**Caswell County Planning Board Meeting**

**November 24, 2020**

**Members Present:**

*Chairman,* Russell Johnston, *Vice Chairman* Michael Poteat, Keith Blalock, Ray Shaffner, and Steve Harris. Also present: Matthew Hoagland, *Planner,* and Ashley Kirby Powell, *Administrative Assistant.*

**Members Absent:**

 Commissioner W. Carter, Don Swann, Ron Richmond and Jason Daniel.

**Called to Order**

Chairman Johnston called the November 24, 2020 Planning Board Meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

**Approval of the Agenda**

Chairman Johnston made a motion to amend the agenda to move the Conditional Use Application permit before Public Comments, seconded by Mr. Shaffner. The motion carried unanimously.

**Conditional Use Permit Application**

Mr. Hoagland presented the Board with the proposed site plans for a conditional use permit for a manufactured home to be placed in the Hyco Lake Residential Zoning area. Mr. Hoagland stated that today the Aldridge’s are present to answer any questions that the Board may have. Mrs. Aldridge thanked the Board for taking the time to view their site plans and hope the Board approved them. Chairman Johnston questioned the Aldridge’s if the home was a modular home or a double wide. Mr. Aldridge replied that it was a double wide. Mr. Hoagland stated after viewing the proposed site plans and all the documents that this does not look like your traditional double wide; it appears the it will sit on a brick foundation and would meet the intent of the ordinance to have a nicer appearance than a traditional mobile home. Mr. Aldridge stated that it will have brick foundation and a high-pitched roof. Chairman Johnston questioned Mr. Hoagland if all the site plans met all the requirements. Mr. Hoagland replied yes. From what he could see, the site plan submitted was very simple but seemed to meet all requirements. However, he could foresee that the Board of Adjustments would request a more elaborate site plan. Chairman Johnston questioned the Aldridge’s if they have their permits for well and septic. Mr. Aldridge replied that yes back in 2013 or 2014. Chairman Johnston questioned if it was an existing well and septic was already on the lot. Mr. Aldridge replied yes. The Planning Board recommended that the Board of Adjustments adopt the site plans with no recommendation for additional conditions, the motion carried unanimously.

**Public Comments**

My name is Karen Tate Gray. As a concerned lifelong citizen of Caswell County, I am requesting that the Planning Board approve the HIDO with the setbacks that has been put forth by the special committee. The citizens of Caswell need the maximum protection from industries that may move into the county that, while generating income, may have a negative impact the environment and on those living in close proximity to the business. I am asking that you do not water down the version that has been presented to the board by the committee. Those on the committee have studied and considered what is most advantageous for the citizens of Caswell. I request that you approve the HIDO as presented to you and not make changes by decreasing setbacks.

948 Union Ridge Rd.

Burlington, NC 27217

Anderson Community

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To Members of the Caswell County Planning Board:

There is only one reason to pass the HIDO. It is needed to help provide safeguards to Caswell County residents and landowners from high impact industries.

The HIDO is all about protection from potentially harmful businesses which can operate here.

Therefore, the HIDO needs to have adequate protections. It needs to have ample spacing and setbacks, for land use and operations. It needs to have ample screening buffers.

Neighboring and downstream property owners need strong safeguards.  The proposed HIDO provides the shields necessary To ensure this security.

Do not water down the HIDO. Do not shrink from protecting our citizens. Keep Caswell a safe and healthy place to live.

Thank you.

Mark Zimmerman

Leasburg, NC

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In order to protect our community do not change the HIDO setbacks. If you diminish our restrictions our protections become null and void. We must follow the chain of reasoning and the principles of science that tells us to keep our HIDO setbacks. Thank you for your time Zoning will set us free.

Jami Haigler

Blaylock Drive

Prospect Hill NC

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To the Planning Board:

I sent these comments earlier, but I want to reemphasize the importance of NOT altering the protections, including setbacks, that affect the citizens. We listened to the prior meeting and couldn’t for the life of us determine what data or information was being used to determine these changes. Would someone please clarify in this meeting the information/data on which these changes are based?

We need a robust HIDO passed as soon as possible, as we are very concerned about the moratorium expiring. It seems obvious that passing this ordinance is in the best interests of the citizens of Caswell, Orange, and Person counties. These protections affect many, many people who live here.

We really cannot afford, any of us, to have these industries including quarries and asphalt plants destroying what is most valuable about our area: the clean air, the streams, and the health of the citizens.

I realize that protecting the natural resources and people of Caswell, northern Orange, and southern Person counties are not priorities for these polluting corporations, but they are surely priorities for every public servant and citizen in the area.

In reviewing other restrictions, I notice that land use spacing, operations setbacks, minimum lot size, etc. are covered. It remains critical to adhere to the spacing, setbacks, and buffers. Basically, every protection possible is needed. Please be particularly attentive to maintaining these setbacks/spacings/etc.

Respectfully,

Lynden Harris

Director, Hidden Voices [www.hiddenvoices.org](http://www.hiddenvoices.org/)

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Please do not reduce the setbacks that the HIDO committee originally recommended. In my earlier email to this planning board, I suggested increased setbacks!  My numbers were based on MINIMUM distances I would want my own home (or my child's school) to be from the various industries. I still prefer the increased setbacks.

Remember, without zoning, this ordinance is ALL we will have to protect us, the residents, from undesirable industries being too close to our homes, schools, and eldercare facilities.

Please make this ordinance do its job!

Sincerely,

Rebecca Page

Yanceyville

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We all listened to that last meeting ... It was very hard to determine what official reports and data were being used to make the changes suggested. We'd appreciate it if you could please provide some clarity on exactly what data was employed?

