



Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the
Zoning and Planning Board

Tuesday, October 18, 2016

Lake Lure Municipal Center

ROLL CALL

Present: Thomas M McKay, Chair
Bruce Barrett
Norman McGlohon
John Moore, Council Liaison

Absent: Charlie Ellis
Jonathan Hinkle

Also Present: Shannon Baldwin, Community Development Director
Michelle Jolley, Recording Secretary

The meeting started at 9:40 a.m. Chairman McKay led the pledge of allegiance and Mr. Barrett gave the invocation.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Mr. Barrett made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Mr. McGlohon seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Mr. McGlohon made a motion to approve the minutes of the August 16, 2016 regular meeting as presented. Mr. Barrett seconded the motion and all voted in favor.

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

A. Discussion on Business Signage for the Arcade Building

Mr. Baldwin provided a quick overview of what types of signs are allowed for this area of the Town Center. He explained that sidewalk or sandwich board signs are allowed on-premises and meant to communicate to pedestrians and slower moving traffic that a business is open and maybe other short messages; however, there is no provision to allow this type of sign to be placed off-site. He added that changes to the regulations would need to be made if that type of sign is allowed off-premises. He stated the question before the Board seems to be “What can be done to improve visits by patrons to the businesses located in the Arcade?” He pointed out the packet included a memo from Commissioner Webber addressing this issue.

Chairman McKay recognized Mr. Webber. Stephen Webber, Commissioner, stated he received an email from Chris and Amy Brevard, who own Scoop Ice Cream and Lake Lure Coffee, which is located inside the arcade building. They submitted a letter to him expressing concerns regarding the regulations on signage for the arcade building. Commissioner Webber petitioned Town Council to commission the Board to discuss whether the regulations regarding advertising signs for the arcade building need updating. He mentioned that he suggested the Brevard’s attend this meeting; however, they did not attend. George Wittmer, owner of the arcade building, was present and willing to speak on the issue. Commissioner Webber explained that the Town owns the land surrounding the building owned by Mr. Wittmer, making this a unique situation. Mr. Barrett pointed out that there is a marquee sign for the arcade building located by the road; however the Town needs off-premise wayfinding signs to guide pedestrians and motorists. Mr. Barrett gave the Town of Rutherfordton’s wayfinding signs as an example and ones Lake Lure should study. Currently, the arcade building is in CTC commercial zoning district. Commissioner Webber mentioned that the Board could consider amending the zoning for this area. He added that the Brevard’s ice cream business, located just down the road from the coffee shop in the same zoning district, is allowed a sandwich board sign; however, their coffee shop is not because of the unique size and layout of the property in relation to the building. Chairman McKay pointed out that there are businesses in town that are seasonal and felt the Town should come up with solutions that would help these businesses. He specifically noted the businesses in the arcade building. He stated he had worked to secure the right to have a marquee sign because the businesses in the arcade are not easily seen from Memorial Highway.

Chairman McKay recognized Mr. George Wittmer. Mr. Wittmer, owner of the arcade building, pointed out that the arcade building is unique in that it is located in the CTC commercial district of the town center. He stated that the Brevard’s signed their lease, which outlined the signage requirements and prohibitions. He noted there is a potential for more signs in addition to the existing marquee sign. He stated he also owns the Lake Lure Inn & Spa and does not wish to see numerous sandwich board signs in the commercial area of the town center. His suggestion would be to allow travelers on Memorial Highway to possibly view the arcade better.

Chairman McKay recognized Mayor Bob Keith. Mayor Keith spoke and mentioned seeing another type of sign similar to a marquee sign that used an LED screen. He pointed out that the LED screen was used to advertise businesses and display slogans for a specific time period. He stated it was similar in size to the existing sign and looked like a permanent sign. He suggested the Board study the one at the Walmart shopping center in Hendersonville. Mr. Wittmer felt the

LED screen might be a good idea if done tastefully, and the existing marquee sign could be amended to accommodate this type of technology.

Commissioner Moore pointed out that some of the trees near the arcade building are very old and seemingly at the end of their lifespan. He mentioned developing a landscape plan for the islands in the parking areas taking into consideration the Town's long range perspective regarding the Town Center. Chairman McKay suggested actually dressing up the grass islands and having an arborist analyze the health and longevity of the existing trees as part of this improvement process. The landscape plan would integrate attractive bushes, flowers, and pedestrian amenities to attract and serve patrons in this section of the Town Center. The new landscape plan should identify and remove barriers to implementing the Town Center Master Plan (TCMP) and therefore move us closer to implementing the final outcome depicted in the TCMP. Removing unhealthy trees and replacing trees (trees not called for in the TCMP) with bushes, flowers and improvements could be steps to help us accomplish this end.

