

Cullowhee Planning Council

Minutes

February 7, 2022

6:00 p.m.

Department on Aging

Heritage Room

Members	Present	Absent	Members	Present	Absent	Members	Present	Absent
Rick Bennett		X	Jim Lewis	X		Chris Stuckey	X	
Joel Setzer	X		Mike Byers	X		Donna Huguelet	X	
David Claxton	X		Carol Burton	X				

Staff Present

Michael Poston, Planning Director

Anna Harkins, Planner I

Allison Kelley, Administrative Assistant

Call to Order

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

Additions to Agenda

Joel Setzer requested to add agenda item under "New Business" b) Public Involvement Discussion. Jim Lewis made a motion to approve the agenda with the addition. Carol Burton seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Approval of Minutes

Chris Stuckey made a motion to approve the minutes from January 3, 2022. Carol Burton 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 Implementation

Mr. Poston stated the Board of Commissioners adopted the plan in 2020, and both staff and Council would be working towards implementing the goals and objections in the action plan.

The goals that have been put into action are as follows:

- LU-1 Encourage a development pattern that is consistent with the Small Area Plan and Future Land Use Map.
 - LU-1.A Base zoning decisions on consistency with this plan and require development design to adhere to recommendations for the applicable future land use character areas.
- Action Plan Item 1: Jackson County Unified Development Ordinance Updates
 - F. Consider the development of regulations for multi-family development outside of the regulated districts.
- Action Plan Item 2: Greenways and Pedestrian Connections
 - B. Study the feasibility of the multiuse path parallel to NC 107 between Country Club Rd and Cullowhee School.

- Action Plan Item 3: Coordination, Public Services, and Infrastructure
 - Continue WCU's representation on the Cullowhee Community Planning Council
- Action Plan Item 4: Parks and Open Space:
 - Continue working with the Cullowhee Revitalization Endeavor (CuRvE) on the Tuckasegee Family River Park
 - B. Painter Road/ Monteith Gap Pocket Park

Mr. Poston stated both staff and Council have known that multifamily developments are occurring outside of regulated districts because our water and sewer corridors do not recognize county regulated municipal/zoning boundaries. However, when water and sewer is available there is the ability to develop at a higher density as there is less need for space for onsite septic, water, and wells. Staff has worked with the Planning Board over the last couple of months to develop multifamily development regulations that happen outside of zoned areas in the County's jurisdiction. He stated this ordinance would apply anywhere in the county where multifamily is being developed that does not have regulatory district. In addition, staff borrowed the language from Cullowhee regulations for multifamily development, as it is the most comprehensive and scoped those regulations to apply for county purposes. The following regulations are included in the county multifamily development ordinance; setbacks, parking table, stormwater, erosion control, etc. They did not transfer over the density table from the Cullowhee ordinance, as this ordinance would apply to unzoned properties in the county. Mr. Poston stated staff would still use the Mountain and Hillside Development Ordinance and Watershed Ordinance as the density standard. However, multifamily developments are expected to meet all the standards, as there would be some limitations with setbacks, buffering, parking, open space requirements, etc. He stated staff is moving through the process of adopting the county multifamily ordinance, the Planning Board held a public hearing in January and made a recommendation to the Board of Commissioners to adopt the multifamily ordinance.

Mr. Poston stated Action Plan Item 2: Greenways and Pedestrian Connections staff has discussed with DOT regarding the scope of that study. In addition, he stated staff is working with the Jackson County Recreation Department on how to move that type of feasibility study forward, as it would come out of their budget. Secondly, Action Plan Item 3: Coordination, Public Services, and Infrastructure, the Council still has representation from Western Carolina University as Mike Byers is a non-voting member, and they will continue this representation. Mr. Poston stated as the previous Council meeting they discussed the River Park and the fact that the county is invested in the Prentice property, and working with DOT to get the ruminant property or access to the property, and continue working with CuRvE. In addition, the Painter Road/Monteith Gap Pocket Park they discussed the shift in that roadbed would create property that the county currently owns both sides of the existing right-of-way that would be abandoned. He stated there would be some property between the new road driveway and the river, and they may be able to put a pocket park maybe some access of certain scale, that has not been determined as they are still trying to understand how much property the county would have as the project moves forward.

Action Plan Items to move forward with are as follows:

- Action Plan Item 1: Jackson County Unified Development Ordinance Updates
 - A. Revise regulations to allow for single-family homes with smaller lot widths and setbacks in Low and Medium Multi-Family Residential zoning districts with increased design requirements including internal access.
 - B. Improve design standards that could help increase the compatibility of new medium-to high-density residential, especially in Transitional areas.
 - C. Revise the existing Commercial district to create a more walkable mixed use district or the create a new River District zoning category to encourage the type of new development envisioned in the Old Cullowhee Design Concept.
 - D. Encourage a more walkable campus edge through modifications to the Multifamily Residential Zoning District (MFH), other districts and/or the creation of a new zoning district.
- Action Plan Item 5: Protect Water Quality in the Tuckasegee and its Tributaries

- A. Develop recommendations for implementing a minimum riparian buffer in the Cullowhee Planning Area

Joel Setzer inquired if staff has seen a proposal come in that would be a great fit for Cullowhee but the regulation or zone is prohibiting the potential proposal. In addition, he inquired what feedback has staff received from the development community that needs to be considered and approved in the area. Mr. Poston stated they have not had much feedback from the business development community as they have not had a large amount of commercial that was not attached to multifamily housing that has been developed. However, he stated that should start to change as when creating the Cullowhee Small Area Plan that if you applied the commercial standards, especially to the Old Cullowhee Corridor, they are going to have a hard time finding someone to redevelop that Corridor based on the current ordinance regulation standards. The Council will need to consider if they want to reactive for redevelopment of Old Cullowhee to determine if there is a better way to address parking, and stormwater since it is near the Tuckasegee River.

Mr. Poston stated staff would begin bringing materials for the above action items from the Cullowhee Small Area Plan for the Council to begin to consider.

b) Public Involvement Discussion

Mr. Setzer stated community members at past meetings have expressed that having the public comment section at the start of the meeting they missed the opportunity to comment on the material discussed at the end of the meeting. He stated they discussed how the Board of Commissioners conduct their meetings and were going to follow back up with this discussion item. Mr. Setzer stated he believed having two public comment sections at the beginning and end of the meeting would not take up too much of the Council's time and would allow the process to be more open to the public.

Mr. Poston stated his recommendation regarding adding another public comment section is to make it optional each meeting for the Council to decide and vote on. He stated he was employed by an agency that put public comment on the agenda before and after the meeting. During some meetings, there was not much public comment and others the meetings would last longer than anticipated, which cannot always be predicted. Mr. Poston recommended the Council decide to allow for additional public comments during the meeting. In addition, the community members can talk to Council members between meetings and share their concerns outside of the meeting. Mr. Poston asked the Council to allow staff and the county attorney to gather information regarding this discussion for consideration moving forward.

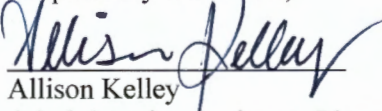
Joel Setzer made a motion for staff to bring information regarding public comment sections on the agenda at the next Council meeting. Chris Stuckey seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

In addition, Mr. Setzer asked if staff could also have extra hard copies of the meeting materials for each meeting for the public. Mr. Poston stated staff would moving forward have extra hard copies available for the public.

Adjournment

With no further business, Jim Lewis made a motion to adjourn. Carol Burton seconded the motion and the meeting adjourned at 7:07 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,


Allison Kelley
Administrative Assistant- Planning


David Claxton
Planning Council Chair