Additionally, I'd like to reiterate that – as the CEO of Klickly and a resident of Person county – it is critical to not only pass the HIDO plan ASAP but it remains crucial to **keep the setbacks, spacing, and buffers**. I'd ask you to please be particularly attentive to maintaining these setbacks/spacings/etc Keep in mind that **such facilities as the proposed quarries/plants offer no meaningful economic benefit to the area.** They also damage local health (and devalue yours and your neighbors' land).

As such, the HIDO plan should be enhanced and **any attempts to ease the restrictions will be seen**as pandering to big money corporations while leaving your neighbors in the lurch.

Looking forward to your response,

Cooper Harris

Founder & CEO

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Dear Planning Board,

I'm writing to implore you not to change the HIDO setbacks for Carolina Sunrock's proposed operations. The company engages in grossly polluting practices that threaten Caswell County as a whole, and any reduction in setbacks will only increase that danger. Please see reason and protect the glorious natural beauty and pristine nature of Caswell County. As Planning Board members, that is the heart of your task.

Respectfully,

Heather Langan

1077 Wilson Road

Hurdle Mills

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I own a home in Caswell County and would like to make that my primary residence, but I am very concerned about the quarry and asphalt plant being planned.  I have long thought Caswell County could attract people and non-polluting businesses from the neighboring counties to the south, especially Orange and Durham counties, but people like me are wary of making the move and need reassurances from Caswell County, especially the Planning Board, that uppermost in its considerations is the long-term health and economic prosperity of its citizens. Short-term economic benefits like those that might flow from the quarry and asphalt plant will be greatly outweighed by both the short- and long-term damage to residents’ health, psychological welfare, reliable water source (should the aquifer be depleted), and quiet enjoyment of their property, and to the economic value of residents’ homes and, more generally, the county’s infrastructure, most notably the roads that will carry massive trucks on roads never intended to carry such size and weight.

Please take actions that will attract people and non-polluting businesses to Caswell County. For so many reasons, it is the right thing to do.

Thank you.

Theresa Newman

560 Solomon Road

Leasburg, NC

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I believe it is clear that our Community Planning need's to address the looming environmental, social and civic problem's certain commercial interest's will leave us and our children with if we fail to do now what we can to sustain the health of our community.  That's a BIG job as you know better than most.

With that in mind, as a community member, I encourage you ensure that the HIDO Setbacks are at the very least maintained and preferably doubled.

Simply put, you know what's going on better than most and our community is at risk of succumbing to polluting interest's that will literally directly contribute to the ill health of our community.  We need plans to prevent that.

Be part of the solution not the pollution, support the community you serve.

Appreciate,

Dr. Martinelli

**Approval of Minutes**

Mr. Harris made a motion to approve the Oct 27, 2020 and November 12, 2020 minutes, seconded by Mr. Blalock. The motion carried unanimously.

**Old Business**

*Proposed Article 9 Amendments*

Chairman Johnston asked if the deadline has now been extended to July 1, 2021 to have all changes submitted for 160D compliance. Mr. Hoagland responded yes. Mr. Hoagland then presented the Board with proposed changes which were discussed at previous meetings and are issues that are often difficult administratively. The draft changes involve exempt plats, mobile home maintenance, temporary placement of R.V. and cell tower placement. Chairman Johnston questioned Mr. Hoagland if he had received feedback from TowerCom on cell tower spacing. Mr. Hoagland replied yes, in the proposed changes presented today in 9.62.2 their recommendation was to reduce the setback requirements due to the way towers are engineered now as far as safety; in the event that they collapse they will crumble into themselves, when older towers would fall straight over. Another change that will be added is the State has now done away with allowing counties to charge cell towers annual fees. Mr. Shaffner questioned Mr. Hoagland how does the proposed mileage difference between towers compare to other neighboring counties. Mr. Hoagland replied he was not sure. Mr. Shaffner stated that originally the ordinance had 5 miles for a distance between towers, that was put in place with hopes that cell coverage would expand all over the county; then recently it was changed to 1 mile. Mr. Hoagland stated another possible change discussed previously is recreational vehicle temporary placement permits. Then he questioned the pleasure of the Board if they wanted to discuss or give guidance on these changes, or table them. The Board concluded to table these changes and go over them at meeting in the future.

**New Business**

*Comprehensive Plan Review*

Mr. Hoagland stated that one of the requirements of the Caswell County Comprehensive Plan is that the county planner bring it to the Planning Board review on an annual basis and make any changes as needed. He also stated that, as a summary of the issue, the comprehensive plan was put into place in 2013-2014, the plan seeks to keep Caswell County predominantly rural, and that the land use planning portion of the plan seeks to create areas for higher density and economic development. The board did not make any motions to update the Comprehensive Plan.

**Planning Department Updates**

* The Caswell County Board of Commissioner reviewed the Planning Board’s High Impact Development Ordinance recommendations and instructed the HIDO Committee to consider all the proposed changes.
* Mr. Hoagland asked if the Board would like to meet in December since the meeting date is close to Christmas. The Board decided to cancel the December meeting due to the Christmas Holiday.
* Mr. Hoagland stated that at the January meeting he plans to prepare for review of Article 10 160D changes, along with bringing back the proposed Article 9 changes.
* Mr. Johnston asked Mr. Hoagland if there were any road project updates. Mr. Hoagland stated that the Highway 86 project postponed due to funding shortages from COVID restrictions causing less travel and as a result less gas tax funding for road construction.

**Adjournment**

Mr. Harris made a motion to adjourn the November 24, 2020 Planning Board Meeting at 1:54 p.m. The motion carried unanimously.