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Town of Lake Lure

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Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Zoning and Planning Board

Tuesday, May 14, 2013

Lake Lure Municipal Center

ROLL CALL

Present: Thomas McKay, Chair
Bruce Barrett
Charlie Ellis
Ric Thurlby
John Moore, Town Council Liaison

Absent: John Wisniewski

Also Present: Shannon Baldwin, Community Development Director
Sheila Spicer, Zoning Administrator
Stephen Webber, BOA Chairman
Mike Egan, Town Attorney
Michelle Jolley, Recording Clerk

Chairman McKay called the meeting to order at 9:35 a.m. and gave the invocation.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Mr. Ellis made a motion to approve the agenda. Mr. Thurlby seconded the motion. All were in favor.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

The minutes of the April 16, 2013 regular meeting were unanimously approved upon a motion made by Mr. Barrett and seconded by Mr. Thurlby.

OLD BUSINESS

(A) Consider Amendments to the Subdivision and Zoning Regulations Pertaining to Streets and Driveways

Mr. Baldwin gave an overview and noted that the ZPB reviewed the amendments to the subdivision and zoning regulations pertaining to streets and driveways at the last month's

meeting. Mr. Baldwin requested recommendation from ZPB for approval by Town Council as submitted and the fact that it's consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. The Zoning and Planning Board did not have any questions. Motion was made by Mr. Ellis to approve the draft ordinance as submitted for recommendation to Town Council. Motion was seconded by Mr. Barrett and all were in favor.

(B) Consider Amendments to the Zoning Regulations Pertaining to Residential Vacation Rentals

Mr. Webber gave an overview of the 4th draft and stated he does not fully support or recommend a fully permitted process. He feels that it could again stir up problems within the community. Mr. Egan stated that he feels the hybrid approach Mr. Webber favored, puts the Town at risk if it were ever legally challenged.

After considerable discussion, ZPB decided to review the draft amendment created by Mr. Egan and discuss it at the June meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

(A) Discussion of NCDOT's Comprehensive Transportation Plan & MSTA Study

Chairman McKay announced the presentation of the comprehensive transportation plan. He stated that it is the culmination of a lot of work, brainpower, and a lot of time and energy. It is one of the most important transitory steps the Town has ever taken.

Mr. Baldwin started the presentation and wanted to talk about the context. He stated that for Lake Lure, transportation planning represents the next step in the planning effort. In 2006 surveys were sent to all the property owners soliciting input. Community meetings were held. A steering committee was chosen. They created the Comprehensive Plan in conjunction with LandDesign. The Comprehensive Plan is broken down into a number of sections.....transportation just being one.....recreation just one.....economic development another. There are other sections. Town Council adopted this document in 2007.

Mr. Baldwin further stated that the document represented a reality check. He asked "What are we doing right? Where do we need to make improvements?"

Mr. Baldwin explained the Comp Plan is full of recommendations. He stated that from all the information gathered, a final concept plan was created as part of the Comp Plan. This is a visual representation of the recommendations. The NC 9 area was studied. Based on utility accessibility, road access, and the fact that Ingles was under construction at the time, the steering committee knew this was going to be a high growth area. Uses were identified by the community and then the Comp Plan married them to the Town assets. The undeveloped back half of the golf course was identified as an asset that could be repurposed and developed. The hope was that when assets were married to the uses the community needed, this would facilitate outcomes/services identified in the Comp Plan development process. The area was branded as the "Lake Lure Regional Center." Not

having better uses in mind, the property was used as a landfill and firing range in the past. There's a cost for remediation relative to these two uses. Mr. Baldwin further stated that along the NC 9 corridor we will have medical services, a dentist office, a new school, and library and recreations areas being pursued, etc. He stated that there is even anticipation of additional growth in medical services relative to the professional medical park.

Mr. Baldwin also explained that the Comp Plan identified the Town center as a new growth area, an opportunity to lure investment. He said in the beginning a trail head was envisioned for trails into the State Park back in 2007. Based on this idea, we started engaging the State about working together. The Park wanted to do a visitors center. They needed better ingress and egress and utilities. The current road to the Park from Chimney Rock Village was deemed to be high risk relative to improvements.....switchbacks and the need to blast/widen was seen as having the potential to undermine the existing road.

Mr. Baldwin continued saying that NCDOT understood the need to improve transportation facilities because of the coming increase of people into the Gorge due to the Park expansion. He said that this activated the NCDOT's CTP process we've just completed and caused us to realize the need to do the Town Center Master Plan in order to interact with NCDOT relative to our desires for the Lake Lure Town Center. Mr. Baldwin noted that they worked hard to convince the Park they could be a great front door for the newly expanded Park. He also said they communicated that they were interested in partnership and quality growth. The State Park adopted their master plan showing ingress through Lake Lure.

Mr. Baldwin mentioned the Town Center Master Plan (Phase I) development process helped to identify the qualities and uses that is wanted in the Town Center. This followed the adoption of the Chimney Rock State Park Master Plan.

Mr. Baldwin read the guiding principles behind the development of the Town Center Master Plan. He then talked about many other projects in the works like the Flowering Bridge, Welcome Center, Marina, and Morse Park.....all in the Town center area. The pedestrian connector with Chimney Rock Village was briefly mentioned. He then described the recently adopted Market Study. He mentioned that Tom McKay and Charlie Ellis were part of the steering committee that worked with Arnett Muldrow. Mr. Baldwin described how stakeholders were engaged during the process, especially business owners.

