

**Minutes**  
**Land Development Standards Committee**  
**October 28, 2009**

Members Present: David Blevins, Patrick Bradshaw, Ron Leatherwood, Patrick McDowell, Joe Taylor, Ken Wilson

Members Absent: Mike Erwin, Daniel Hyatt, Steve Kaufman, Ken Wilson

Staff present: Fred Baker, Paul Benson, Lee Galloway, Alison Melnikova

The meeting came to order at 7:40 am. Mr. Benson announced that the business for the day would be review of the Action Items from the Diagnosis Report beginning where the Committee left off on October 21 with Section 3.14.1 –Steep Slopes.

Committee comments by section:

3.14.1 Revise the current steep slope regulation so that they are based on percentage slope for any parcel not just those above 2,900' in elevation.

Combine the standards of Hillside Conservation Development CUP and the basic Hillside Protection sections.

The Committee engaged in a wide-ranging discussion of issues involved with slope regulation including erosion control standards, grading standards, street construction standards, vegetation removal limitations, soil stability, etc. References were made to the Haywood County Slope and Mountain Ridge Protection ordinances. Interest was expressed in adopting uniform standards with the county. However, it was also pointed out that citizens of town would probably not be satisfied with county regulations which permit steeper cut and fill slopes and do not limit density or extent of grading. (See attached county ordinances).

There was general agreement that the current limitation of 2,900' may be too arbitrary as some land above that elevation has gentle, low visibility slope while steeper slopes below that elevation also need special protection.

There was also general agreement that a more "scientific" site specific approach should be taken with slope regulation especially with geotechnical analysis of

slope stability to insure safe construction. Also, there seemed to be general agreement that higher density development would be more acceptable provided that the impact of grading, vegetation removal and building design were carefully regulated.

In summary, the Committee was not in agreement with all aspects of proposed slope regulation, but in general favored removal of the 2,900' elevation threshold, and instead basing the standards on average slope, with the threshold for protected areas rising from the current standard of 15% slope to at least 25% slope. As for combining the standards of Hillside Conservation Development CUP and the basic Hillside Protection sections the Committee generally favored using the provisions contained in the current CUP process for all protected hillside areas, particularly the requirements for geotechnical analysis, limitations on vegetation removal and low visibility architectural standards.

As a sidebar, staff agreed to look for ways to put Town erosion control under the authority of Haywood County rather than the state.

3.14.3 Adopt Haywood County mountain ridge protection regulations as part of the Land Development Standards.

This is a simple change in format as the current ordinance already defers to these state model standards adopted by Haywood County.

3.14.4 Incorporate the Site Resource Assessment (SRA) into all new subdivision plans, particularly those that are located in steep slope areas and provide streamlined permitting process when used including fee waivers, fast-track reviews, etc.

There was general agreement that it would be appropriate to require an SRA for steep slope development although there was some disagreement about whether geotechnical investigation should be required for slopes of less than 35%. There was also some concern that a requirement for an SRA may be an undue burden for minor subdivisions. The Committee did not evaluate all of the data suggested for inclusion in the examples given in the Diagnosis Report.

The meeting adjourned at 9:10 am.

Paul Benson, Planning Director