Commissioner Moore asked Mr. Baldwin if temporary permission could be given to the Brevard's while the Board makes a decision. Mr. Baldwin explained that the ordinances in place should be followed; however, an amendment could be made to the regulations. Mr. Baldwin pointed out that not having a zoning administrator hired yet certainly slows down enforcement activities. Chairman McKay felt that the existing marquee sign is outdated and asked if Mr. Wittmer would be opposed to flat signs on the front of the arcade. Mr. Wittmer stated the arcade building is certainly historic and he did not like the idea of flat signs on the walls, and would like to protect the integrity Mediterranean facade of the building. He added that there are signs located in the breezeway of the building. He did not feel that sandwich board signs were a good idea either. Mr. Baldwin suggested each business in the arcade building would benefit by having an open sign in window clearly visible from Memorial Highway. It was suggested that business owners send postcards to year-round residents regarding open hours, which had already previously been discussed with Lago Vista and Lake Lure Coffee.

Chairman McKay conveyed that it is very difficult to make off-premise sandwich board signs work along this stretch of the highway when the actual businesses are a considerable distance away. Mr. Wittmer expressed that the regulations on signage are in the lease signed by all of his tenants. Commissioner Moore explained that a business could bring a proposal before the Town anytime to give the Board something to analyze. Chairman McKay stated that an amendment to the regulations regarding off-premise signs would have to be made.

Mr. Wittmer noted that the placement of the marquee sign is in a good location; however, he felt the LED sign could be attractive if done correctly. Chairman McKay asked that Lake Lure Properties bring back a design that would work well for them. Mr. McGlohon suggested the Board make a recommendation that Council commission a study of trees on the islands near the arcade building to begin this process. Mr. Baldwin noted he would like to formalize a scope of work to guide to bring back to the Board next month for approval before work begins. He emphasized that the consensus of the Board and those who spoke was that....

- Flat signs on the facade not be allowed on the arcade building as it detracts from the historic look of the building

- No sandwich board signs off-premise as it adds visual clutter to the CTC commercial area of the Town Center
- Reluctance of having buildings placed into the full blown NC historic buildings program because of extra layer of regulations the buildings would fall under
- Willingness to entertain a proposal depicting a modified marquee sign that integrates LED technology similar to what Mayor Keith described
- Desire to integrate wayfinding signs along the highway and suggested working to add Historic Arcade and Historic Lake Lure Inn to TDA wayfinding system currently being developed, if it can be done without adding buildings to the full-blown historic buildings register.
- Assess existing trees located in the grass islands of the commercial area of the Town Center and commission a landscape plan and implementation schedule, all as discussed earlier.

Mr. Baldwin noted, however, that any new signs would have to be reviewed by NCDOT for compliance with scenic highway sign standards currently in place. As was pointed out by Commissioner Moore earlier in the discussion, individual business owners are free to send proposals for the Board to consider at any time. Mr. Barrett asked that Lake Lure Properties bring back a proposal at next month's meeting that depicts a modified marquee sign using LED technology described by Mayor Keith. Mr. Baldwin stated he would return next month with the proposals/recommendations in written form for review.

PLANNING PROJECTS UPDATE

A. TOLL-CRV Commercial Corridor Connector

Mr. Baldwin mentioned that a request was made for \$500,000, which requires a match between the Town of Lake Lure and Chimney Rock Village for a connector from the Flowering Bridge to the Chimney Rock Village. He conveyed that this is for a pre-application submittal. He stated that we are pressing ahead for a meeting with the stakeholders to get information for the design process to move forward with the connector.

B. Comprehensive Plan Update Process

Mr. Baldwin pointed out that surveys have been done, meetings have been held, and information has been collected and shared with staff. Department heads were asked to create goals for their departments and beyond day-to-day operations. They would like to facilitate the type of future we hope to secure. The Council will hold a retreat at the first of December to create a budget. As soon as staff thoughts and recommendations are solidified, Mr. Baldwin would bring those back to the Board for review.

C. ABC Store Property

Mr. Baldwin noted Council asked that he work with the Town Manager and Meg Nealon to come up with proposals needed for the repurposing of the ABC store and look at the current site

to see what it needs to move from the current site to the new site. They are waiting for a review from the Town Manager to bring back to Council.

Mr. Baldwin provided an update on the LLCA temporary site. He mentioned the LLCA secured necessary instruments to ensure funds were available to move the buildings, if needed. He noted he had nothing further to report. He stated the school is still working to get the bonds needed. Russ Pitts is the liaison for the school. He noted that we may need to ask for an update from the school via Charlie Ellis. Chairman McKay felt we needed this update.

Commissioner Webber provided an update on the American Legion property. He noted the property is up for sale and the Town tendered an offer for \$25,000 for the property. A Legion representative expressed a desire to remove the building. Town Council tendered the offer to do so with a provision that a year be allowed to get that done. If the building is not removed within that timeframe, the building would then belong to the Town. The Town will also provide a memorial plaque on the property to the American Legion. He stated he heard the Legion's asking price was \$50,000 and the sale is open to the general public. According to a tax appraisal the Town had done around 20 years ago, the tax appraisal was approximately \$25,000, the building was approximately \$5,000, and the land was approximately \$15,000. He stated the sewer bill is current based on donations. He stated they may wish to disconnect.

Upon a motion by Mr. Barrett and seconded by Mr. McGlohon, the meeting was adjourned at 10:48 a.m. The next regular meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, November 15, 2016 at 9:30 a.m. at the Lake Lure Municipal Center.

ATTEST



Thomas M McKay, Chair



Michelle Jolley, Recording Secretary