Mr. Baldwin pointed out that we have a much better feel for where visitors are coming from now per the business survey conducted. He said that this will help facilitate investment because it gives quality intelligence to investors and this process built good will and relationships. He stated to be rest assured that the market will change as entrance goes and they hope they're going to see investment as a result of all the work the just reviewed.

Chairman McKay pointed out that the Town had one of the largest community turnouts in the Gorge for the market study they worked on. Over 200 people attended. The board members mentioned there is a lot going on in the community right now.

Mr. Baldwin explained that he wanted to do this presentation today so that it is known there will be an increase in people as well as a rise in the economy as the Park expands. He wants to make sure the plans that are adopted will take the Town in the right direction. He stated the two most important items in the CTP and Traffic Study are: Lake Lure Parkway and Westside Connector. The Traffic Study was commissioned to help us understand existing and future traffic loads because of the Park expansion, and to try to create a solution to address the expansion. Both NCDOT and State Parks are divisions of North Carolina. The Lake Lure Parkway proposal allows for stacking to take place within the Park entrance and designed to keep traffic moving; thus the traffic circles. It's to be constructed in three phases. Phase 1 brings folks to the traffic circle near Town Hall then sends them up the mountain into the Park. Phase 2 allows folks to travel through the town center. Phase 3 takes folks around by the entrance to the bottomless pools. Mr. Baldwin mentioned that this is the best way to do it per NCDOT and all stakeholders were at the table. He said most of the Proctor Road residents are on board and they've described this as an eloquent solution. They want to be able to get to the hospital or have the ambulance get to them. Mr. Baldwin stated that the phased approach is a nice rational way to implement the Lake Lure Parkway.

Mr. Baldwin continued saying that the CTP is a thirty (30) year build out. There are multiple maps: pedestrian, bicycle, highway, public transit maps. The most controversial thing out of the CTP is the Westside Connector. This is a proposal that specifies the town supports improvements up to the resort but not through the resort. The narrative clearly states that the Town supports the connector but it doesn't support going through the resort to connect to anywhere else. Mr. Baldwin mentioned the connector will save time, ensure emergency access, provide access to State Park facilities, etc. It gives folks in the resort the opportunity to take a shorter trip to Hendersonville and/or Asheville, if they choose to do this. It gives a venue for events like Ironman and an opportunity to access additional park land. Mr. Baldwin continued saying concerns have been expressed about security in Rumbling Bald by some. He stated that staff from the State Parks said, "If this improvement is made, security will increase because patrols increase." Mr. Baldwin said that if improvements are made, the Town will patrol the area. Therefore, security will be increased. He mentioned that right now a person with a four wheel drive can navigate the existing road and no one would really be in a position to apprehend them. The Town does not want to force anything on Rumbling Bald. The Town is not going to do that. If they do not want to connect in or come out, they're not obligated to do so. Leaving the recommended improvements off the plan because of concerns about security is probably not a wise thing to do. Mr. Baldwin said the funds should be used to improve the facility to, but not through, the resort. Rumbling Bald would choose the "through." But it's not being forced on them.

Mr. Baldwin stated he'd like a recommendation from the Planning Board to Town Council that Town Council review and adopt the transportation plans as submitted.

Council will be given a presentation and asked to adopt the plans at their May 21st meeting.

Mr. Baldwin mentioned that both the CTP and MSTA Traffic Study are consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and Town Center Master Plan and both were adopted by Town Council.

Mr. Ellis pointed out that despite the concerns of a few, there's an opportunity to grow our economy in a positive and controlled way; it really creates some connectivity which is desperately needed. The Flowering Bridge represents a physical connection between two communities..... the walkway. The connection of the town center to the Park. There's a need to connect back to the resort which has both residents and visitors. Mr. Ellis also said that the benefits for fire and safety are obvious. He said this plan does a lot of things in terms of getting tourists around but connecting this group into the community will create a very, very positive community. Mr. Ellis said he really doesn't see anything negative with it at all.

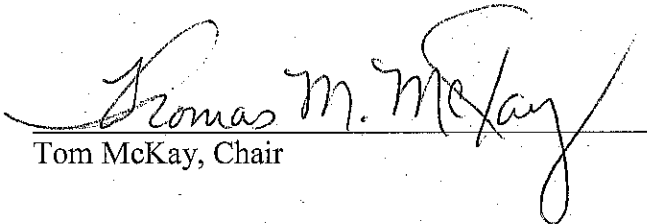
Chairman McKay stated the body needs a good circulatory system. He said that in time everyone will get on board and having this Park has energized this community. Chairman McKay noted that there is now access to funding that wasn't available in the past.

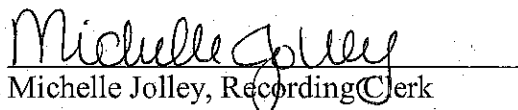
Mr. Thurlby stated he would like to move that Town Council review and adopt the CTP and Traffic Operations Study as depicted. Mr. Barrett seconded and all voted in favor.

ADJOURNMENT

Upon a motion by Mr. Barrett and seconded by Mr. Ellis, the meeting was adjourned at 11:30 a.m. The next regular meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, June 18, 2013 at 9:30 a.m. at the Lake Lure Municipal Center.

ATTEST


Tom McKay, Chair


Michelle Jolley, Recording Clerk