, people that are involved in community groups and environmental constituents). Mr. Poston stated these stakeholder groups were formed to help CodeWright Planners to gain context on what they thought these policy documents meant, and what they felt was important aspects from these documents from those perspectives.

In May, CodeWright Planners spent an entire week to discuss community character and what aspects the community valued. Mr. Poston stated this process is unique as a code writing process is typically done in-house incorporating regulatory language from our guiding documents such as the Cashiers Small Area Plan and ULI study. Cashiers has a very engaged community and you can see that by spending time in the area or reading the local newspaper (Crossroads Chronicle). Mr. Poston stated they wanted to develop a more public oriented style of engagement for this process, and during the month of May they had four different public events, and office hours where anyone could sign-up to speak with Mr. Meadows regarding Cashiers.

In addition, he stated their overall goal is if you were interested in this process but had not been able to talk with us about this project; it is probably because you did not want to really talk to us about it because we have gave ample opportunity for the community to be engaged. Mr. Poston stated Mr. Meadows would be back in Cashiers for two days for a Council meeting and community meeting (June 12-13th) with office hours for anyone who would like to set up a time to meet and talk.

Mr. Poston stated stage four of this process, which takes all of the information they have received (policy guidelines, community character) to create an annotated outline of what the ordinance would look like. Anyone from the public who has interest in this process can follow

along on the website www.recodifycashiers.com that has all of the PowerPoints, trip notes, and data we have collected, etc. During this process they are looking for a consensus between the development community, environmental stakeholders, business owners, and the residents in the area. Mr. Poston stated they are anticipating the approval process in October/November and would come before the Planning Board for review and recommendation to the Board of Commissioners. Mr. Poston asked the Board to review the materials on the website in the meantime, as this draft would be forthcoming.

b) Jackson County Land Use Plan 2040 Update

Mr. Poston stated based on feedback it appears the community is moving closer towards wanting zoning. He stated he has had conversations with members from the community about how zoning would protect their property values as much as it limits what they can do with their property. Mr. Poston stated as the area begins to become more populated and as people start building closer together, he believes people would start being more interested in potential zoning regulations. Mr. Poston stated staff has met with the steering committee and they all agree that is time to review and update the County's goals and objectives.

Mr. Shepherd inquired what distinguishes the difference between land use and zoning countywide. Mr. Poston stated that when you want to regulate land use, zoning is your vehicle. For example, if you are wanting to regulate what types of business industry or what types of uses are allowed on a property, zoning is the most effective tool because you will classify that property as residential, commercial, industrial, institutional that would be compatible. Mr. Taulbee asked staff if they could bring back additional information to the Board regarding current development regulations and zoning discussion, along with the Planning Board's powers and duties at the next meeting.

Adjournment


With no further business, Ken Brown made a motion to adjourn. Joyce Cooper seconded the motion, and the meeting adjourned at 7:33 p.m.

Submitted by:



Allison Kelley
Administrative Assistant – Planning

Approved by:



Thomas Taulbee
Planning Board Chairman

